Lecture 01

Managerial Roles

What roles do managers take on in different organizational settings?

In carrying out the responsibilities of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, managers take on many different roles. A role is a set of behavioral expectations, or a set of activities that a person is expected to perform. Managers' roles fall into three basic categories: *informational roles, interpersonal roles*, and *decisional roles*. In an informational role, the manager may act as an information gatherer, an information distributor, or a spokesperson for the company. A manager's interpersonal roles are based on various interactions with other people. Depending on the situation, a manager may need to act as a figurehead, a company leader, or a liaison. When acting in a decisional role, a manager may have to think like an entrepreneur, make decisions about resource allocation, help resolve conflicts, or negotiate compromises.

Managerial Decision Making

In every function performed, role taken on, and set of skills applied, a manager is a decision maker. Decision-making means choosing among alternatives. Decision-making occurs in response to the identification of a problem or an opportunity. The decisions managers make fall into two basic categories: programmed and nonprogrammed. Programmed decisions are made in response to routine situations that occur frequently in a variety of settings throughout an organization. For example, the need to hire new personnel is a common situation for most organizations. Therefore, standard procedures for recruitment and selection are developed and followed in most companies.

The Many Roles Managers Play in an Organization:

Information Roles
Monitor

- Seeks out and gathers information relevant to the organization
- Finding out about legal restrictions on new product technology

Disseminator

- Provides information where it is needed in the organization
- Providing current production figures to workers on the assembly line

Spokesperson

- Transmits information to people outside the organization
- Representing the company at a shareholders' meeting

Interpersonal Roles
Figurehead

- Represents the company in a symbolic way
- Cutting the ribbon at ceremony for the opening of a new building

Leader

- Guides and motivates employees to achieve organizational goals

- Helping subordinates to set monthly performance goals

Liaison

- Acts as a go-between among individuals inside and outside the organization
- Representing the retail sales division of the company at a regional sales meeting

Decisional Roles

Entrepreneur

- Searches out new opportunities and initiates change
- Implementing a new production process using new technology

Disturbance handler

- Handles unexpected events and crises
- Handling a crisis situation such as a fire

Resource allocator

- Designates the use of financial, human, and other organizational resources
- Approving the funds necessary to purchase computer equipment and hire personnel

Negotiator

- Represents the company at negotiating processes
- Participating in salary negotiations with union representatives

<u>Lecture 02</u>

Management Skills

Political skills

Political behavior, defined as the ability to effectively influence others, often is associated with people who are running for elective office. However, political skill exists in just about every organization—and the people most successful at utilizing this skill often have the best reputations among their colleagues, according to a study by a Florida State University researcher.

"They have the ability to understand others and use that knowledge to influence others' thoughts and actions," she said.

Political skill is about building trust. Perrewé found that workers are more likely to follow if the leader is someone in whom they have confidence and like. "Leaders need to inspire the team to work toward a common goal," she said. "A leader with good political skills can get employees to go the extra mile because they have been convinced that it will help the organization."

Conceptual skills

Conceptual skills are used frequently in the business world where managers can use their ability to conceptualize to view and visualize the entire company that they work for in order to develop the best plans for the business's success. Most companies consider conceptual skills to be a requirement for their management staff.

Some people are born with conceptual skills and have an intuitive sense while others must acquire the skill through learning. Other common skills valued with conceptual thinking include critical thinking, implementation thinking, innovative thinking and intuitive thinking.

For those individuals who are not born with an innate sense of these skills, there are ways to develop the skill set. In an individual's personal life and professional life, these skills can be developed by first taking the time to look around. Observing the way that other people and other businesses implement strategies as well as reading related publications (in the individual's field or hobby area) can help increase the range of possibilities a person sees. Then, an individual must be willing to change direction and to pursue new goals whenever an opportunity arises that makes sense. If a problem occurs, do not look for the simple and fast fix.

Intrapersonal skills

Emotional intelligence is the common name for a person's ability to understand and manage personal emotions, while also recognizing those of others. Emotional intelligence includes recognizing the events that trigger feelings of anger, frustration and sadness, and preparing effective responses. People with emotional intelligence tend to display higher self-motivation, more calculated risk-taking, poise under pressure and persistence in the face of obstacles. These intrapersonal abilities help in achieving goals and following through on commitments to others.

A person's internal monologue or inner critic also impacts intrapersonal skills. The inner critic is the somewhat consistent voice in a person's head that reflects positive or negative thinking. Someone with strong intrapersonal skills tends to have a more positive internal monologue, such as a "can-do" attitude. Rather than constant self-doubt and uncertainty, someone with excellent intrapersonal abilities believes that success is inevitable. Intrapersonal abilities also enable a person to sense when someone else is upset, offended or sad, and to react appropriately.

Diagnostic skill

Diagnostic skill means ability to visualize the possible future events. Successful managers also possess diagnostic skills. These skills enable a manager to visualize the most appropriate response to a situation. A manager must diagnose and analyze a problem in the organization by studying in symptoms and then developing a solution. Much of the potential excitement in a manager's job centers on getting to the root of problem and recommending solutions. The importance of diagnostic skills increases as the manager is promoted to the higher level.

Technical Skills

Technical skills are the ability to use the procedures, techniques, and knowledge of a specialized field. For example, an accounting manager needs the basic technical skills of accounting profession. First line managers need a high degree of technical skills in order to supervise subordinates properly. The need for technical skill decreases as the manager moves up in the organizational hierarchy.

Digital Skills

Managers who have digital skills have understanding of computers, telecommunication, and in particular, know how to use digital technology to perform many aspects of their jobs. These skills are important because using digital technology substantially increases a manager's productivity. Computers can perform in minutes tasks in financial analysis, human resource planning, and other areas that otherwise take hours, even days to complete. Thus, computer is an especially helpful tool for decision making. Software enables managers to manipulate data and perform 'what if scenarios, looking at the projected impact of different decision alternatives'.

Human Skills

Managers spend considerable time interacting with people both inside and outside the organization. Hence, managers need human skills. Human skills are the ability to work with, understand, and motivate other people. They are needed to get along with people and to get work done through people. Human skills include interpersonal skills such as communication, negotiation, bargaining, directing, leading, motivating, and conflict resolution. Human skills are very important at all level of management. The popularity of team-based management has increased the necessity for interpersonal skills for all members of the organization. A manager who has good human skills is likely to be more successful than with poor human skills.

Although the proceeding skills are all vital, the relative importance of each will vary according to the level of the manager in the organization. For example, first line managers generally need to depend more on their technical and human skills. These managers have greater contact with the work being done and the people doing the work. Digital skills are equally important at all level of management. Middle managers require a more even distribution of skills. Finally, conceptual and diagnostic skills are extremely critical to the top managers. Top management's primary responsibility is to make the key decisions that are executed or implemented at lower levels. This requires top managers see the big picture in order to identify opportunities in the environment and develop strategic plans to capitalize on these opportunities.

<u>Lecture 03</u>

Strategic Plan : Policies for Implementation

The Association's Strategic Plan was developed to be an essential ingredient in assuring the long-term viability of ACRL Association of College and Research Libraries. The plan was developed to assist ACRL in positioning for the future and controlling its destiny. It is therefore, most important that the plan be fully integrated into the operational structure of ACRL. To make certain that the Plan is utilized to the fullest possible extent, the following policies have been created.

Policy #1 Integration with the Association's programs, services and products

It shall be the policy of the ACRL Board of Directors that:

ACRL's Strategic Plan shall be provided to the Units (standing committee, sections, chapters, etc.) so that the goals and strategic directions contained in the plan may be used by the units as they execute the annual program planning process. The plan shall be the primary basis for all ACRL programs, services and products, and these shall be evaluated on the basis of their relatedness to the plan.

The ACRL leadership shall be made aware of and be familiar with the ACRL Strategic Plan; and the strategic directions from the plan shall be included on the agenda of each Midwinter and Annual Conference Leadership Council planning session for discussion and comment. Recommendations for revisions to the plan resulting from these discussions may be made to the Board of Directors.

Policy #2 The Strategic Plan and priorities shall drive the budget process

It shall be the policy of the ACRL Board of Directors that:

The goals and strategic directions contained in the ACRL Strategic Plan shall provide the basis upon which the Board of Directors establish annual priorities for the Association, the president and vice-president identify elements of programs for the year, the units' programs and activities are funded, for establishing new division initiatives, and for the Budget and Finance Committee's recommendations regarding the annual budget.

Policy #3 Assessment of implementation of the Plan

It shall be the policy of the ACRL Board of Directors that:

Annually all units identify programs and activities that support the plan for the current year and the year that follows and submit a report to the ACRL office for compilation for the Board's review.

Policy #4 Annual Strategic Plan Updating

It shall be the policy of the ACRL Board of Directors that:

ACRL Strategic Plan is a living document which provides a framework for Association decision making, programming, budgeting, and internal evaluation. Because ACRL operates within the rapidly evolving higher education and academic library environments, it is important for the document to be able to respond positively--even aggressively--as such changes occur. Changes in the plan, however, must balance longer term objectives against more immediate issues.

Therefore, the Plan's strategic directions will be reviewed for change annually. ACRL units wishing consideration for particular changes in the strategic directions should bring their recommendations in writing to the Board for its second meeting at midwinter or for the Spring Executive Committee meeting. Any action by the Board will be at the following annual conference.

In addition, each year a review of the Association's external and internal environment shall be conducted by staff analyzing trends, member expectations and other available data. Based on this annual review, the Board of Directors may make other revisions to strategic directives and report these to the membership. Recommendations resulting from analysis of external and internal environments and discussions among ACRL leaders during the Leadership Council Planning Sessions shall be discussed by the Executive Committee at its following meeting and a report shall be made to the Board of Directors at the next conference for action.

The vision, mission, and goal statements will be revised by the Board every five years at the Annual Conference. The process for revision will start three years after the adoption of the plan. This more in-depth review will always follow active solicitation of input from both individual members and the various units of ACRL.

Lecture 05

Levels of Management

The term “Levels of Management’ refers to a line of demarcation between various managerial positions in an organization. The number of levels in management increases when the size of the business and work force increases and vice versa. The level of management determines a chain of command, the amount of authority & status enjoyed by any managerial position. The levels of management can be classified in three broad categories:

Top Level of Management

It consists of board of directors, chief executive or managing director. The top management is the ultimate source of authority and it manages goals and policies for an enterprise. It devotes more time on planning and coordinating functions.

The role of the top management can be summarized as follows:

- Top management lays down the objectives and broad policies of the enterprise.
- It issues necessary instructions for preparation of department budgets, procedures, schedules etc.
- It prepares strategic plans & policies for the enterprise.
- It appoints the executive for middle level i.e. departmental managers.
- It controls & coordinates the activities of all the departments.
- It is also responsible for maintaining a contact with the outside world.
- It provides guidance and direction.
- The top management is also responsible towards the shareholders for the performance of the enterprise.

Middle Level of Management

The branch managers and departmental managers constitute middle level. They are responsible to the top management for the functioning of their department. They devote more time to organizational and directional functions. In small organization, there is only one layer of middle level of management but in big enterprises, there may be senior and junior middle level management. Their role can be emphasized as:

- They execute the plans of the organization in accordance with the policies and directives of the top management.
- They make plans for the sub-units of the organization.
- They participate in employment & training of lower-level management.
- They interpret and explain policies from top level management to lower level.
- They are responsible for coordinating the activities within the division or department.
- It also sends important reports and other important data to top level management.
- They evaluate performance of junior managers.
- They are also responsible for inspiring lower-level managers towards better performance.

Lower Level of Management

Lower level is also known as supervisory / operative level of management. It consists of supervisors, foreman, section officers, superintendent etc. According to R.C. Davis, "Supervisory management refers to those executives whose work has to be largely with personal oversight and direction of operative employees". In other words, they are concerned with direction and controlling function of management. Their activities include:

- Assigning of jobs and tasks to various workers.
- They guide and instruct workers for day-to-day activities.
- They are responsible for the quality as well as quantity of production.
- They are also entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining good relation in the organization.
- They communicate workers problems, suggestions, and recommendatory appeals etc to the higher level and higher-level goals and objectives to the workers.
- They help to solve the grievances of the workers.
- They supervise & guide the sub-ordinates.
- They are responsible for providing training to the workers.
- They arrange necessary materials, machines, tools etc. for getting the things done.
- They prepare periodical reports about the performance of the workers.
- They ensure discipline in the enterprise.
- They motivate workers.
- They are the image builders of the enterprise because they are in direct contact with the workers.

Lecture 06

The Decision-Making Process

A decision-making process is a series of steps taken by an individual to determine the best option or course of action to meet their needs. In a business context, it is a set of steps taken by managers in an enterprise to determine the planned path for business initiatives and to set specific actions in motion. Ideally, business decisions are based on an analysis of objective facts, aided by the use of business intelligence and analytics tools.

In any business situation there are multiple directions in which to take a strategy or an initiative. The variety of alternatives to weigh -- and the volume of decisions that must be made on an ongoing basis, especially in large organizations -- makes the implementation of an effective decision-making process a crucial element of managing successful business operations.

There are many different decision-making methodologies, but most share at least five steps in common:

1. Identify a business problem.
2. Seek information about different possible decisions and their likely effect.
3. Evaluate the alternatives and choose one of them.
4. Implement the decision in business operations.
5. Monitor the situation, gather data about the decision's impact and make changes if necessary.

Data-driven decision making

Traditionally, decisions were made by business managers or corporate executives using their intuitive understanding of the situation at hand. However, intuitive decision-making has several drawbacks. For example, a gut-feel approach makes it hard to justify decisions after the fact and bases enterprise decision-making on the experience and accumulated knowledge of individuals, who can be vulnerable to cognitive biases that lead them to make bad decisions. That's why businesses today typically take more systematic and data-driven approaches to the decision-making process. This allows managers and executives to use techniques such as cost-benefit analysis and predictive modeling to justify their decisions. It also enables lines of business to build process automation protocols that can be applied to new situations as they arise, removing the need for each one to be handled as a unique decision-making event.

If designed properly, a systematic decision-making process reduces the possibility that the biases and blind spots of individuals will result in sub-optimal decisions. On the other hand, data isn't infallible, which makes observing the business impact of decisions a crucial step in case things go in the wrong direction. The potential for humans to choose the wrong data also highlights the need for monitoring the analytics and decision-making stages, as opposed to blindly going where the data is pointing.

Challenges in the decision-making process

Balancing data-driven and intuitive approaches to decision-making is a difficult proposition. Managers and executives may be skeptical about relying on data that goes against their intuition in making decisions or feel that their experience and knowledge is being discounted or ignored completely. As a result, they may push back against the findings of BI and analytics tools during the decision-making process.

Getting everyone on board with business decisions can also be a challenge, particularly if the decision-making process isn't transparent and decisions aren't explained well to affected parties in an organization. That calls for the development of a plan for communicating about decisions internally, plus a change management strategy to deal with the effects of decisions on business operations.

Decision-making models can also be used to avoid these various challenges by creating a structured, transparent process.

Types of decision-making models: Common types of decision-making models include:

Rational models: Rational decision-making is the most popular type of model. It is logical and sequential and focuses on listing as many alternative courses of action as possible. Once all options have been laid out, they can be evaluated to determine which is best. These models often include pros and cons for each choice, with the options listed in the order of their importance.

A rational decision-making model typically includes the following steps:

1. Identify the problem or opportunity.
2. Establish and weigh decision criteria.

3. Collect and organize all related information.
4. Analyze the situation.
5. Develop a variety of options.
6. Assess all options and assign a value to each one.
7. Decide which option is best.
8. Implement the decision.
9. Evaluate the decision.

Intuitive models: These decision-making models focus on there being no real logic or reason to the decision-making process. Instead, the process is dictated by an inner knowledge -- or intuition -- about what the right option is. However, intuitive models are not solely based on gut feelings. They also look at pattern recognition, similarity recognition and the importance or prominence of the option.

Recognition primed models: These models are a combination of rational and intuitive decision-making. Its defining element is that the decision maker only considers one option instead of weighing all of them.

The recognition primed decision-making process involves:

1. Identifying the problem, including all its characteristics, problem cues, expectations and business goals.
2. Thinking through the plan and performing a mental simulation to see if it works and what modifications might be needed.
3. If the plan seems satisfactory, then the final decision is made, and the plan is implemented.

In recognition primed models, alternative courses of action are only considered if the original plan does not produce the intended results. The success rate of this model correlates to an individual's experience and expertise.

Creative models: In this decision-making model, users collect information and insights about the problem and create some initial ideas for solutions. Then, the decision maker enters an incubation period where they do not actively think about the options. Instead, they allow their unconscious to take over the process and eventually lead them to a realization and answer which they can then test and finalize.

Lecture 07:

Team effectiveness

High-performance teams don't just appear; they are developed and nurtured. By themselves, leaders with vision cannot guarantee the development of such high-performance teams, nor can members who desire to be part of such teams. The development of high-performance teams takes the combined efforts of visionary leaders and motivated team members. In addition, facilitators with expertise in team building are needed. The following lists the characteristics that comprise high-performance teams:

- The team has a common focus, including clear and understandable goals, plans of action, and ways to measure success.
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for each team member.
- Each member has clearly defined expectations of other members.
- The team fully utilizes its resources—both internal and external.
- Member's value each other's differences in healthy and productive ways.
- Each member is able to give, receive, and elicit necessary feedback.
- The team members manage their meetings in a productive way.
- The team is able to reach goals by achieving the necessary results.

To build an effective team, a leader needs to establish an organizational environment in which individual team members can reflect upon and analyze relationships with other team members. A leader should encourage the resolution of any conflicts through healthy, professional confrontation, and willingly and openly negotiate necessary changes. In short, effective leaders are cheerleaders for the team; they encourage and support members who are committed and actively involved with their teams and engage those members who aren't participating.

Several factors within an organization itself influence team effectiveness, including its organizational culture, level of autonomy, and types of feedback mechanisms. But the factors that influence the effectiveness of a team most directly stem from its internal structure and processes.

- **Structural factors** include team or group type, size, and composition of skills and abilities.
- **Team processes** include stages of team development, cultural norms, roles cohesiveness, and interpersonal processes such as trust development, facilitation, influence, leadership communication, and conflict resolution.

To judge the effectiveness of their teams, leaders need to examine their teams' performances and personal outcomes. *Performance outcomes* may be measured by products made, ideas generated, customers served, numbers of defects per thousand items produced, overtime hours, items sold, and customer satisfaction levels. *Personal outcomes* may be measured by employee satisfaction, commitment, and willingness of members to stay on the team. Both outcomes are important for the long-term viability as well as the short-term success of the team.

Lecture 08

Team Building

Team building requires managers to follow a systematic planning and implementation process to assess whether teams can improve the organization's goal attainment; to remove barriers to team building; and to build effective teams through training, empowerment, and feedback.

Managers must also decide on team size and member roles to gain the maximum contribution for all members.

To create effective teams, managers need to avoid the following six deadly sins of team building:

Lack of a model: A team leader often focuses on a single aspect of team functioning, such as communication practices. But many other elements are critical to team success and effectiveness, and a team is only as strong as its weakest component. A single-dimensional team-building process may cause frustration and destroy the credibility of the process.

Fix: A model of how teams' function is needed to address all the factors that result in reduced team effectiveness. At a minimum, the following must be considered for team effectiveness:

- Clearly stated and commonly held vision and goals
- Talent and skills required to meet the goals
- Clear understanding of team members' roles and functions
- Efficient and shared understanding of procedures and norms
- Effective and skilled interpersonal relations
- A system of reinforcement and celebration
- Clear understanding of the team's relationship to the organization

Lack of diagnosis: Each team has distinct strengths and weaknesses, which team building must take into account. The team leader must be aware of these strengths and weaknesses.

Fix: The leader must assess his team's strength and weaknesses. Although assessment and diagnostic instruments can be purchased, hiring an outside consultant to complete a thorough team assessment is advisable.

Short-term intervention: Some managers think that a one-day retreat or team-building exercise will resolve issues causing tension and frustration. One day, no matter how good it is, is not going to make much of a change in the norms, culture, or practices of a team. A one-day retreat may bring to light issues that cannot be solved during that day and are left to fester, resulting in team members mistrusting the process.

Fix: Plan a long-term strategy for team building. One year is a good time frame for this plan.

No evaluation of progress: Because team building is a long-term process, both management and team members need to know whether it is succeeding. A mechanism for regular evaluation of team functioning needs to be in place so that the team leader can identify barriers and eliminate them.

Fix: Plan regular evaluations of team progress. The diagnostic instrument used initially can be used at regular intervals to gauge progress.

Leadership detachment: The detached manager looks at team development as something that will help others change so that the team will function more effectively. However, the most influential person in most teams is the formal leader or manager who sets the tone for the team, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Fix: A manager must be willing to hear from employees about how his or her behavior impacts the team, whether negatively or positively. The worst thing that an organization can do is to start the process and refuse to acknowledge that a manager is a key player in the process.

Addressing all problems internally: Team building cannot succeed unless conflicts and problems are brought into the open and dealt with properly. Poorly functioning teams are characterized by climates of blame, defensiveness, and a lack of ability to deal with conflict. These teams cannot improve themselves.

Fix: Consider hiring an outside consultant to help if a team is very negative or has unresolved conflicts. The most important reason for using an outside consultant is that an “outsider” has no preconceptions or agenda.

Remember that poor team building is worse than doing nothing. Poorly thought-out efforts are likely to increase negativity, reduce team functioning, and reduce management credibility. A manager's personal reputation and the degree to which employees have confidence in him or her are at stake.

Lecture 09:

Types of Teams

The development of teams and teamwork has grown dramatically in all types of organizations for one simple reason: No one person has the ability to deliver the kinds of products and services required in today's highly competitive marketplace. Organizations must depend on the cooperative nature of many teams to create successful ventures and outcomes.

Teams can be vertical (functional), horizontal (cross-functional), or self-directed (self-managed) and can be used to create new products, complete specific projects, ensure quality, or replace operating departments.

- **Functional teams** perform specific organizational functions and include members from several vertical levels of the hierarchy. In other words, a functional team is composed of a manager and his or her subordinates for a particular functional area. Accounting, personnel, and purchasing departments are examples of functional teams.
- **Cross-functional teams** are made up of experts in various specialties (or functions) working together on various organizational tasks. Team members come from such departments as research and development, design, engineering, marketing, and distribution. These teams are often empowered to make decisions without the approval of management. For example, when Nabisco's executives concluded that the company needed to improve its relationship with customers and better satisfy customers' needs, they created cross-functional teams whose assignments were to find ways to do just that. Although functional teams are usually permanent, cross-functional teams are often temporary, lasting for as little as a few months or as long as several years, depending on the group tasks being performed.

- **Self-directed work teams,** or self-managed teams, operate without managers and are responsible for complete work processes or segments that deliver products or services to external or internal customers. Self-directed work teams (SDWTs) are designed to give employees a feeling of "ownership" of a whole job. For example, at Tennessee Eastman, a division of Eastman Kodak Company, teams are responsible for whole product lines—including processing, lab work, and packaging. With shared team responsibilities for work outcomes, team members often have broader job assignments and cross-train to master other jobs. This cross-training permits greater team flexibility.

No matter what type of team is formed, the benefits of teamwork are many, including synergy and increased skills, knowledge, productivity, flexibility, and commitment. Among the other benefits are increased job satisfaction, employee empowerment, and improved quality and organizational effectiveness.

Lecture 10:

Self-management

Self-management is a critical workplace skill. This article explores a self-management definition, and tips to improve your self-management skills.

What is self-management?

Self-management is our ability to manage our behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in a conscious and productive way.

Someone with strong self-management skills knows what to do and how to act in different situations. They know how to avoid distractions while working from home, so they can maintain focus and stay productive. They know what they need to do to achieve their fitness goals — and they follow through.

Self-management means you understand your personal responsibility in different aspects of your life, and you do what you need to fulfill that responsibility.

Self-management and its relationship to emotional intelligence

This self-management definition has its roots in emotional intelligence theory, where this capability may also be referred to as self-regulation. Self-regulation is supported by our capacity for self-awareness, which helps us create conscious access to our thoughts, desires, and feelings. Only once we are *aware* of these things, can we begin to control and express them appropriately.

Those with well-developed self-awareness and self-regulation are well-positioned to develop a set of self-management skills that support them on their work and personal journeys.

Why is self-management so important in an organization?

From an organizational perspective, the ability of team members to self-manage is critical to the effective functioning of an organization. Imagine an environment where the majority of those working within it were unable to stay on task, on strategy, and on schedule. That would make it very challenging to complete projects.

Self-management is even more important when we talk about empowering employees across the organization to be more innovative and resourceful. When every team member understands their responsibilities, goals, and what it takes to achieve them, they can make better decisions and do their part to achieve the team and organization objectives. Part of effective self-management with empowerment is that employees make good decisions about when to seek additional help or input.

7 skills to increase your self-management capabilities

Do you ever catch yourself staying up late to watch one more episode of your favorite TV show, even when you know you have a busy workday ahead? Have you ever missed a deadline because you pushed off a big project for too long? Have you ever become frustrated at one of your direct reports for not completing a project according to your guidance?

These are all signals that you may need to work on your self-management capabilities. Self-management can be learned and refined by mastering these related skills:

1. **Role clarity.** Those with role clarity know what our responsibilities are, who our work matters to and how we are measured. We also know who we are dependent on to get our work done. In short, we have a good sense of how we fit into the system and how our work serves the organization.

2. **Goal alignment:** Organizational success relies upon team members working together to reach a common goal. In order for this to work with a team of self-managed individuals, each of us must understand the big picture, and align our own goals with those of the organization. This will allow us to stay on track and maintain sight of what we're working toward.

3. **Strategic planning.** The next skill in this progression, strategic planning, is the ability to understand what we need to do in order to support organizational goals. We work backward from the desired future state in order to determine what we need to do in order to get there.

4. **Priority-setting.** Now that we know what we need to do, we need to set priorities so we can achieve our goals. This can help ensure we get to the most important tasks and projects, even as other demands on our time arise. In our example, Ibrahim sets his priorities and decides he needs one day each week for the next three months to get through the first phase of his plan. To accomplish this, he blocked off time on his calendar to work on this project, and he pushed out less important projects by communicating with stakeholders.

5. **Self-awareness.** The ability to consciously access our thoughts, desires, and feelings can help us control our behaviors. This, in turn, can have a direct impact on our performance, and how others perceive us. For example, as Ibrahim works through his plan, he begins to notice some anxious feelings within his body and finds himself ruminating at night. He begins to sense his "ego attachment" to the opportunity to succeed in the eyes of others and a sense of worry about whether he is the right person for this project.

6. **Emotional regulation.** Being self-aware of our feelings is a prerequisite to regulating them. For example, fear can be distressing and provoke a fight or flight-type reaction if we aren't able to elevate it to our consciousness. Ibrahim's self-awareness allows him to understand his fear that he may not be the right person for the task at hand. He's able to overcome this emotion by thinking rationally about his strengths and how they apply to any market segment. This allows him to refocus on what he does best, and work through his discomfort.

7. **Self-care.** The only person who can truly be responsible for our care is ourselves. Thriving as an individual starts with nurturing ourselves. Many of us carry ingrained beliefs that serving others is our calling, or self-sacrifice is noble, and thinking about ourselves is selfish.

12 tips to sharpen your self-management skills

Even those with strong self-management capabilities can falter now and then. Perhaps you didn't get much sleep last night, and let your emotions get the better of you at a team meeting. Or maybe you got so bogged down in urgent tasks, that you lost sight of what was truly important. It happens to the best of us.

Here are some ways you can sharpen your skills and improve how you self-manage.

1. **Keep your promises.** There are two parts to keeping your promises. First, do what you said you would do (DWYSYWD). It creates trust with others and within yourself. Second, be careful what you say yes to. Your job is not to be a hero. It is to stay focused on your role and to work to your strengths. Know your boundaries, but apply compassion as you hold them.

2. **Align to the right level of engagement.** Appropriate engagement varies from the executive table to individual contributors. There is a continuum from strategy to execution that moves from "why" to "what" to "how". Keep your focus on the right point for your role. As a middle manager, for example, your job is to translate the "why" of strategy into the "what" of discreet projects. It isn't your job to figure out how to do those projects.

3. **Focus on what you can control.** No matter how good the plan we make, we are not in control of, or responsible for, everything that happens around us. What we are in control of is how we respond to the impact of these circumstances. Fred Kofman, the author of Conscious Business, likes to ask "how are you response-able?" What is the best action you can take right now?

4. **Be a player, not a victim.** If you begin to feel things like "this isn't fair" or "why didn't they meet the deadline?" you are likely seeing yourself as a victim. How can you move from victim to player? A player works with intention rather than being controlled by external events. They can often find themselves engaged more productively by evoking a coaching stance, being creative to propose solutions, or respectfully challenging the status quo.

5. **Know who you are (and who you aren't).** Keep an inventory of your strengths in mind, and as you plan your work, assign yourself work that fits these strengths. The corollary here is that you also know what you aren't good at, which means finding others who are. For example, I'm aware that I am strong in looking at the new requirements and building solutions to address them. I am poor at (and disinterested in) fixing things already in use, so I always look to have a trouble-shooter around me.
6. **First things first.** If we have a good plan we know the critical items we have to get done. We also know that there will be many demands/requests for our time helping others meet their objectives. We need to stake out time on our calendars for our work first, while still allowing enough time to be supportive of others and to stay in tune with the organization. By doing this, you control which items of lesser priority get your time.
7. **Meetings with yourself.** Make time for yourself to stay on plan. At a minimum, set time aside for a one-hour weekly meeting where you take stock of progress, catalog problems, notice opportunities, and update your plans for the next week, month, or quarter. If taking work home with you is a problem, you might do this daily to "check out" of the office so you know where to pick up in the morning.
8. **Nurture yourself.** You can't do your best if you aren't at your best. Know that you will be most effective if you eat well, focus on physical wellbeing, and get at least seven hours of sleep daily.
9. **Take breaks.** It is very easy to get caught up in work, and being tied to your desk is counterproductive. Taking breaks allows time to release stress and recharge. Get creative: visit a colleague, get some water, go out for a walk in nature, or call your partner. Just get away from work for a few minutes several times a day.
10. **Practice mindfulness.** Introduce the habit of mindfulness and meditation into your day. When we enter a state of meditation, it is just as helpful to our brains and bodies as sleep. Spending 5-10 minutes, a couple of times each day, can create new energy for us.
11. **Avoid "coveting."** Coveting is defined as a yearning to possess or have something. When we do this, we attach our happiness to future outcomes which can provoke feelings of stress in the present about achieving those outcomes. Keep your energy in the present, knowing that good work now leads to good outcomes later.
12. **Don't multitask.** The idea of multi-tasking has somehow been given a badge of honor. The fact is that human minds don't work that way. We are wired to do one thing, and then switch tasks. Switching tasks requires energy to refocus, so the more we do it the more time and energy we waste.

Final thoughts on self-management

Self-management is a critical workplace skill that we can all improve. We're only human, after all. Take some time to consider in what ways you excel at self-management, and where you might improve.

Stay conscious of your thoughts, desires, and feelings as you go through your day, and take note of those you need to work on. Acknowledging the need for improvement is a big step toward attaining it.

Lead in: Self-management is a ***critical workplace skill.*** This article explores a self-management definition, and tips to improve your self-management skills.

Abstract: Self-management is a critical workplace skill that can—and should—be developed. Learn what it is, and how to improve your own self-management skills.

Lecture 11:

Equity theory

According to the equity theory, based on the work of J. Stacy Adams, workers compare the reward potential to the effort they must expend. Equity exists when workers perceive those rewards equal efforts (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 The equity theory.

But employees just don't look at their potential rewards, they look at the rewards of others as well. Inequities occur when people feel that their rewards are inferior to the rewards offered to other persons sharing the same workloads.

Employees who feel they are being treated inequitably may exhibit the following behaviors:

- Put less effort into their jobs
- Ask for better treatment and/or rewards
- Find ways to make their work seem better by comparison
- Transfer or quit their jobs

The equity theory makes a good point: People behave according to their perceptions. What a manager thinks is irrelevant to an employee because the real issue is the way an employee perceives his or her situation. Rewards perceived as equitable should have positive results on job satisfaction and performance; those rewards perceived as inequitable may create job dissatisfaction and cause performance problems.

Every manager needs to ensure that any negative consequences from equity comparisons are avoided, or at least minimized, when rewards are allocated. Informed managers anticipate perceived negative inequities when especially visible rewards, such as pay increases or promotions, are allocated. Instead of letting equity concerns get out of hand, these managers carefully communicate the intended values of rewards being given, clarify the performance appraisals upon which these rewards are based, and suggest appropriate comparison points.