Management Essay, Research Paper

Management is a process that has existed and been in practice for thousands of years. Over the years there have been many organized activities supervised by people responsible for planning, organizing, leading and controlling these activities. And especially in the last century, management has been subjected to investigation and has become a major field of study.

There were also various contributions to the field of management. A man named Adam Smith published a book called the Wealth of Nations in 1776, which he discussed how organizations and society would benefit economically, from the application of the division of labor. Smith explained that the division of labor increased productivity by improving worker s skill, saving time, and creating laborsaving inventions and machinery. Today, job specialization is very popular and widely utilized in professions such as teaching and medicine.

However, one of the most important influences on management was the Industrial Revolution. This was the period when human labor started to become replaced by machines. The introduction of machine power led to other factors such as mass production, reduced transportation costs, and limited government regulations, which all promoted the development of big organizations. As a result, there was a need for a formal theory to direct managers in controlling their organizations.

The first half of the century was known as a stage of diversity in management. There were four approaches that contributed to the enhancement of management, provided by certain writers. The first, scientific management was concerned with improving the productivity of operative personnel. Second, general administrative theorists, focused on the overall organization and how to make it more effective, third a group of writers and researchers emphasized the human resources or people side of management. Fourth, another group concentrated on developing and applying quantitative models. These four approaches differ because of the distinct backgrounds and interests of the writers.

In 1911, Fredrick Taylor wrote a book called Principles of Scientific Management. Taylor described the theory of scientific management as the use of the scientific method to define the one best way for a job to be done. This book was widely accepted by managers all over the world that Taylor became known as the father of scientific management. Taylor s goal was to create a mental revolution between the workers and management by setting standards for improving production efficiency.

The general administrative theorists were essential for developing more general theories of what managers do and what good management consists of. Their writings established the structure for many of our contemporary ideas on management and organization. Two outstanding general administrative theorists were Henri Fayol and Maz Weber. Fayol stated that management was a common activity practiced in all human tasks whether in business, government, or in the home, based on fourteen principles. Weber created a theory of authority structures and described organizational activity based on authority relations. He also stated an ideal type of organization as a bureaucracy. The group of general administrative theorists together with the scientific management group is referred to as the classical theorist.

The end of the diversity stage was marked by the quantitative approach to the study of management, also referred to as operations research or management science. This approach has been most useful in management decision making, especially to planning and control decisions. With the application of this approach, behavioral problems were more noticeable and most students and managers can relate better to day-to-day problems in organizations.

Today we are thinking in terms of using knowledge to improve productivity in our old businesses how to do the same with less. Tomorrow we will think of competition how to do more in new businesses. The most valuable devices will be those that help business and help people cope with change. Management has to think like a fighter pilot. When things move so fast, the right decision cannot always be made, so management has to learn to adjust, to correct more quickly.

There are distinctive characteristics that a person in a management position must posses to keep him or her effective in a challenging world. There are enormous opportunities due to changes. However, there is no predictability. We live in a very chaotic time because there is so much change, that moves in so many different directions. Therefore, the effective manager has to be able to recognize and run with opportunity, to learn, and constantly refresh the knowledge base.