



Decision making is a critical function of management and each decision may have multiple ramifications. Choose wisely.

Rawpixel.com/Shutterstock

**Middle managers** are akin to department heads; they fall between frontline managers and senior management. They are responsible for short- to medium-range plans, and they establish goals and objectives to meet these goals. They manage the work of frontline managers.

**Senior managers** are responsible for making medium- to long-range plans and for establishing goals and strategies to meet those goals.

## Managerial Skills

The key management skills include: planning, organizing, decision making, communicating, human resources management, and controlling. These skills are interdependent and frequently happen simultaneously or at least overlap.

Hospitality companies exist to serve a particular purpose, and someone has to determine the vision, mission, and strategies to reach or exceed the goals. That someone is management. The **planning** function involves setting the company's goals and developing plans to meet or exceed those goals. Once plans are complete, **organizing** is undertaken to decide what needs to be done, who will do it, how the tasks will be grouped, who reports to whom, and who makes decisions.

**Decision making** depends on the quality of the decision making and can determine the success or failure of a project. Decision making includes determining the vision, mission, goals, and objectives of the project, which can include the entire organization. Decision making includes scheduling employees, determining what to put on the menu, and responding to guest needs.

responsibilities fall to the middle and supervisory management. In hospitality lingo, one would not expect the president of Marriott Hotels to pull a shift behind the bar at the local Marriott hotel. Although capable, his time and expertise are better used in shaping the company's future. Thus, although the head bartender and the company president may both be considered management, they require different skills to be effective and efficient managers.

## The Function of Management

**Management** is what managers do: plan, organize, make decisions, communicate, motivate, and control.

*Management* is defined as "coordinating and overseeing the activities of others so that their activities are completed efficiently and effectively."<sup>8</sup> In looking at this statement, you can see that the functions of management and working with and through the work of others are ongoing. Additionally, management involves getting efficient and effective results.

**Efficiency** is getting the most done with the fewest number of inputs. Managers work with scarce resources: money, people, time, and equipment. You can imagine the rush in the kitchen to be ready for a meal service. But it's not enough to just be efficient; management is also about being effective. **Effectiveness** is "doing the right thing." As an example, cooks do the right thing when they cook the food correctly according to the recipe and have it ready when needed.

The changing nature of organizations and work has, in many hospitality organizations, blurred the lines of distinction between managers and nonmanagerial employees. Many traditional jobs now include managerial activities, especially when teams are used. For instance, team members often develop plans, make decisions, and monitor their own performance. This is the case with total quality management.

So, how do we define who managers are? A manager is someone who works with and manages others' activities to accomplish organizational goals in an efficient and effective way. Managers are often classified into three levels: **frontline managers** are the entry level managers; they manage the work of line employees. They may also be called supervisors. A front-office supervisor, for example, takes charge of a shift and supervises the guest service agents on the shift.

---

**Communication** with individuals and groups are required to get the job done. **Human resources** involves attracting and retaining the best employees and creating an environment that employees desire to work in.

**Controlling** is the final management skill that brings everything full circle. After the goals are set and the plans formulated, management then organizes, communicates, and motivates the resources required to complete the job. Controlling includes the setting of standards and comparing actual results with these standards. If significant deviations are seen, they are investigated and corrective action is taken to get performance back on target. This scientific process of monitoring, comparing, and correcting is the controlling function and is necessary to ensure that there are no surprises and that no one is guessing what should be done.

## Additional Skills

In addition to the skills of forecasting, planning, organizing, communicating, motivating, and controlling, managers also need other major skills: conceptual, interpersonal, and technical.

Conceptual skills enable senior managers to view the corporation as a complete entity and yet understand how it is split into departments to achieve specific goals. Conceptual skills allow a senior manager to view the entire corporation, especially the interdependence of the various departments.

Managers need to lead, influence, communicate, supervise, coach, and evaluate employees' performances. This necessitates a high level of interpersonal human skills. The abilities to build teams and work with others are human skills that successful managers need to cultivate.

Managers need to have the technical skills required to understand and use modern techniques, methods, equipment, and procedures. These skills are more important for lower levels of management. As a manager rises through the ranks, the need for technical skills decreases and the need for conceptual skills increases.

Managers need to realize the critical importance of the corporate philosophy, culture, and values, and of a corporation's mission, goals, and objectives.

## The Manager's Changing Role

Managers may have subordinates, but today's successful manager is considered more of a team leader or coach. There are, of course, other ways to describe what managers do. For example, managers don't just plan, organize, make decisions, communicate, motivate, and control. They wear a variety of hats, including the following:

- **FIGUREHEAD.** Every manager spends some time performing ceremonial duties. For example, the president of a corporation might have to greet important business guests or clients or represent the corporation by attending dinners.
- **LEADER.** Every manager should be a leader, coaching, motivating, and encouraging employees.
- **LIAISON.** Managers spend a lot of time in contact with people in other departments both within the organization and externally. For example, the sales manager liaises with the rooms division director.
- **SPOKESPERSON.** The manager is often a spokesperson for the organization. For example, a manager may host a college class visit to the property.
- **NEGOTIATOR.** Managers spend a lot of time negotiating. For example, the head of a company along with qualified lawyers may negotiate with a union representative to establish wages and benefits for employees.

These roles, together with the management functions, encompass what managers do. Remember, managers need to be many things—often in quick succession—even to the point of wearing two or more hats at once.

Today's managers face not only a more demanding and increasingly complex world, but also a more dynamic and interdependent one. The "global village" is a reality, and sociocultural traditions and values must be understood and diversity respected and encouraged by future managers. The two most important changes going on right now are the technological advances and the internationalization of hospitality and tourism. The extent to which you as a future leader/ manager can master these events and functions will determine your future.

The manager's role is not only internal but also external. For instance, a manager must be responsive to market needs and income generation. Managers must continually strive to be innovative by realizing efficiencies in their respective areas of responsibility through process improvement—for example, by determining how to reduce long check-in lines at airports and hotels. Some companies use innovative and creative ways to streamline the check-in procedures to make the process a more worthwhile experience for the guests. Disney, for instance, uses the creative approach of sending Mickey and the gang to entertain the guests while they stand in line.

## Distinction between Leadership and Management

**Managing** is the formal process in which organizational objectives are achieved through the efforts of subordinates.

*Leading* is the process by which a person with vision is able to influence the behavior of others in some desired way.

Although managers have power by virtue of the positions they hold, organizations seek managers who are leaders by virtue of their personalities, their experience, and so on. The differences between management and leadership can be illustrated as follows:

### Managers

- Work in the system
- React
- Control risks
- Enforce organizational rules
- Seek and then follow direction
- Control people by pushing them in the right direction
- Coordinate effort

#### Leaders

- Work on the system
- Create opportunities
- Seek opportunities
- Change organizational rules
- Provide a vision to believe in and strategic alignment
- Motivate people by satisfying basic human needs
- Inspire achievement and energize people<sup>9</sup>