



ARTICLE 2: MANAGEMENT THEORY

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Management Theory: Evolution, Leadership Styles, and Core Functions

Effective management is essential for organizational success. Management theory provides insights into how organizations function, how managers influence employees, and how leadership affects outcomes. Early management theories emphasized efficiency and control, while later approaches incorporated human behavior and adaptability. This article examines the evolution of management theory, key leadership styles, and core management functions, highlighting their practical relevance for graduate students and future managers. Classical management theory emerged during the industrial revolution. Scientific management, proposed by Frederick Taylor, focused on efficiency and task standardization. Henri Fayol identified key managerial functions, while Max Weber introduced bureaucratic principles emphasizing hierarchy and formal rules.

Human relations theory emerged as a response, recognizing the impact of social interaction and employee satisfaction on productivity. Behavioral approaches further developed this view, incorporating motivational theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y.

Modern management theory emphasizes adaptability. Systems and contingency theories recognize that no single approach suits all organizations. Effective managers adjust strategies based on environmental, cultural, and organizational conditions.



Management style describes how managers direct, motivate, and engage employees.

1. Autocratic: Centralized decision-making; effective in crises but may reduce motivation.
2. Democratic: Encourages participation; improves communication and commitment.
3. Laissez-faire: Offers autonomy; works for highly skilled teams but can cause coordination issues.

Core Managerial Functions depend on four fundamental functions:

- Planning: Setting objectives and outlining actions to achieve them.
- Organizing: Allocating resources and defining roles.
- Leading: Motivating, communicating, and influencing employees.
- Controlling: Monitoring performance and adjusting plans as necessary.

These functions are interconnected and cyclical, forming the basis of effective management practice.

Management theory equips managers with tools to analyze problems and make informed decisions. Understanding diverse theories and styles allows leaders to adapt to organizational challenges and dynamic global environments. Applying management theory thoughtfully enables sustainable organizational performance and successful leadership.

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