

MANAGEMENT AND MANAGERS

Only 200 years ago, before the industrial revolution, the concept of professional management and manager did not exist. Today millions of people around the world are managers; in United States alone, nearly 15 million people, or about 12 percent of the work force, hold managerial positions. These managers coordinate and control organizational resources, lead their people into the future, and help their organizations respond to everything from technological changes to social expectations. Management touches everyone's daily lives in a variety of ways managers run the largest and the smallest businesses, hospitals and schools, charities and art organizations, government and military organizations.

Who are these managers and what do they do? Thomas C. Theobald, Chairman of Continental Bank of Chicago is a manager who has returned one of the largest bank in the United States to profitability by concentrating on the long term potential of forging closer relationships with business customers. Anita Rodick, founder of Great Britain's fast-growing retail chain The Body Shop, keeps international employees and customers environmentally conscious while selling personal care products. The president of United States is a manager, and so is, Micky Sadoff, national president of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Whether the goal is to make money to save lives, or to serve citizens, management is the key ingredient in achieving any organization's success.

Management defined

The art and science of management have developed and changed over the years, and so too have definitions of management. Some early theorists viewed management simply as the ability to work through others. But contemporary managers work many resources and tools, so this definition of management must be broadened beyond the human aspects. Today, management can be defined as the process of achieving organizational goals through planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the human, physical, and financial and information resources of the organization in effective and efficient manner.

By this definition management is a distinct process, a set of ongoing, coordinated activities that managers engage in as they pursue the organization's goals. Therefore, a manager is someone who actively participates in the management process through the four functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the resources of the organization. Managers in various organizations are confronted by different challenges and call on different resources, elements such as raw materials, people, information, money that the organization needs to produce goods and services.

Depending on their situation and on their resources, managers stress one or another of the four management functions to accomplish their goals. For example, Sharon Foster Johnson, executive director of the Northside Center for Child Development in New York City, emphasizes planning to keep her not-for-profit center tuned to community needs. Tony M. Harsch, president of HMV USA, worries about organizing and staffing in order to give the shoppers in his retail subsidiary of Britain's HMV