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EDITORIAL

Management: The case for definition

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Introduction

The general field of management studies is well established globally and attracts attention from researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and the general public. The word 'management' is generally known as a way to describe the process of looking after business practices. It is referenced by many in different ways depending on the context. This means it frequently is discussed as a way to increase the competitiveness of a business. The reasons for the popularity of management as a topic are numerous and continually change based on need. It is well established as a topic meaning that despite trends it always will be discussed amongst individuals in the business community. The stories about managers vary in terms of their successfulness and longevity in the marketplace. Management as a skill needs to be updated due to emerging societal needs. This means many managers change their behaviours based on how they perceive business goals. Managers can influence people's lives in numerous ways meaning they transcend traditional work roles. This means that managers can have transformative benefits to people if they act in a positive way.

Defining management

The definition of management is updated due to social requirements, so it is unclear to many how to express its meaning. This means there are many different definitions of management and no common definition. The need to define management is relevant depending on the circumstances of the activity. It may be fine to have various definitions, but this can make it hard to compare and contrast research. As a consequence, management as a field can be dysfunctional due to the lack of clarity about its meaning. Management as a topic is an exciting area because there are so many sub-branches. This means there is a flawed assumption that there does not have to be a well-defined definition as it is taken for granted in terms of its meaning.

Management is an appealing word because it holds such importance in society. Nonmanagerial efforts are included as destructive to an organisation and puts it in a precarious stance. This means the true reason for management is for reputation reasons. A sharper definition of management makes it easier to provide reasons for its usefulness. Many are inclined to argue that a definition is not needed due to general understanding of the topic, but I think this is a flawed argument and a definition is require. This will help to determine what behaviour is in the realm of management and to highlight the differences between managerial and non-managerial activity. By having a rigorous definition it can strengthen the management field. If management does not have a clear meaning then cynics will decrease its importance.

The word management has mixed feelings due to on the positive side viewing it as a force for change but on the negative side it can result in decreased innovativeness. Most view management as an innate way to supervise others by combining personal beliefs with a determination to act in a business manner. Management is a multifaceted concept that can requires a holistic approach. There

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are many possible ways to define management, but there is no consensus on the best way. Relying on different definitions permits the nature of management to be analysed in a systemic way. A new and comprehensive definition is required so that it can reflect environmental change. This will help to cement the nature of management and how it differs to other business topics. This will help guide researchers as to how to measure it and solve business issues. I define management as the assessment, identification, monitoring, and solving of business issues that are aided by human interaction, which can take place via indirect or direct communication. This definition highlights the need for managers to aid in coordinating different forms of activity. Managers can exist in profit or non-profit settings but focus on providing positive pathways. This means their objective is to fulfill needs that result in an overall better competitive advantage.

Management functions

Normally management involves interactions between individuals regarding a joint purpose. This tends to be formal in nature with the processes centred around group cohesion. To do this, managers need to have a sense of what is required and a mindset that makes this happen. The idea for management is that there is a need for others to guide the process and to develop agreements. This can include negotiating complex environments that require the appropriate tools.

Managers are concerned with the planning, organising, controlling, and directing functions of an organisation. The planning means to put forward ideas about steps and procedures needed to reach a goal. The planning can be short, medium, or long term based on need and differs in terms of direction. Short-term planning often is concerned with immediate needs in the marketplace and can require immediate action. Medium-term planning is more focused on realistic possibilities in the marketplace. This can involve looking at different trends around industry changes. Long-term planning is more bigger picture and innovative. Organising involves assigning tasks to individuals with the aim of obtaining a certain outcome. This can be a relatively easy or hard process depending on the nature of the individuals involved. Some people like to be organised and have set objectives whilst others prefer their freedom. Thus, it is important to consider the behavioural and personality traits of the individuals. Controlling means observing others in terms of how they do tasks. This means providing feedback and suggestions about improvement. Directing means to holistic make suggestions about the interactions between individuals in the environment. This can include changes depending on the situation.

The drivers of management practice

The main drivers of management practice are around ensuring effectiveness and performance. This means the focus is on competitiveness around decreasing potential risks and vulnerabilities of business. A focus on management efficiency can mean better overall functionality of a business. This can include focusing on better relationship management in terms of contracts and suppliers. This requires the sharing of information and identifying improvements. To do this a focus on the role of context in terms of country and industry is required. To identify efficiencies, it helps to list the risks then categorise them in terms of urgency. This enables value to be mapped out in terms of how it is applied by a business.

Effective management practices requires the continual assessment and evaluation of management processes. This can include both formal and informal evaluation mechanisms based on expert judgement. The value creation process needs to be looked at in terms of upstream and downstream relationships. Upstream relationships refer to how the product is sold or the after sales service, which can involve more profitability. Downstream relationships include suppliers or sources of materials required to make products. A robust construction of relationships can improve the assessment of value chain effectiveness. This enables predictions to be made about the concept of value.

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The true impact of managerial activities can take some time to be known. This is due to a passage of time between the introduction of management ideas and the resulting change taking time. Someone who has the personal characteristics of a manager is likely to be time focused, people orientated, and determined. Often this involves opportunity sensing in terms of people and resource management. The problem with management definitions is that they can be ill defined and only relevant to a particular context.

Conclusion

A manager needs to be alert to opportunities by harnessing their creative endeavours. By being determined, it can help them to shift human capital out of an area and into another required area thereby increasing overall efficiency. This means the emphasis of a manager is on undertaking value creation. Managers need to drive progress otherwise the organisation will be subject to decay. This means moving in a positive way in order to overcome entrenched practices. Successful managers can encourage others to iterate upon their ideas to propagate ideas. This leads to a chain reaction where there is constructive as well as destructive energy. Managers are agents of change in an organisation by being canny about how to manage people.

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