

Managing for Results

Purpose

In all sectors and at all levels managers must have the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to grasp the right opportunities for themselves and the organisations in which they work, or may work in the future.

The manager of the future faces many challenges and opportunities. Not least of these is the need to provide direction, gain commitment, facilitate change and achieve results. In a world where competition and survival are key concerns it is important that the focus is on customers, internal and external, quality and continuous improvement.

The manager has responsibilities both inside and outside the organisation and must balance demands from each to ensure success in both, often in changing and uncertain circumstances. Managerial work remains complex and fragmented and job descriptions containing the word 'manager' continue to differ in the extreme.

It must be acknowledged that some aspects of managerial work are aligned with the organisational performance infrastructure, or critical failure factors, that provide the bedrock in terms of what is acceptable and necessary. Managers should also be leaders and visionaries in minor and major ways. They must think and act to improve both their own and the organisation's performance. This differentiation is what ensures that they, their staff and their organisations become the best at what they do.

It is essential that Managing for Results seeks to analyse the very nature and value of the role of the manager in a variety of contexts and at all levels, from supervisor to director. A critical evaluation of the contribution made by managers and management should prompt the debate that there is no one 'right way'. There are, however, fundamental activities, competences and competencies that need to be present in any organisation.

Self-management and development are key factors; managers need to develop an understanding of their role and their ability to undertake it, to be aware of their responsibilities and relationships and the potential contribution that they can make. This will include

agreeing objectives, establishing mutual expectations with other managers, colleagues, team members, customers and suppliers, and also understanding systems, structures and processes relevant to the role.

The content is outlined under four broad headings and these must be considered not only in terms of how they apply but also when and why they are appropriate. The related arguments need to be based on logical reasoning, actual good practice, recent research and emerging trends and new ideas.

The practice of management	40 per cent
Delivering change	20 per cent
Enhancing customer relations	20 per cent
Enabling continuous improvement	20 per cent

The practice of management

This element critically examines the role of the manager and the existence of 'management'.

The managerial role: a critical review of the rationale for management.

The managerial contribution: creating and maintaining the infrastructure and optimising performance through the differentiators.

It can be argued that there are distinct and unique behaviours that can be identified, fostered and developed. Managers will always be leaders to a greater or lesser extent, but will leaders always be managers? What qualities differentiate the two and what tensions can this elicit? The manager must bear responsibility for their own contribution as well as that of others. They must be able to reflect on and identify their own values, motivations, capabilities and capacity, and be able to obtain feedback and constantly seek to improve themselves.

Delivering change

Organisations and people naturally resist change but this isn't possible in the fast-moving environment of the twenty-first century. Managers are key players when it comes to embedding a climate for change, where people feel able and positively encouraged to think creatively, where innovation is fostered and new ideas supported. This calls for an infrastructure that allows for identifying, planning and implementing change. Managers need an understanding of how and why organisations work, grow and develop in order to effect meaningful and positive change.

Enhancing customer relations

Customer care is about looking after customers to ensure their wants, needs and expectations are met and exceeded, thus creating customer satisfaction and loyalty. It is estimated that nearly three-quarters of customer loss is due to indifference to customers. Product and service design and delivery need to be firmly based on a thorough understanding of the customer, their needs and expectations. Developing and maintaining good customer relations, internal and external, will provide a sound performance infrastructure. Anticipating the needs and exceeding the expectations of customers makes all the difference.

Enabling continuous improvement

Nothing stands still in today's organisation. Managers must ensure standards are met and maintained while constantly striving to do better. It is important in this element to understand the meaning and importance of quality as a basic, fundamental requirement. This element also recognises the need for continuous improvement, from monitoring through to empowerment and innovation. It is evident that some organisations may need to totally transform themselves in order to survive and to meet the challenges of the future. Whatever the extent of this transformation, there are questions to be asked and lessons to be learned by all managers.

Performance indicators

1 The practice of management

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Evaluate and challenge the role of the manager in a variety of contrasting contexts.
- 2 Assess the opportunity for and the contribution of managers and management to the effectiveness of the organisation.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The nature of management.
- 2 The managerial contribution to organisational success.

Indicative content

Performance infrastructure

- 1 Evaluating and adopting appropriate management standards and styles. The similarities and differences between managers and leaders and potential tension and conflict between them. Planning, organising, setting targets and agreeing objectives. The appropriate deployment of managerial approaches; leading, coaching, facilitation, delegation.
- 2 Developing and operating a network of lateral, functional and vertical relationships with senior and junior colleagues, peers, teams, individuals, and internal and external partners.
- 3 Communicating persuasively and convincingly in a manner appropriate to the audience and circumstances. Understanding organisational politics and influence, power and authority.
- 4 System and process management, including health and safety, and the conflicts and challenges that these may present. Assessment of working conditions and remedies to address unsatisfactory situations. Industrial and professional codes of practice, procedures, organisational and legal requirements.

- 5 Developing self and others through the identification of individual potential, values, motivators, capabilities and capacity. Knowing how and when to give, receive and act on feedback. Methods of management development; self-development, executive coaching, mentoring, personal networks, action learning sets.

Performance differentiators

- 1 Appraisal of the factors that individually and collectively contribute to the 'added-value' orientation within the management role and within management more generally.
- 2 The significance of strategic and visionary thinking for effective management and the managerial role. How to foster innovation and creativity.
- 3 The pivotal contribution of the line/middle manager in promoting appropriate behaviours; role model, exemplar, guide, coach and mentor.
- 4 Developing a shared vision and providing direction. Gaining support for the organisation's vision and strategy. Inspiring and motivating others to make their full contribution and continually refining strategy and gaining support for plans.
- 5 Self-management strategies and opportunities; evaluating the impact of own performance and seeking out opportunities for development.

2 Delivering change

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Plan and implement a programme of change.
- 2 Advise on the development and maintenance of organisational structures and systems.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The ways in which organisations grow and change.
- 2 The elements that lead to the successful implementation of change.

Indicative content

Performance infrastructure

- 1 Engaging in a critical review of organisational dynamics; comparative organisational types, structures, functions (marketing, operations, research and development, finance etc) and cultures, the relationship between them and the impact of these on the conduct and nature of the business and its capacity to change.
- 2 Developing and embracing a change culture, fostering innovation and risk. Assessing the organisation's current position and customer perceptions in the sector or market relative to key competitors. Considering the need to embrace a change culture even when there is no obvious competition, but for the purpose of providing more efficient, effective services.
- 3 Critically analysing and reviewing models and theories of change management, their application and relative effectiveness.
- 4 Evaluating corporate culture, its significance, interpretation, causes and effects, links to internal and external change.

Performance differentiators

- 1 Identifying the need for change, proactive intervention, reactive/remedial recovery; identifying equilibrium, disequilibrium and stability.
- 2 Making the business case for change; with the drivers, benefits and risks identified, realisation of short-term wins as well as longer-term deliverables; planning for change, identifying barriers and solutions.
- 3 Communicating plans for change using media and styles appropriate to the people and situations. Promoting understanding and showing empathy with others' needs, feelings and motivations. Taking personal responsibility for making things happen.
- 4 Agreeing goals and objectives, monitoring and evaluating progress. Ensuring flexibility of response and making adjustments while not losing sight of long-term goals.

3 Enhancing customer relations

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Design and gain acceptance of a planned programme for the improvement of service to internal/external customers.
- 2 Advise on approaches to customer relations that will maximise customer satisfaction.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 The nature of customer service and its relative priority.
- 2 How to assess customer needs, the importance of keeping customers and the means by which this may be assured.
- 3 The importance of customer service in all sectors and organisations.

Indicative content

Performance infrastructure

- 1 Critical evaluation of the infrastructure factors essential to the development and maintenance of acceptable levels of customer-perceived performance; understanding the distinctions between customers, users, payers and clients.
- 2 Evaluating and distinguishing between models of customer service; service level agreements, preferred supplier status, telesales, help-lines, accounts management, call centres.
- 3 The crucial elements of customer 'satisfaction'; the need to establish and maintain a good relationship with customers and potential customers that gives them confidence that their requirement will be met, on time, with cost-effective solutions and adequate support availability. The meaning of customer service;

reliability, responsiveness, competence, credibility, access. Mechanisms for dialogue with customers; surveys, questionnaires, focus groups.

- 4 Specific applications of customer service values for internal customers and for use in monopolistic and public sector environments.

Performance differentiators

- 1 Critical review of the evidence about changing customer dynamics and the need to go beyond satisfaction.
- 2 Creating a customer-centric culture; ensuring the competencies, creative and innovative skills are available to design, develop and deliver products and services based on customer needs. A critical evaluation of the factors behind the creation of such a culture; attitudes and behaviours for individuals, unit functions and organisations.
- 3 Identifying target customers for goods and services, communicating availability and benefits, and helping customers to select the products and services that best suit their needs.
- 4 Assessment of the contingent lessons to be learned from 'world-class' service enterprises.

4 Enabling continuous improvement

Operational indicators

Practitioners must be able to:

- 1 Advise on the importance, requirements and implications of continuous improvement, from quality control and assurance through to transformation.
- 2 Foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Knowledge indicators

Practitioners must be able to understand, explain and critically evaluate:

- 1 Quality and continuous improvement techniques.
- 2 The conditions and behaviours that promote quality and continuous improvement.

Indicative content

Performance infrastructure

- 1 Critical assessment of the rationale for continuous improvement and transformation; the continuous improvement framework, strategy, infrastructure, problem-seeking activities, problem-solving groups, problem-solving tools.
- 2 Evidence-based review of infrastructure models of continuous improvement; quality management systems and process compliance; establishing systems required to ensure products and services meet standards, auditing compliance with these systems and their contribution to organisational goals and objectives. Identifying tension and conflict between quality assurance and production/delivery targets.
- 3 Evaluation of differentiator applications for continuous improvement; proactive, opportunity-seeking, intuitive experimentation, empowerment; using methods for identifying and overcoming the barriers to continuous improvement.

- 4 Assessment of the internal/external imperatives for continuous improvement in specific organisations and sectors.
- 5 Critical evaluation of the standardised/holistic approaches to quality rectification, maintenance and quality improvement.

Performance differentiators

- 1 Assessment of the factors that generate a continuous improvement transformation culture; top-down management, leadership, consistent focus, challenging goals, comprehensive people involvement.
- 2 'Holding the gains'; identifying and maintaining better practices and processes, cost savings, improved customer service.