
Managerial Skills

The following are excerpts from Managerial Skills.org
<http://www.managerialskills.org/performance-management/>

Performance management applies not only to the workplace, but also anywhere else that people meet and interact, such as schools, sports teams, community meetings, political and government settings. Performance is generally measured along two functions; behaviour and results. The concept of *performance management* is a relatively new term in management operations. It is generally thought of as appraisals of employees, but has now been applied to organizational and group performance levels. The traditional performance management as applied to individual employees encompasses the wide spectrum of employee performance improvement, development, cross-training, challenging assignments, performance measurement, goal setting, and feedback.

Performance Management Concept

However, as stated previously, performance management is about more than just employees. It can also apply to the different departments (administration, sales, computer support, etc.), business processes (financial management, budgeting, product development, billing), programs implementing new policies and procedures, products or services to internal or external customers, projects (automated billing, moving to a new location), and teams and groups. Performance management is still an evolving concept; technology keeps accelerating innovation and change. Performance management has been defined as “... a strategic and integrated approach to increasing the effectiveness of organizations by improving the performance of people who work in them by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors” (Armstrong and Baron).

At the individual level, evaluating employee performance levels is a multi-level process. A flow chart of performance management applied to the individual would be; establishing performance goals -> developing performance plans -> giving and receiving feedback -> performance appraisals (evaluation) -> rewarding performance ->addressing performance problems -> performance improvement/development plans -> firing employees. Organization and businesses have strategic and operational goals. Performance management protocols and software systems have demonstrated clear improvements in business results. These may include (but not limited

to), increased sales, reduced business costs, creates a motivated workforce (e.g., incentive plans, bonus payments, employee interaction), and improved management control.

Performance Management Goals

Performance management can also be applied to overall organizational goals and monitoring progress towards those goals. This protocol can identify what to improve in organizational operations and systems, usually through the process of assessments. The results of the assessments have to be interpreted through organizational diagnostic models. Assessments in organizational performance management can be implicit and unplanned, or explicit, planned and systematic (usually the best approach is the latter). There are many good assessment tools, such as comprehensive questionnaires, diagnostic models, business checklists, organizational health survey, and even cultural assessments.

One way to conceptualize the performance management cycle is desired results versus actual results. Any discrepancy between the two is the performance improvement zone, or performance problem. Goals and objectives are set, employees are monitored for any necessary feedback and correction, and finally the performance appraisal. Top performers are rewarded, and any areas needing improvement are further developed and enhanced. As mentioned previously, technology is continually altering and improving the work environment. The Human Resources Information System (HRIS) is a good place for the manager to access for updates on data management strategies, as well as the Human Resources Management Systems (HRMS). All of the above are good approaches and strategies for enhancing organizational effectiveness as it relates to performance management.

Management Concepts

Any organization dedicated to achieving or accomplishing specific goals needs to a set of **management concepts**. That organization may be a large business corporation, or it may be something committed to another sphere of activity entirely different, such as the NASA Space Administration. Whatever type of organizational structure is involved, *management concepts* facilitate strategic and/or tactical objectives. Generally very large sums of money, personnel, and resources are at stake, and thus it is critical to have specific management concepts to most effectively utilize, control, and organize those resources.

Key Management Concepts

Although every organization or association is different, there must be some sort of **plan** implemented to achieve specified goals and objectives. Strategic planning can be the overarching management concept that sets the direction the “ship of business” will take. Planning will involve all the various factors that may affect business or organization operations. Internal and external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and even threats are all factored into the planning process and procedures. There are many different areas of planning, such as financial, general assets available, employee pool and selection process, and so on. The management concept of planning should be practical and efficient.

Management Concepts: Organize

Once the overall goals, objectives, and operational strategy have been set forth, the next function of management is to **organize** all the resources to implement the organizational plan. It is true that any business is a series of relationships between groups and departments, employees, outside entities that interact with the organization, etc. Rather than having the management concept of business as a war and battlefield, there should instead be one of harmonization between various components of the business model. Task allocation and information expenditure are some examples of organizing a business venture, undertaking or outfit.

Any organization is comprised of people, and this staff needs **direction**, a third management concept. There must be communication between department heads, plus motivation is required to get the various teams headed in the right direction as set out in the planning stages. Prizes, incentives, commissions, bonuses, even vacation packages can all be motivational tools utilized by managers to effectively direct their employees and staff. A good manager understands the communication process, and thus knows how to problem solve and build positive interpersonal

relationships. Any effective organization, whether operating on the business model or some other function, is really only as good as its workers, staff, technicians, administrators, and managers.

Management Concepts: Control

A final management concept is that of **control**. All the staff and workers of a company, at whatever level of job-function, need to have a clear understanding of the performance standards required of them. Obviously there will be higher standards required for those staff in positions entailing higher levels of responsibility; the mail room delivery person will not have the same job functions as the organization's systems analyst! Whichever the case, management concepts are almost always an ongoing and continuous operation, with the function of maximizing company objectives and goals. The company is truly a series of relationships, and ensuring the smooth flow of those relationships can be challenging at best! Efficient and successful implementation of these management concepts will guarantee company success.

Motivating Employees

Having the right [management skill](#) set is synonymous to developing healthy and professional relationships while **motivating employees** in your workforce. In an ideal world, *motivating employees* would be as easy as giving reassuring words or patting the person in the back. However, as a leader, you must recognize the fact that not all people are motivated the same way. It would also help to take into consideration both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation when dealing with different kinds of people within the organization. An individual with intrinsic motivation is driven by emotions and feelings towards the task at hand. They must have that inner drive without necessarily having tangible rewards. Therefore words of encouragement and recognition will certainly enhance their drive to perform. Others, however, have a different approach. Some have extrinsic motivation – they like to be rewarded with material gifts like an incentives, bonuses, gift cheques and such. Indeed, there are so many things involved and to properly motivate a person, it requires the manager to think of different ways that will boost the morale of their people.

Motivating Employees and Setting Expectations

Some people are not motivated to do their work because they don't know what is expected from them. It would really help for managers to sit down and meet with individuals or a group to help them get a vision for the task or the project at hand. *Motivating employees* doesn't stop with just giving them a task. You must gear them towards that vision and help them see the bigger picture by providing them with good work [management tips](#). It also helps that you develop a good feedback system among peers as well as the management. Good managerial skills involve being able to set a time and the right moment to tell the person if he or she is doing the task right. This should be done privately and sensitively so that the person does not feel attacked in any way.

Rewards and Recognition

On most occasions people look for more visible rewards for their hard work. And the next time you give them a task, this will motivate them to perform even better. Rewards and recognition may come in different forms. It would really depend on the need of the person, the resources of the organization and the level of accomplishment on a given project or task. This may come in the form of a promotion, monetary rewards, gifts, and special awards. By motivating employees in this manner throughout the many [project management steps](#), you may be giving them just the extra incentive they need in order to accomplish more.

Mistakes and Consequences

It would be also good to lay down the cards to your employees in terms of committing mistakes, violations and their consequences. Punishment should not be used as a term for such things. It is important that you emphasize that it is all about discipline and setting a standard for all employees to try to reach.

Establish a Climate of Trust While Motivating Employees

When people trust their leaders, they are more motivated to work hard. Likewise, when they know that their leaders trust them, they also feel driven to perform at their best and prove that you are right in giving them your trust. It is all about incorporating the right managerial skills when motivating employees to foster this kind of environment within your organization.

Negotiation Skills

Negotiation is simply the process of a discussion to reach some sort of agreement, especially as it relates to matters of business or state; **negotiation skills** are the skills most apt or efficacious in reaching the agreement you desire (or your company or organization), rather than the opposition. Other synonyms for negotiation are; wheeling and dealing, arbitrage, bargaining, debate, transaction, mediation and settlement. But *negotiation skills* are not limited to business or ambassadors and secretaries of state; we negotiate in our everyday lives when we decide what restaurant to go to, what movie to watch, what to do on a rainy day. Just watch young children “negotiate” which TV channel they are going to watch!

Good Negotiation Skills

In fact, strength and force could be considered a negotiation skill. Many times when there is a hostile take-over in the business world, the company or corporation with superior leverage, more market shares, greater cash flow, etc., can negotiate a better bargain in the company buy-out due to a stronger financial base. However, in real life, an equitable negotiation may in fact be more of a compromise, rather than “I’m bigger and badder than you are, eat it!” There are such things as business ethics. Unfortunately, if one side in the negotiation determines that they will never again do any business with a particular company or organization, they may indeed “play hardball”, which is certainly a legitimate negotiation skill. The classic movie “Wall Street” exemplifies some of the ruthless negotiation skills utilized by banking financiers.

Compromising in Negotiation Skills

Most people react negatively to ultimatums and inflexibility (“Take it or leave it.”), so a more productive negotiation skill is compromise, give and take, give a little, gain a lot. Think more like a lawyer, rather than a corporate predator, such as portrayed in the movie “American Psychopath”. Successful negotiation will be a series of trade-offs and exchanging acceptable alternatives. It’s about building relationships with those you are negotiating with. You want it to be more of a “win-win” result, so that all parties are positive at the outcome; you got what you wanted, I got what I wanted, we are both happy and satisfied.

Phases of Negotiation Skills

The expert negotiator does not have to hypnotize or swindle the opposition. However, such an individual will have superior negotiation skills such that they consistently get the best possible deal, all the time, even under less-than-ideal circumstances. It can be theorized that successful negotiators follow a four step process of; preparation, information exchange, explicit bargaining, and commitment. There is a pre-bargaining phase, bargaining phase, and closure phase.

Understanding each of these phases is critical to successful negotiation and implementing the different negotiation skills required.

There are so many different negotiation skill sets that can be developed; lines of communication, listening carefully, attitude, cooperation, planning, goals, concession, mediation, and so on. In the end, what you really want is a mutually acceptable compromise where both sides get as much as they want. That is the ideal; if the other person must give way, then some sort of compensation should be offered. Over time, through hard-won experience, your negotiation skills may lend you the title of Master Negotiator!

Dealing with Difficult Team Members

Being a leader, for all the benefits that come along with the title, will definitely take a toll on you if you are not prepared for it especially when you **deal with difficult people**. It can be quite hard to manage a group of people and to inspire them to do their best for the business, and even harder to straighten out any wrinkle that may come up among the relationships of your subordinates. If you are lucky enough to be in this position of power, you need to arm yourself with the necessary [leadership competencies](#) that will allow you to deal with difficult team members. Here are some guidelines that you may use when the need arises, both in an effort to make the team function as efficient as it can without losing your edge as the leader.

Explain the Situation When You Deal With Difficult People

First and foremost, you need to be able to effectively explain the situation to the person who is involved when you *deal with difficult people*. If you find that you have been receiving various forms of resistance from certain members of the group, then you need to be able to talk to these people and explain to them, in the nicest possible manner, how their attitude is detrimental to the group's success. Also point out how their attitude has been making it harder for the other members of the groups to perform their best as well. As long as you manage to use the right approach in addressing those who are involved, you should be able to gear them to change their points of view, which would make it exponentially better to work with them. Be firm and be authoritative, but avoid using your position as the leader to make another person feel ill at ease.

Do You Have The Right Skills?

Make sure that you develop the necessary leadership skills that will allow you to assess whatever reason may be causing certain members of the group to be difficult to work with. Use of [performance reviews](#) can be effective in determining specific problems and finding solutions. For all you know, you may be lacking certain management techniques that would have kept them in their place. If you are absolutely confident that you are doing everything that you can to keep the group running smoothly, then begin to assess the over-all business environment. If you find that the environment is as conducive for business as possible, you can assume that there are certain problems that these members are experiencing, which you should be able to find when you deal with difficult people on your team.

Game Plan When You Deal With Difficult People

Finally, make sure that you hatch a good plan that will allow you to follow through any problematic case and to find whether the requested improvements in action or behaviour are being performed. If you find that your team members are still continuously causing any form of resistance to your leadership, despite your efforts of trying to understand them, then it may be time to provide some sort of disciplinary action. Having good [leadership skills](#) will require you to discipline the members of your group without causing them to feel alienated and this requires great [management integrity](#). Find the right consequences for team members, most preferably one that will make them much easier to work with in the future so that you don't have to deal with difficult people on your team.
