

## “DEVELOPING EXECUTIVE (MANAGERIAL) COMPETENCIES”

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**E**xecutive in modern organization is by virtue of his position or knowledge is responsible for a contribution that materially affects the capacity of the organization to perform and obtain results\_ this be the capacity of a business to bring out a new product or to obtain a large share of a given market” wrote Peter Drucker a renowned management thinker of our times. It may be, for instance, the capacity of a hospital to provide bedside care to its patients. Such a man (or woman) must make decisions. He just cannot carry out orders. He must take responsibility of his contribution. And he is supposed, by virtue of his knowledge, to be better equipped to make the right decision than anyone else. He may be overridden (superseded) or he may be demoted or fired. But as long as he has the job, the goals, the standards and the contribution are in his keeping. Drucker wrote further.

### MANAGER AND EXECUTIVE

Most managers are executives - though not all. Many people, in other words, are superiors of other people (and often, of fairly large numbers of other people) - and still do not seriously affect the ability of the organization to perform. For instance, most shop floor foremen in a manufacturing plant belong to this category.

They are 'overseers' in the literal sense of the word. They are 'managers' in that they manage the work of others. But they have neither the responsibility for, nor authority over, the direction, the content, and the quality of the work or the methods of its performance. They can still be measured and appraised very largely in terms of efficiency and quality, and by the yardsticks we have developed to measure and appraise the work and performance of the manual worker. Executives however, are individual professionals who are expected by virtue of their position or knowledge to make decisions in normal course of their work that have

significant impact on the performance and results of the work. It must be remembered that for the modern organizations needs both 'managers' and 'executives'.

### COMPETENCIES CAN BE LEARNED

For an organization to grow & achieve its goals and objectives it is pertinent that its managers and executives are effective in their job. Learning and practicing various competencies can lead to effectiveness of work. A management competency for the purpose of this article is defined as a "combination of knowledge and skills and the ability to use these in carrying out managerial job responsibilities". By this definition, a competent manager or executive is a highly effective performer and not simply adequate. The objective in establishing each of these competencies is to determine as precisely and accurately as possible what managers / executives need to know and be able to apply in order to perform their job responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The requirement of competencies can differ at various levels i.e. at junior executive level, intermediate or middle level and at senior executive level. Since most of the management students on completion of their studies will join as junior level executive / manager, in this article competency requirement at junior / base level are discussed.

### COMPETENCY UNDERSTAND ROLES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANIZATION

The indicators for this competency represent both internal and external aspects of the department. All Management levels need full use of this competency, in keeping with their respective roles. At junior executive level indicators are :

- ability to relate the goals and functions of the unit supervised to those of the immediate organization of which it is component,
- ability to relate one's functions to those of superiors, peers, subordinates, and clients,
- ability to inform subordinates and clients of roles and functions.

### COMPETENCY - DETERMINING OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

For junior level executive goals and objectives are focused internally, involving unit or project and must be consistent

with overall organizational objectives. Competencies in this area are :

- ability to develop work plans in accordance with the goals of the immediate organization,
- ability to communicate goals clearly and persuasively to subordinates and establish targets and milestones,
- ability to monitor progress.

### COMPETENCY - ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES AMONG ALTERNATIVES

Since the priority process generally demands some compromise, junior executives must expect a certain amount of dissatisfaction with any ordering or priorities or selecting among options. For junior executives competency to tackle such situation will require :

- ability to identify alternatives and evaluation criterion,
- ability to discriminate in respect of the urgency and importance of tasks,
- ability to explain priorities to subordinates and obtain commitment,
- ability to establish priorities among tasks.

### COMPETENCY - PROBLEM SOLVING AND EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

The need for this competency is basically the same at all management levels. What differ are the complexity, sensitivity and impact of the solutions and decisions.

At junior level this means :

- ability to identify problems and analyze cause,
- ability to identify and supervise the implementation of corrective measures,
- ability to identify solutions to potential problems and recommend the best corrective measures,
- ability to identify and evaluate options,
- ability to make timely decisions within the limits of

delegated authority.

#### **COMPETENCY - DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING PLANS**

The need for this competency is basically the same at all management levels. The difference is in the scope and complexity of position responsibilities. At junior executive level it will include :

- ability to schedule activities and work assignments and prepare work plans.
- ability to meet the organization's operational requirements,
- ability to communicate plans,
- ability to measure results and make adjustments.

#### **COMPETENCY - ORGANIZING RESOURCES SO AS TO ACCOMPLISH OBJECTIVES AND GOALS**

This competency is crucial to office resources management and effective planning and achievement of objectives. In case of junior executive, this competency means :

- ability to effectively utilize and control resources provided,
- ability to identify problems associated with the allocation and utilization of resources,
- ability to identify and eliminate the overlapping of tasks.

#### **COMPETENCY - DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND SETTING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

This is an important competency for all management levels. Delegation should be used not only for the effective accomplishments or work but also for the development of subordinates. At junior executive level indicators of this competency include :

- ability to outline clearly and concisely the responsibility and tasks being assigned to subordinates and obtain their acceptance and understanding of results expected,
- ability to monitor progress effectively,

- ability to work within one's own delegated authority and to know where and when to refer issues over which others hold authority.
- ability to explain how performance standards contribute to the accomplishment of unit goals,
- ability to provide timely feedback to subordinates.

#### **COMPETENCY - APPLYING DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL SYSTEMS & ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

Managers at all levels have a special responsibility and obligation to effectively utilize the resources of department's various support systems in the discharge of their duties. Managers should be familiar with all support services and the impact these have on individuals. At junior executive level it entails :

- ability to make effective use of staff specialist services,
- ability to communicate administrative procedures effectively and to recommend changes to systems and procedures,
- ability to recognize and acknowledge the rules, rights and obligations of the union and management,
- ability to deal effectively with employee complaints and disciplinary cases,
- ability to review the performance and assess the potential of subordinates,
- ability to identify training needs of subordinates and provide on the job training and coaching.

#### **COMPETENCY - MANAGING FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES**

This competency requires a solid understanding of the nature of financial management and knowledge of the rules, responsibilities, authorities and account abilities of the manager and financial specialist. Executives at all levels share a special responsibility above and beyond that of day-to-day operations for effective management of financial and material resources in keeping with the organization's policies and practice. For junior executives, it is an -

- ability to oversee financial resources within delegated authority,
- ability to budget and cost the unit's operational plans,
- ability to operate within a specific financial management system,
- ability to oversee and control consumable inventory.

#### **COMPETENCY - DEMONSTRATING CREDIBILITY AS A MANAGER**

This competency is important for all levels of managers & executives since they are in a position to set role model for subordinates. For junior level executives, it means :

- ability to earn respect and acceptance from others,
- ability to instill confidence in others,
- ability to set a good example for subordinates,
- ability to remain calm and function effectively under pressure and / or extreme conditions.

#### **COMPETENCY - CREATING AN ORGANIZATION CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO A MOTIVATED WORKFORCE**

This competency is important for all levels of managers & executives because its influence on productivity. At junior executive level it means :

- ability to utilize motivational techniques in the work place,
- ability to maintain subordinates' morale in difficult situation,
- ability to intervene when subordinates behavior is detrimental to the work group,
- ability to establish and maintain support with subordinates,
- ability to identify and reduce de-motivational working conditions,
- ability to develop a result oriented team that allows for individual subordinates' needs

and aspirations.

#### **COMPETENCY - DEALING WITH DIVERGENT VIEWS AND NEGOTIATES ON A WIDE VARIETY OF ISSUES**

The need for negotiating skills is not limited to specialists in labor relations or contract management. All managers must be sensitive and objective in dealing with diverse points of view. At junior executive's level, it translates into :

- ability to assess divergent internal and external views objectively and develop appropriate responses in disputes,
- ability to resolve differences through negotiations,
- ability to resolve or reduce conflict,
- ability to take the necessary rectifying action in a conflict or refer the matter to a higher authority along with recommendations,
- ability to avoid win-lose situations where possible,
- ability to identify creative solutions to avoid a potential dispute.

#### **COMPETENCY - SPEAKING EFFECTIVELY AND MAKE ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

It is critical that development of this competency begin early in a managerial career and reach a high degree of proficiency at intermediate and senior levels. At junior executive level, this competency covers :

- ability to make formal (technical/administrative) briefings to immediate superior within the branch/unit,
- ability to organize and conduct staff meetings for the unit,
- ability to communicate (speak & listen) effectively with subordinates, superiors and clientele on a one-to-one basis,
- ability to use appropriate aids for presentation

#### **COMPETENCY - EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

For Managers both the preparation and review of written

materials are important. Because this competency takes considerable time to acquire, development must begin early in individual's career. For junior executive this competency means :

- ability to write memos and reports and record minutes,
- ability to express (develop) arguments systematically and persuasively,
- ability to utilize effective reading techniques.

### **CONCLUSION**

Executive (and Managerial) effectiveness is central to his performance which in turn is key to the organizational performance. Modern society depends for its functioning on the effectiveness of large and small scale organizations, on their performance and results. Executive effectiveness is therefore essential to make modern society productive economically and viable socially. Learning, imbibing, developing and sharpening various competencies is no more a matter of choice but a stark reality in the life of an executive. Only executive effectiveness can enable this society to harmonize its two needs: the need of an organization to obtain from the individual the contribution it needs, and the need of the individual to have organization serve as his tool for the accomplishment of his goals and objectives. The competencies must be learned and these can be learned.

### **REFERENCES**

Peter F Drucker: The Effective Executive, Harper & Row, New York