



Cruise ship: compulsory crew drill



Before commencing to read this chapter, what do YOU immediately think of when you hear the term 'management'?

The management of people

The central underlying feature of organisational behaviour is concerned with the study of behaviour of people within an organisational setting. Although often studied as separate subject areas, there is a substantial interrelationship between organisational behaviour and management. As discussed in **Chapter 1**, however much of a cliché, it is still an inescapable fact that people are the main resource of any organisation. Without its members, an organisation is nothing and only as good as the people who work within it.

Whatever the individual's orientations to work, the nature of the work organisation or cultural influences, efforts of members of the organisation need to be directed and guided towards the achievement of its goals. It is by the processes of management, execution of work and co-ordinated efforts of their members that activities of the organisation are carried out. The efficiency and performance of staff, and their commitment to the objectives of the organisation, are fostered by good human relationships at work.

In today's increasingly dynamic, global and competitive environment understanding human behaviour at work and effective management of the people resource is even more important for organisational survival and success. **Management** is fundamental to the effective operation of work organisations. It is essentially an integrating activity that should help reconcile needs of people at work with requirements of the organisation (see **Figure 10.1**).

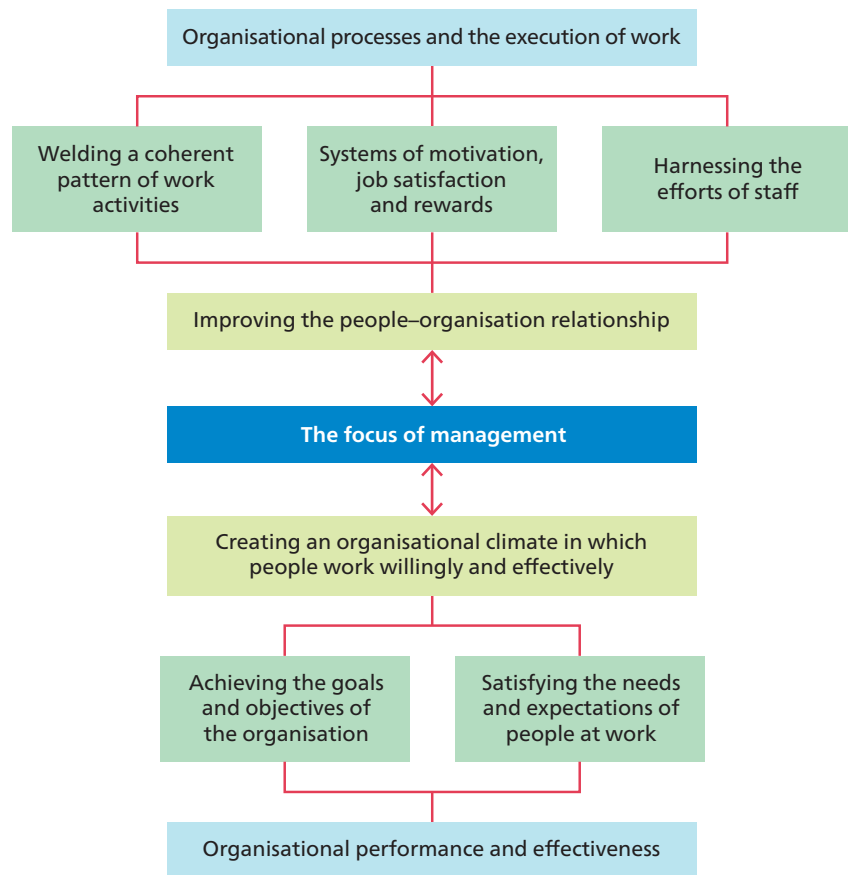


Figure 10.1 The central focus of management

Who is a manager?

In certain respects everyone could be regarded as a manager. We all manage our own time and everyone has some choice whether or not to do something, and some control, however slight, over the planning and organisation of their work. However, we are concerned with management as involving people looking beyond themselves and exercising formal authority and/or influence over the activities and performance of other people. Even within a work organisation you cannot necessarily identify a manager by what a person is called or their job title.

In some organisations there is a liberal use of the title ‘manager’ in an apparent attempt to enhance the status and morale of staff. As a result, there are a number of people whose job title includes the term manager but who, in reality, are not performing the full activities of a manager. Yet there are many people whose job title does not include the term manager but who, in terms of the activities they undertake and the responsibility and influence they exercise, may be very much a manager.

For our purposes, therefore, we can regard management as:

- taking place within a structured organisational setting with prescribed roles;
- directed towards the attainment of aims and objectives;
- achieved through the efforts of other people; and
- using systems and procedures.

At its most basic, management may be viewed as ‘making things happen’. Recall also the discussion on the nature of leadership (**Chapter 9**). Whereas leaders are not necessarily managers it could be argued that all managers should be leaders.

It is the responsibility of management to manage. But organisations can achieve their aims and objectives only through the co-ordinated efforts of their members. This involves good people management. A heavy responsibility is placed on managers. Attention must be given to the work environment and appropriate systems of motivation, job satisfaction and rewards. The activity of management also takes place within the broader context of the organisational setting, external environment and cultural norms. There are also variations in systems and styles of management and in the choice of managerial behaviour. **Figure 10.2** shows a basic five-stage framework of study.

What is management?

Management is a generic term and subject to many interpretations. It is also a complex and discursive subject with contrasting ideas on the meaning of management and the work of a manager.¹ The nature of management is variable. It is not a separate, discrete function but relates to all activities of the organisation. It cannot be departmentalised or centralised. Management is seen best, therefore, as a process common to all other functions carried out within the organisation. However, ‘management’ is not homogeneous. It takes place in different ways and at different levels of the organisation.

Significance of cultural influences

Schneider and Barsoux contend that trying to define the meaning of management shows up differences in beliefs and values. Cultural influences are a significant feature of management. Managers in some countries might have more concern for the ‘spiritual’ aspects of management, while in others there would be greater

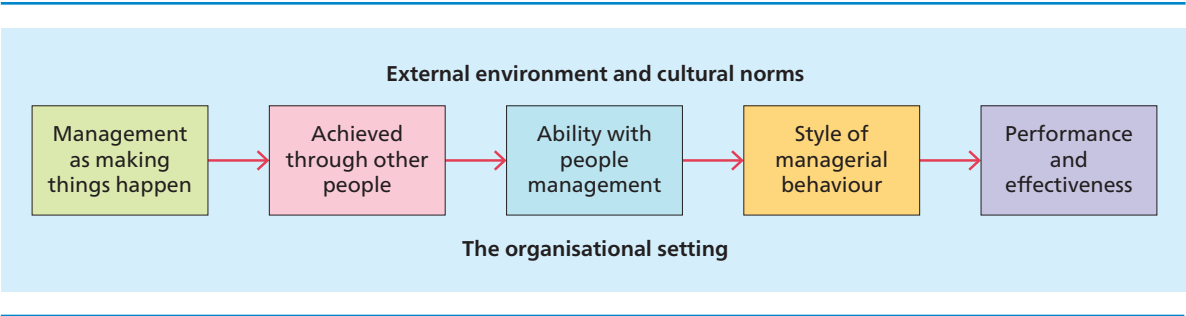


Figure 10.2 A basic framework of study

concern for the business sense. Developing people through work could be seen as an intrusion of privacy, and others may perceive empowerment as another name for manipulation.² According to *Francesco and Gold*, if international managers are to perform successfully in the global economy they need to understand the effects of different cultures on organisational behaviour. Reliance on theories developed in one culture is not sufficient.³

Managers born or made? Management an art or science?

There is frequent debate about whether managers are born or made or whether management is an art or a science. Briefly, the important point is neither are mutually exclusive alternatives. Even if there are certain innate qualities that make for a potentially good manager, these natural talents must be encouraged and developed through proper guidance, education and training, and planned experience. Clearly, management must always be something of an art, especially in so far as it involves practice, personal judgement and dealing with people. However, it still requires knowledge of the fundamentals of management, and competence in the application of specific skills and techniques – as illustrated, for example, with developments in information technology.

The discussion of management as an art or a science is developed by *Watson* who suggests that in order to make sense of the complex and highly ambiguous situations in which managers find themselves, management can be viewed not only as both art and science but also as magic and politics (see Figure 10.3).⁴

Dib provides an account of hearing contrasting views on management as a science. One view is YES – there is clearly science in management although a purely scientific approach omits human beings as the most important factor. Management is about the application of knowledge. 'The most successful managers are those who use scientific models, theories and concepts, and then apply them using their own style, experience and personality.' The other view is NO – both management and science apply and extend our knowledge but management needs more than just observations and experiments and needs to be based on practice, reflection and action. Management is too eclectic to be a science itself. 'The very nature of management means that without applying and reflecting upon the practice of management we will be more inclined to measure than to take action'.⁵

Thinking about management at university level

Foppen questions the relationship between management practice and education, and whether management hasn't always been illusory. However, *Foppen* emphasises the importance of management performance.

Management is of pivotal importance for modern society. It is for this reason that, no matter what, thinking about management, certainly at university level, is of great relevance to management practice. So apart from the question of whether management's claim that it is indispensable is really valid or not, the fact that practically everyone believes it is, is what counts.⁶

Activities of management

A common approach to viewing the nature of management, favoured by the classical writers such as *Henri Fayol* was the search for common activities