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Direction

Direction is an important function of management. Its main objective is to get the work done through others for the attainment of organizational goals. For this purpose, the manager has to direct and guide the employees, otherwise it is difficult to run the organization. Thus, Direction/Operation includes giving instructions to the subordinates, motivating and giving good leadership to the subordinates. Hence, **George. R. Terry** has called direction, as 'actuating'.

Concept of Direction Or

Meaning and Definition of Direction

Generally, direction/operation means giving orders. But in terms of management function, direction means instructing, guiding leadership, supervising and motivating the subordinates to function towards the attainment of organizational objectives.

Meaning and concept of direction, can be stated on the basis of the following definitions :

1. In the words of **Ernest Dale**, "Direction is telling people what to do and seeing what they do to the best of their ability."
2. According to **Marshall E. Dimock**, "The heart of administration is the directing function which involves determining the course, giving orders and instructions, providing the dynamic leadership."
3. According to **Urwick and Brech**, "Direction is the guidance, the inspiration, the leadership of those men and women who constitute the real core of the responsibilities of management".
4. According to **Theo Haimann**, "Direction consists of the processes and the techniques utilized in issuing instructions and making certain, that the operations are carried on as originally planned."
5. According to **Koont'z and O'Donnel**, "Direction is a complex function that includes all those actions which are designed to encourage subordinates to work effectively and efficiently in both, the short and long run."

Thus, direction means the function which is performed by the manager for the attainment of organizational objectives and it includes instructing, guiding, motivating and supervising employees.

Characteristics or Nature of Direction

After study and assessment of all the above definitions, following characteristics of direction are highlighted :

1. **An Important and Separate Function of Management :** Direction is an important and separate function among managerial works. Without direction staffing, planning and organizing functions are useless. Direction is like a starter.
2. **Pervasive Activity :** Direction is performed in all forms of organization, whether big or small, it is a function performed at all levels of management. This function is also required in all spheres, like political, religious, cultural and others.
3. **Consists of many Activities :** Direction consists of many activities which includes instructing, guiding, motivating, supervising the employees etc.
4. **Continuous and Dynamic Process :** Direction is a continuous process, as it continues till the organization runs. The manager has to continuously guide and instruct the subordinates. It is a dynamic process too, because as per circumstances and business environment its policy, techniques and concepts changes.
5. **Wide Function :** It is very wide in its scope as it does not include only guiding the organization instructing the employees but also in motivating, leading, communicating and supervising the employees.
6. **Flow of Direction :** Direction flows from the top to the bottom, because a superior always guides, instructs, and supervises the subordinates. It never flows from bottom to top.
7. **Management in Action :** This function of management brings the management into action. It basically mobilizes the human and physical resources for the attainment of organizational objectives.
8. **Connecting and Co-ordinating function :** It is a connecting and co-ordinating function as an organization which cannot attain its objectives just by making the plans, but the execution of the plans is important for success. Direction is a function of management co-ordinates the plans with the actual performance and the manager supervises and directs his subordinates to work towards the attainment of organizational objectives.
9. **Development of People :** Direction guides and instructs the subordinates which gradually make them learn to work on their own, thus, it develops the ability of people.
10. **Balancing in Two-fold Objectives :** Direction has a two-fold objectives. The first being achieving a organizational objectives and the second is to attain the personal objectives of the employees. Direction with proper leadership may create a balance in the attainment of both the objectives.

- 11. Creates Work Environment :** Direction creates a healthy working environment for the employees, which motivates them to work with own desire to the best of their capacity for the attainment of organizational goals.
- 12. A Work Related to Human Resources :** Direction has a direct relation with human resources. Thus, the leader instructs, guides and supervises the subordinates and motivates for the attainment of organizational objectives.

Principles of Direction

Or

Essentials of Effective Direction

Direction is related to people. It not only develops the persons, but has direct relation with them. However, it is a difficult task to understand them. Hence, following few principles are required to be kept in view to understand, guide and direct.

- 1. Principle of Harmony of Objectives :** Every person in the enterprise endeavours to achieve some personal objective. On the contrary, the objective of the enterprise is to earn the profits. Hence, an efficient Director should make efforts to establish co-ordination among both these objectives. That is why, Fayol has said, "The objectives of the enterprise should be given the priority over the personal objectives."
- 2. Principle of Maximum Individual Contribution :** Organization is a collective effort. Its objectives can be fulfilled, only through maximum efforts, labour, interest and devotion of all its officers and the employees. Hence, the managers should adopt such technique or method of direction, which may induce every subordinate employee to make maximum possible contribution towards achievement of group objectives.
- 3. Principle of Unity of Command :** This principle states that at a time, the subordinate employee should get orders, only from one boss. This is an accepted principle that no subordinate can efficiently comply the orders of more than one officer, at a time. If this principle is violated, situation like duplication of orders, differences, mutual rift, violation of instruction and disorder in the organization, etc. may emerge and devotion of the employees also gets disturbed.
- 4. Principle of Direct Supervision :** According to this principle, the managers should themselves supervise work of their subordinate, during course of work. Their style of supervision should include elements of being liberal and co-operative, so that they may well understand the problems of their subordinates and solve these problems, amicably, so as to boost up the morale and trust of the employees.
- 5. Principle of Effective Communication :** According to principle of effective communication, direction can be made effective only in the atmosphere of 'Mutual Trust'. Hence, it is essential that :
 - (i) The managers should ensure that the concerned persons have well understood the policies, functions, plans and the responsibilities,
 - (ii) The managers should understand that upwards communication is also as important, as is the downwards communication,

- (iii) The managers should develop two way communication method of exchange,
- (iv) It should also be ensured that the communication is clear, understandable, attractive and prompt, and
- (v) It should be kept in view that the message to be communicated is complete and understandable.

6. Principle of Effective Leadership : The objective of direction is to get the work from the subordinates. However, it is possible, only when the officer has the quality of good leadership. Hence, for effective leadership, an officer as a leader, should properly guide and advise his subordinates, regarding their work and personality. It will enable him to secure the trust of his subordinates and get the desired work from them.

7. Principle of Good Human Relations : Good human relations facilitate the functions of direction. According to this principle, an officer should humanely behave with his equal ranking officers and employees. As a result, he will be able to secure their co-operation, they will have faith in him and the managers will be able to easily provide guidance to their subordinates in friendly atmosphere.

8. Principle of Continuous Awareness : According to this principle, the determination of the policies and passing of orders is not the end of the duties of the managers. Rather, they should always remain alert and conscious to see, whether the employees are working, in accordance with the policies, or not ? If they are working against the instruction, corrective actions should be promptly taken.

9. Principle of Supplemental Use of Informal Organization : Informal organizations and relations are generally not proper, from the view of the management, since at times, they spread false news and rumours and also encourages the employees to disobey the instructions of their officers. However, the efficient managers should use the informal organization as a support system and the supplemental to the formal organization. It will add to the satisfaction of the employees and mutual co-operation will develop. Thus, the compliance of orders and directions may be made, with the help of this principle.

10. Principle of Continuous Follow-up : Direction is a continuous process. Hence, this principle lays emphasis on the need of continuous follow-up of the implementation of the orders-directions given for effective direction. Efforts should be made to obviate the mistakes and deficiencies and improvements should be enforced, quite continuously. Besides, the managers should be continuously conscious towards the activities of their subordinates.

11. Principle of Participative Decision-making : Participation of the individuals and the groups in decision-making process is essential for effective direction. For that, their ideas and suggestions should be invited and necessary advice may also be taken. Besides that, the decisions may be taken at the operational levels or around those levels to enhance the quality of the decisions.

12. Principle of Effective Control : Direction cannot be fully effective without the existence of competent, refined informations and adjusted control mechanism for surveillance regarding the behaviour and the performance. It makes

Importance of Direction

Direction is one of the most important functions of management, because in the absence of proper direction, other functions of management i.e. planning, organizing, staffing etc. cannot be successful. Thus, **Marshall E. Dimock** has said that "The heart of administration is the directing function which involves determining the course, giving orders and instructions, providing the dynamic leadership".

Koontz and O'Donnel have said that "Direction is related to work performance. A person can make plans, can do staffing function but he may not achieve success till the time he instructs his subordinates what has to be done. In short, the importance of direction can be explained as follows :

1. Easy Attainment of Objectives : Direction helps to achieve the personal objectives of the employees also, alongwith achieving the organizational objectives, since :

- (a) It tells the people what they are supposed to do.
- (b) It provides leadership to the employees by supervising and motivating them, so that they may contribute towards achieving the objectives.
- (c) Prepares a healthy environment to achieve organizational objectives.
- (d) Improves the efficiency of the employees by issuing instructions and giving them support.
- (e) Maintains co-ordination between the organizational and personal objectives.

2. Accomplishment of Work : Explaining the importance of direction, **Theo Haiman** has said that as a car cannot run without an accelerator, in the same way without direction the subordinates cannot operate their work. Thus, without direction or guidance, the subordinates may not work.

3. Success of Plans : Direction's main objective is to get the work done through subordinates. Thus, its function explains how and what work has to be done by the employees. This function motivates, supervises and directs the employees to work towards the attainment of organizational objectives. It has been aptly stated by a scholar, "Full utilization of organization, relations and competent employees is possible, only by efficient direction."

4. Basis of Success of Business Organization : It is the basis of success of business organization. It gives instructions and guidance to the employees stating how the work has to be done to accomplish the task. It is just like a strategy for the war, as the warriors are instructed by the captain that how they have to fight to achieve success.

5. Best Utilization of Resources : It helps in the best utilization of resources, as it bridges the gap between planning and actual execution and gives necessary

guidance to the subordinates which is necessary for the achievement of organizational goals.

6. Obtaining Knowledge of Human-being : Direction is managerial work. It is human oriented. Direction helps the managers to know various human beings and their aspirations, their emotions, needs and capabilities. As without knowing the subordinates as human being direction function is not possible. Thus, the manager first knows about the subordinates, then perform the function of direction.

7. Easy Management of Changes : In practice, most of the persons oppose the changes. However, due to several reasons, enforcing change is essential, as well. Direction being a dynamic and continuous process, it is helpful in easily managing the changes, as follows :

- (i) Change may be executed by developing effective communication and dynamic system.
- (ii) The change may be made easy.
- (iii) Resistance, doubts and apprehensions towards the changes may be obviated, by way of proper guidance and motivation.
- (iv) The thoughts and behaviour of people may be made favourable to the changes through suitable motivation and leadership, which may not be possible by orders and directions.

As a result of all these, people not only accept the changes, rather they start taking interest also, in the new changes.

8. Establishment of Effective Co-ordination : It helps to establish co-ordination among the various departments and their work, as it provides effective guidance and leadership. At the same time, it helps to keep good relations with the external parties of business like customers, suppliers of goods, government etc.

9. Improvement in Work Efficiency : Direction motivates the employees to contribute to the best of their capabilities for the attainment of organizational goals. This is possible because of effective guidance, leadership and communication. This results in improving worker's efficiency.

10. Helps in Integrating Various Functions of Management : Direction is a link between management and its other functions. The primary functions of management are planning, organizing, staffing and the last is controlling. Direction helps in maintaining co-ordination among all functions of management. In the absence of direction function other functions of management are a failure.

11. Development of Managerial Ability : Direction develops managerial ability and skills. The reason is that while issuing instructions to the subordinates the superiors develop their skills also. It also helps to judge the human beings and their emotions.

12. Understanding Reasonable Behaviour : It helps the managers to understand the plans, policies and problems of the organization. As a result, he acts in a reasonable manner as per demands.

Scope or Components of Direction Or

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Techniques of Direction

The techniques of direction means that process which involve a lot of activities. Now the question arises what are the techniques of direction? Following are the various techniques of direction :

1. **Orders and Instructions** : Issuing orders or instructions to do or not to do a work is a technique. It helps not only to get the work done but it also helps to motivate subordinates to work. But in order to achieve success, it is important that the orders should be issued by only one person and they should be practical to their approach.

2. **Delegation of Authority** : It is another technique. Under this technique the subordinates are given powers so that they can perform their duties effectively. But at the time of delegation of authority, it should be ensured that a reasonable amount of authority should be delegated, it should neither be more than that what is required nor it should be less.

3. **Discipline** : Discipline helps to get the work done in an organized manner and it also ensures that there is a healthy work environment.

4. **Co-ordination** : This is a component of direction in which co-ordination is maintained among the work and the departments of the organization so that the objectives can be achieved. Co-ordination is important for smooth working of the organization. Better co-ordination among the various factors is an indicator of good direction.

5. **Motivation** : It is a technique in which people are made to perform their work willingly. This technique helps to satisfy the employees and motivates them to work better. In order to motivate the employees, various financial and non-financial methods are used.

6. **Supervision** : Supervision means overseeing the activities of the subordinates. This includes a direct contact with the subordinates, allotment of work, providing them with inputs to carry on the work and providing them effective leadership. Thus, by supervising the superiors, maintain a direct contact with the subordinates.

7. **Leadership** : Leadership is the technique of influencing the behaviour of others. Under this technique, the leader uses his skill to influence the subordinates. Thus, this technique helps the subordinates to work willingly.

8. **Communication** : Under this technique the superior issue instructions to the subordinates and the subordinates follow them and work accordingly. But at the same time, the superior has to ensure that there is no confusion while communicating, as confusion is the biggest enemy of communication. In modern time, the communication plays an important role to perform direction. There are various means and methods of communication, which are used these days.