

THE EVOLUTION OF MANAGEMENT THOUGHT

The practice of management is as old as human civilization. The ancient civilizations of Egypt (the great pyramids), Greece (the leadership and war tactics of Alexander the Great) and Rome displayed marvelous results of good management practices. The origin of management as a discipline was developed in the late 19th century. Over time, management thinkers have sought ways to organize and classify the voluminous information about management that has been collected and disseminated. These attempts at classification have resulted in the identification of management approaches. The approaches of management are theoretical frameworks for the study of leadership. Each of the management approaches is based on somewhat different assumptions about human beings and the organizations for which they work. For better understanding, the evolution of management thought will be shared into four different stages. These include:

- ✓ Pre-Scientific Management Era (before 1880),
- ✓ Classical management Era (1880-1930),
- ✓ Neo-classical Management Era (1930-1950),
- ✓ Modern Management era (1950-on word).

The Pre-Scientific Management Period

The industrial revolution that took place in the 18th century had a significant impact on management as a whole. It changed how businesses, as well as individuals, raised capital; organize labour and the production of goods. Entrepreneurs had access to all the factors of production such as land, labour, and capital. Theirs was to make an effort to combine these factors to achieve a targeted goal successfully.

However, the new dimension that management took following the industrial revolution cannot be discussed without mentioning notable personalities who contributed their quarter. They were able to introduce useful ideas and approaches to give management a precise and universally acceptable direction. Here are some of them.

Professor Charles Babbage – United Kingdom (1729 – 1871)

Prof Babbage, a renowned professor in mathematics at Cambridge University discovered that manufacturers were relying on guesswork and suggestions and urged them to utilize mathematics and science to be more accurate and productive.

Robert Owens – United Kingdom (1771 – 1858)

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Robert was regarded as the father of personnel management because of his approach and focus on employee welfare. He introduced co-operation and trade unions. Robert believed that employee welfare could determine their performance to a large extent. He encouraged the training of workers, education for their children, canteens in the workplace, shorter working hours, among others.

- ✓ Other Contributors to the Pre-Scientific Management Period Include:
- ✓ Henry Robson Towne – USA
- ✓ James Watt Junior – United Kingdom
- ✓ Seebohm Rowntree – United Kingdom

The Classical Theory

Prof Babbage, Robert Owens, and other names earlier mentioned can be regarded as the pioneers of management. But their contribution to the evolution of management is little. The beginning of what is known as the science of management started in the last decade of the 19th century. Names like Emerson, F.W. Taylor, H.L. Grant, and others, paved the way for the establishment of what is called scientific management.

During the classical period, management thought was focused on job content, standardization, the division of labor, and a scientific approach towards the organization. It also was closely related to the industrial revolution as well as the rise of large-scale enterprises.

The Neo-Classical Theory

This period of evolution of management thought is an improvement of the classical theory. In other words, it modified and improved upon the classical theory. For instance, Classical theory focused more on the area of job content, including the management of physical resources, while neo-classical theory gave more profound emphasis on employee relationships in the work environment.

The Bureaucratic Model

The German sociologist, Max Weber recognized as father of modern Sociology who appraised bureaucracy as the most logical and structure for big organization. With his observation in business world, Weber summarized that earlier business firms were unproductively managed, with decisions based on personal relationships and faithfulness. He proposed that a form of organization, called a bureaucracy, characterized by division of labour, hierarchy, formalized rules, impersonality, and the selection and promotion of employees based on ability, would lead to more well-organized management. Weber also argued that authoritative position of managers in an organization should be based not on tradition or personality but on the position held by managers in the organizational hierarchy.

CONTRIBUTION OF HENRY FAYOL TO MANAGEMENT THOUGHT

Henry Fayol (1841-1925) is rightly treated as the father of modern theory of general and industrial management. He developed his management principles and general management theory and published them in the form of a book (in French) "General and Industrial Administration" in 1916.

Henry Fayol also suggested 14 principles of management. These principles are: -

Division of work - Henri believed that segregating work in the workforce amongst the worker will enhance the quality of the product. Similarly, he also concluded that the division of work improves the productivity, efficiency, accuracy and speed of the workers.

Authority and responsibility - These are the two key aspects of management. Authority facilitates the management to work efficiently, and responsibility makes them responsible for the work done under their guidance or leadership.

Discipline - Without discipline, nothing can be accomplished. It is the core value for any project or any management.

Unity of command - This means an employee should have only one boss and follow his command. If an employee has to follow more than one boss, there begins a conflict of interest and can create confusion.

Unity of direction - This means all the person working in a company should have one goal and motive which will make the work easier and achieve the set goal easily.

Subordination of personal interest to organizational interests - This indicates a company should work unitedly towards the interest of a company rather than personal interest. Be subordinate to the purposes of an organization. This refers to the whole chain of command in a company.

Remuneration - This plays an important role in motivating the workers of a company. Remuneration can be monetary or non-monetary. However, it should be according to an individual's efforts they have made.

Centralization - In any company, the management or any authority responsible for the decision-making process should be neutral. However, this depends on the size of an organization. Henri Fayol stressed on the point that there should be a balance between the hierarchy and division of power.

Scalar chain - Fayol on this principle highlights that the hierarchy steps should be from the top to the lowest. This is necessary so that every employee knows their immediate senior also they should be able to contact any, if needed.

Order - A company should maintain a well-defined work order to have a favorable work culture. The positive atmosphere in the workplace will boost more positive productivity.

Equity - All employees should be treated equally and respectfully. It's the responsibility of a manager that no employees face discrimination.

Stability of tenure - An employee delivers the best if they feel secure in their job. It is the duty of the management to offer job security to their employees.

Span of co-operation

Initiative - The management should support and encourage the employees to take initiatives in an organization. It will help them to increase their interest and make them worth.

CONTRIBUTION OF ELTON MAYO TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT THOUGHT

Elton Mayo (1880-1949) is recommended as the Father of Human Relations School.

He introduced human relations approach to management thought.

Hawthorne experiments

The amount of work to be done by a worker is not determined by his physical capacity but by the social norms. On-economic rewards play a significant role in influencing the behavior of the workers. Generally, the workers do not react as individuals, but as members of group. Informal leaders play an important part in setting and enforcing the group norms

Having just seen it work in practice at the Philadelphia Spinning Mill, Mayo was given another opportunity to test his theory that improved working conditions will produce motivated and productive employees. This time, he was sought by Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works in Cicero, Illinois, to aid them in their goals to "inspire company loyalty, discourage high employee turnover and unionization, and present a good face to the public."

These studies, known as the Hawthorne Experiments, began in 1924 with illumination tests that "set out to determine the effects of lighting on worker efficiency." After those tests had been completed in 1927, new studies began, this time examining the impact of factors like rest periods and work hours on production levels. One study where five women assembled relays (electromagnetic switches for telephones) had positive results, but the researchers were unsure which changes to the working conditions — breaks, shorter working hours, incentives, group design, and increased attention — were producing those results. It was at that point in 1928 when Mayo and his colleagues, most notably Fritz Roethlisberger, were brought in to provide assistance.

A **first group of discoveries** Mayo had made revolved around what they had been brought in to determine: the cause of the relay assemblers' increased productivity. Mayo determined that the productivity increased significantly over time because: 1. the individuals formed a cohesive and enthusiastic team; and 2. these group conditions increased both job satisfaction and cooperation with the experiment.

A **second group of discoveries** were found during interviews originally planned to gather details about employees' life situations and their impact on attitudes towards work. After changing from a directed to a nondirected format, interviews grew from around 30 minutes to up to two hours, instead serving as an emotional release and an opportunity to gather substantial data on the attitudes of industrial workers during those times. From this data, Mayo and Roethlisberger discovered the importance of supportive and participative leadership, interpersonal relationships, and social cohesion in the workplace and used this knowledge to help develop some of the earliest attempts at personnel policies, supervisory training, and an employee counseling program.

A **third group of discoveries** came from the "Bank Wiring Room Study." This time, a group with bad behaviors—like intentionally limiting production and ostracizing/hitting workers who were more productive—was studied in order to determine what was causing the behavior. From this study, Mayo determined that cliques form in organizations, enforce informal rules within them, and can work with or against management depending on its attitudes.

The Hawthorne studies ended in 1933, when the Depression hit and mass layoffs ensued, and it wasn't until the 1950s and '60s that the knowledge would be recognized and adopted for its brilliance. Altogether, the studies demonstrated the importance and influence of Human Relations, including employee participation, job satisfaction, effective leadership, motivation, group norms, and resistance to change. While the studies had "flaws in both method and interpretation," Mayo and his colleagues' work "came closer to outlining an integrated theory of human behavior than any other perspective before them" and marked the beginning of the fields of Organizational Behavior and Organizational Psychology.