

Under directing you might logically place an entire about management activities. The foregoing quarter make clear, for instance, that people who are most successful at leading. We can direct without orders; we can fill leadership positions (although perhaps out being true leaders. However, directing is more truly lead.

Motivation is also related to leading in this consistency. Related in turn to motivation and leadership is all of the can be given to anyone in a position of authority over organizational unit. Directing in some way touches on process, or technique ever brought into play in getting people.

COORDINATING

It has been suggested that coordinating—the blending of events—might legitimately be considered a part of directing. We are considering it separately, if only briefly, for importance to the supervisor.

A dinner of five magnificent courses will not be particularly impressive if the courses are scattered over two or three hours, the dessert arrives last. Likewise, an essential part of management is not the simple fact of their performance but rather their relative to other activities. Thus we approach a potential that involve coordination with other tasks.

In healthcare activities it is always essential that employees, and services all be combined in the right relationship, throughout the department, and among the departments of a healthcare organization. It makes little sense to have a patient who is soon to be given tests requiring little sense to place a patient who is scheduled for an X-ray before the department is ready to receive the patient. In healthcare activities it is always essential that employees, and services all be combined in the right relationship, throughout the department, and among the departments of a healthcare organization. It makes little sense to have a patient who is soon to be given tests requiring little sense to place a patient who is scheduled for an X-ray before the department is ready to receive the patient. In healthcare activities it is always essential that employees, and services all be combined in the right relationship, throughout the department, and among the departments of a healthcare organization. It makes little sense to have a patient who is soon to be given tests requiring little sense to place a patient who is scheduled for an X-ray before the department is ready to receive the patient.

CONTROLLING

Plans rarely come to realization exactly as intended. Moment changes are required in pursuit of departmental progress against objectives. The terms most commonly used are *follow-up* and *action*. We take note of how things are going and make new decisions accordingly. Controlling is often the most neglected of the basic management functions. The problems of limited or nonexistent follow-up are especially in terms of the strength of follow-up on important decisions.

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Generally, the first elements of this list occupy, or should occupy, a proportionately larger amount of the time of people in the upper levels of management. We said "should" because top managers and middle managers are frequently prone to continue behaving in the manner of first-line supervisors; that is, they spend significant amounts of time dealing with day-to-day operating problems.

The basic management functions of planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling were presented in a given order for an important reason.

EMPHASIS

others. In any of the basic management functions occur in isolation from the other functions. Only sometimes, as in long-range strategic planning, for example, do any of the basic management functions occur in isolation from the other functions. This illustrates the frequently cyclic nature of the management functions; it also suggests that usually two or more basic functions are exercised together. Controlling, described as follow-up and correction, ordinarily leads to more planning; sometimes more organizing and coordinating, and always more directing. Controlling is described as follow-up and correction, ordinarily leads to more planning; sometimes more organizing and coordinating, and always more directing. This illustrates the frequently cyclic nature of the management functions; it also suggests that usually two or more basic functions are exercised together. Only sometimes, as in long-range strategic planning, for example, do any of the basic management functions occur in isolation from the other functions.

Lydia Michaels also engaged in a form of controlling and also in providing input for future planning when she suggested strengthening the hospital's disaster plan. What was learned from one disaster situation could then enhance the hospital's ability to better cope with future disasters.

Lydia Michaels implemented the emergency staffing alternative she had planned for earlier. More controlling, as well as directing, occurred in placing young Miss Carson in the acting head nurse role. And directing was in the forefront when Lydia Michaels implemented the emergency staffing alternative she had planned for earlier.

When Mrs. Michaels pulls from her float pool and locates additional nurses with emergency department experience, she is engaged in both controlling—literally, follow-up and correction—and coordinating. It should be immediately evident that neither coordinating nor controlling can be accomplished without directing as well. By not personally stepping into the vacancy created by the absence of the large unit's head nurse, she avoided a working trap of sorts and kept herself available for continued coordinating and controlling, which were highly likely to be necessary given the day's circumstances.

In preparing to bring the new beds into service, Lydia Michaels was actively involved in both planning and organizing in determining what needed to be done for the expansion and in establishing projected staff levels and how the additional staff would be phased in as needs grew. Her master staffing plan activity was primarily organizing, but this role included planning in that she determined how they might compensate for staff shortages with a float pool.

Returning to "A Tough Day for the New Manager," there are a number of observations that can be made about Mrs. Michaels's hectic Tuesday relative to the basic management functions.

THE MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN ACTION

Further during the consideration of delegation and, later, of supervisory decision making.

when they should be leaving most such problems to the lower management levels. Indeed, managers at all levels in all organizations are frequently prone to "crisis management," expending most of their time and effort in reacting to present events and conditions rather than looking ahead.

Because of the nature of departmental supervision, the first-line supervisor will concentrate more on activities toward the bottom of the list of basic management functions. It is the lower echelons of management who are rightly more concerned with the problems of the moment. Those at the top of the organization should be more concerned with where the organization is going relative to its long-range goals and should be considering courses of action required to support those goals.

However, planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling are all part of every manager's job. In a large healthcare organization, top management may spend 70 percent or 80 percent of the time involved in broad-based planning and organizing. In the same organization, except for the regular practice of delegation (a part of organizing), the first-line supervisor may spend 80 percent or 90 percent of the time on a combination of directing, coordinating, and controlling (Figure 4-1).

How you may see your approach to the basic management functions will be largely influenced by the approach you have taken to the job since you have been supervisor. Much of what you do has been determined by the concept of management you held before you became a supervisor, and by whether or not you received any solid orientation to supervision.

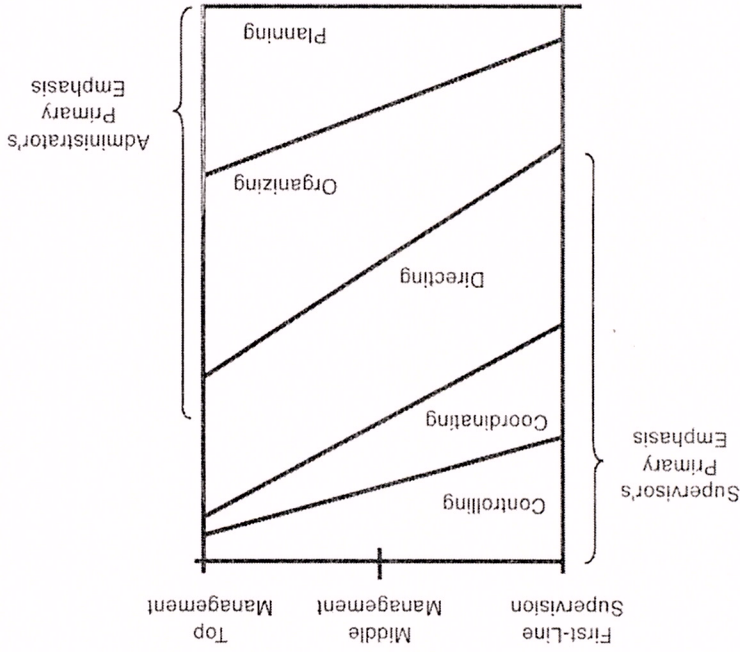


Figure 4-1 Typical Shift in Emphasis on Basic Management Functions from Lowest to Highest Levels of Management

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1. Describe the fundamental differences between line and staff.
2. Provide an example of the use of the word manager as a generic term and an example of its use as a specific organizational title.
3. Considering how the terms supervisor and manager may be perceived, which would you rather be called and why?
4. As simply as you can properly express it, what is the single defining characteristic of planning?
5. Which of the basic management functions gets the most of the supervisor's attention? Why?
6. What are the primary characteristics of the basic management function of controlling?
7. Why is it claimed that the management functions of planning and organizing consume—or at least should consume—more of top managers' time than of the first-line supervisor's time?
8. Some variations on the basic management functions name "leading" as one of the functions. Where do you place "leading" within "planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, and controlling" and why does it belong there?
9. Define and describe "delegation" within the context of the basic management function of organizing.
10. Although everyone will concede the importance of planning, why is it that planning is often ignored by some supervisors?

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

In discussing the basic management functions we necessarily focus on a number of practices that are often described as management processes. In doing so we run the risk of creating an impression that management is mostly process oriented. We might be tempted to believe that to be successful in management we need to learn a number of processes and then apply the appropriate processes to circumstances as they arise.

It is indeed true that planning and organizing are processes. Controlling, delegating, and leading (to name some fairly broad functions) are processes, too, as are controlling absenteeism, scheduling, and interviewing (to name some more narrowly delineated functions). And we could name dozens of other so-called functions or techniques that are processes.

With all of this seeming emphasis on functions and processes, it is appropriate to remind ourselves that the central focus of management is *people*. We might spend a great deal of time learning management processes—most management education is in fact heavily weighted toward process—and never become successful supervisors. In the long run, success at any level of management will depend on one's ability to work effectively with people.

PROCESSES VERSUS PEOPLE

