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Administration Skills

Manmohan Joshi

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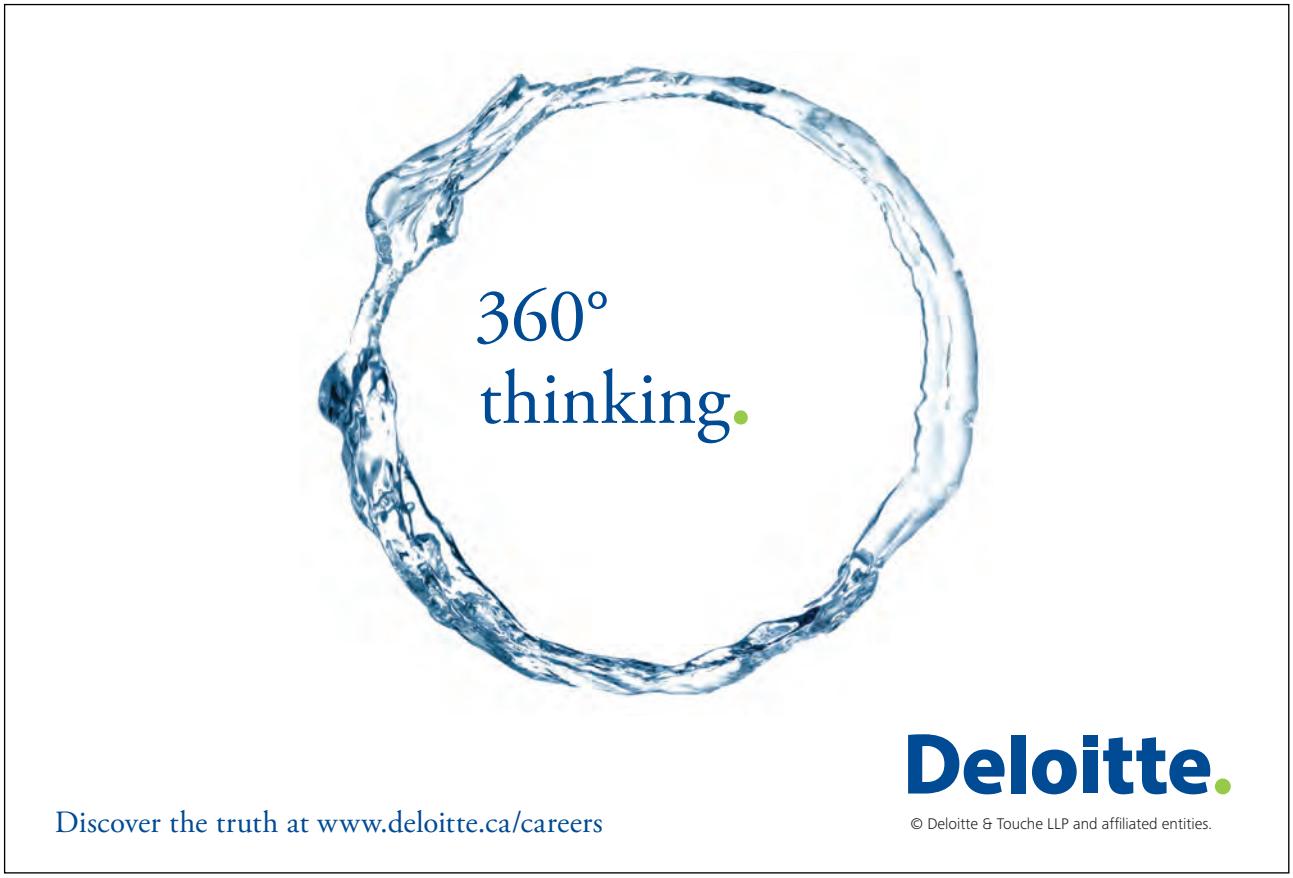

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1 Administration Skills

Many of us think of an administrator as paper-pushing and issuing instructions, requiring little initiative and few skills. Yet the dictionary defines an administrator as someone who manages, for example, business or public affairs, or someone capable of organizing activities and resources.

As a result of stereotypical views of administrative tasks, administrators are widely undervalued and receive little recognition for their contribution to business or activity. Many administrators are rarely offered training and development opportunities and receive little or no career guidance. However, they have direct influence on their organization's image. They operate at all levels across all areas of organizations. They need and use a wide variety of essential skills in these areas.

This book offers administrators an opportunity to review their existing skills and experience, and to learn about new skills which could improve their effectiveness in current or future jobs. In different organizations these administrators may be known by various nomenclatures viz. Manager, Supervisor, Executive etc. but for the sake of convenience I'll use the term "Supervisor" for this chapter.

1.1 The Supervisor's job

A management consultant asked the HRD Manager of a large insurance company, "How does your business keep running so smoothly? Each time I visit here I learn of another shake-up in top management. Vice-Presidents come and go as if they were big league basketball managers. Yet I hear that your policy-holders don't complain too much about service."

"I think I can answer your question," replied the HRD Manager, "Our day-to-day work gets done by office supervisors and their workers. It doesn't matter who the players are at the top of the company. The game is the same down below. Most of our supervisors have been with us a long time. They make sure that the work gets done without worrying about the politics in the executive suite."

Although comments made by this manager may be overdramatic, they do illustrate an important part of work life.

Organizations cannot be run properly without competent first-level managers. Supervisors are the key to success in any organization. Because of the widespread recognition of this fact, supervisors are usually held accountable for whatever goes wrong in a work organization.

1.2 Who is a Supervisor?

A supervisor is a manager who:

- Accomplishes work with and through subordinates;
- Directs the work activities of people who themselves are individual performers.

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1.3 Different Supervisory jobs

The basic job performed by a supervisor varies in complexity. Some supervisors are expected to prepare a budget, contribute to long-range planning and solve technical problems. Another person may be called a supervisor, yet may spend almost all of the workday checking to see that others are working properly. Such supervisory positions are becoming increasingly rare.

1.4 Managing Resources

An administrator has to manage various resources. He/she cannot accomplish this task without the full cooperation of his/her team. The following resources are generally at the disposal of the administrator:

- **People:** This is the most difficult resource to manage. People have different needs, attitudes, abilities and personalities. These are not constant and can change from day to day, hour to hour. A good administrator will maximize the strengths and minimize the weaknesses.
- **Time:** This is the most democratic of resources. Everyone has 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour etc. It is how this time is used that determines administrative effectiveness.
- **Space:** This is expensive and many work places suffer from a lack of it. However, much can be made of the space available to improve the working environment and people's behaviour.
- **Finance:** All administrators will be involved with budgets and expenditure to some degree.
- **Equipment:** It includes desks, telephones, photocopiers, computers etc. An administrator must ensure that his/her team has sufficient equipment for their needs, while bearing in mind that idle equipment is a non-productive asset.
- **Information:** It is to be ensured that all information received is given the right priority and used as appropriate to help the team. Their utilization will help the team and the individuals within the team, so managing these resources effectively is vital.

1.5 Administrative Effectiveness

It is helpful to understand why some administrators are more effective and others are not, and how their sincerity in the welfare of the team members can affect the success of the organization.

1.5.1 Level of effectiveness

- What the administrators expect of their subordinates and the way they treat them largely determines the subordinates' performance and career process.
- A unique characteristic of superior administrators is their ability to create high performance expectations that subordinates fulfill.
- Less effective administrators fail to develop similar expectations, and as a result, the performance of their subordinates suffers. Subordinates, more often than not, appear to do what they believe they are expected to do.

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1.6 Development Cycle

- The role that the administrators play in developing the readiness of their people is very important. Too often, administrators do not take responsibility for the performance of their people, especially if they are not doing well.
- However, when administrators develop their people and have subordinates at high levels of readiness, the subordinates can take over much of the responsibility for day-to-day administrative functions also.
- Initially, close supervision and direction are helpful when working with individuals who have little experience in directing their own behaviour. In order to maximize their performance, administrators must change their style and take an active role in helping others grow.

1.7 The Upgraded Role of the Supervisor

The supervisory role has been upgraded in recent years. Supervisory positions today require technical skills, human relations skills, and direct responsibility for improving productivity and performance.

The current emphasis on improving productivity and performance, while at the same time maintaining morale, has also helped upgrade the supervisor's job.

1.8 Supervisory Functions or Activities

Every supervisor has responsibilities towards themselves, their team, the individuals within the team, the organization and the tasks in hand. Most administrators find themselves under constant pressure to achieve targets as effectively as possible.

An essential way of understanding the supervisory role is to examine the functions or activities performed by supervisors. This is the traditional or typical way of understanding administrative/supervisory jobs.

1.9 Planning

Planning is the basic managerial function. Planning helps in determining the course of action to be followed for achieving various organizational objectives. It is a decision in advance, what to do, when to do, and who will do a particular task. Planning is a process which involves 'thinking before doing.' It is a process of looking ahead. The primary objective of planning is to achieve better

results. It involves the selection of organizational objectives and developing policies, procedures, budgets and strategies. Planning is a continuous process that takes place at all levels of management. When a supervisor helps determine which work activities the department will undertake in the next week, he or she is planning. A detailed planning is done in the beginning but the actual performance is reviewed and appropriate changes are made in plans when actual execution is done. Plans may be of many kinds, such as short range plans, medium range plans, long range plans, standing plans, single use plans, strategic plans, administrative plans and operational plans.

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The process of planning involves a number of steps:

- Gathering information
- Laying down objectives
- Developing planning premises
- Examining alternative courses of action
- Evaluation of action patterns
- Reviewing limitations
- Implementation of plans

1.10 Organizing

Every enterprise needs the services of a number of persons to look after its different aspects. The management sets up the objectives or goals to be achieved by its personnel. The energy of every individual is channelized to achieve the objectives of the enterprise. The function of organizing is to arrange, guide, coordinate, direct and control the activities of the organization. It provides the necessary framework within which people associate for the attainment of objectives. It also includes designing jobs, designing organization, and training employees to do so.

The process of organization involves the following steps:

- To identify the work to be performed
- To classify or group the task
- To assign these groups of activities or work to individuals
- To organize training
- To delegate authority and fix responsibility
- To coordinate these authority-responsibility relationships of various activities

1.11 Directing

Directing is concerned with carrying out the desired plans. It initiates organized and planned action, and ensures effective performance by subordinates towards the accomplishment of group activities. Direction is called management in action. Directing is influencing others to achieve organizational objectives. It is also referred to as leading. Supervisors are engaged in directing when they motivate, counsel or discipline subordinates. Leading can also be considered the person-to-person activities of the supervisor.

1.12 Controlling

Controlling is the function of making sure that performance conforms to plans. Control is essential for achieving objectives of an organization. The planning of various activities does not ensure automatic implementation of policies. Control is the process which enables management to get its policies implemented and take corrective action if performance is not according to the pre-determined standards. If planning is the beginning of the management process, controlling may be said to be the final stage. If planning is looking ahead, controlling is looking back. Control is not possible without planning and planning is meaningless without control.

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Control is a live function, and executives at various levels of management continuously assess the performance of their subordinates. Controlling is conducted with people as well as with equipment and materials. Supervisors are engaged in controlling when they make spot checks of their operation.

The process of controlling involves the following steps:

- Establishing standards of performance
- Measuring actual performance
- Comparing the actual performance with the standard
- Finding variations or deviation, if any
- Taking corrective action or measures

1.13 Supervisory Responsibilities

1.13.1 To Higher Management

The expectations management has of the supervisor in turn become the functions to be performed by the supervisor. In order to meet the expectations of higher management, the supervisor must interact with other groups. Each role demand is usually met by coordination with somebody else.

1.13.2 To Employees

Much of a supervisor's job involves the carrying out of responsibilities to employees. Proper discharge of these responsibilities is the primary way in which supervisors meet the demands placed on them by the management. Employees have expectations on supervisors. Caroll and Anthony summarize the situation: "They expect him or her to provide them with direction and support. They expect him or her to be their representative to the higher management. They expect him or her to look after their needs – social needs and personal needs. Perhaps employees should not expect all of this from their leaders – but nevertheless many of them do – and the supervisor must deal with their expectations."

Supervisors have so many different expectations from their subordinates and so many different obligations towards them that it would be difficult to cover all of them. Differences in subordinates, jobs, work organizations and cultures are among the many different factors that influence which responsibilities supervisors have towards their subordinates. A boss in charge of freshly recruited subordinates would have to provide more emotional support than would a boss in charge of a group of existing subordinates.

A representative example of supervisory responsibility toward subordinates is as follows:

- Establish a warm and trusting work climate within the department/organization. Be considerate and open with employees.
- When employee problems occur, handle them promptly. A staff member might need a personal day off in order to attend a friend's wedding. The supervisor should take care of this problem before it causes the employee to be distracted from the job.

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- Be fair in relationships with employees. Although one worker in the department may be more likeable than some others, it is important to make work assignments strictly on the basis of job competence or other organizational requirements.
- Provide all employees with a clear explanation of all matters related with their jobs – sometimes employees need an explanation for seemingly self-apparent work rules. One receptionist went to the rest room while she held a customer on "hold". When reprimanded she said she thought a person had the freedom to go to the rest room 'whenever nature called.'
- Train staff in job-related skills. Most need on-the-job training.
- Counsel with employees when legitimate needs for counseling exist. Although supervisors are not expected to function as personal counselors, it is often important to listen to their problems and then recommend that they seek outside help.
- Discuss contemplated changes before they take place. By doing so, a supervisor is often able to overcome subordinate resistance to change.
- Help in the orientation of new employees. Although most of them receive some kind of orientation programme from the organization, it is important that the supervisor familiarize the new employee with major personnel policies, work regulations, organizational structure, management expectations etc.
- Coordinate and schedule work in ways that minimize peaks and valleys in the work load. Such action helps avert troublesome problem of employees being overworked or under worked.
- Develop a satisfactory level of morale within the group. The term 'morale' refers to a positive attitude and feeling about a number of things such as quality of supervision and attitudes towards colleagues and supervisors.

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- Support employees when they are being treated arbitrarily from above. Supervisors gain respect to the extent that they can perform this delicate act. Supervisors cannot go against
- orders from above, but they can see to it that upper management take another look at a situation in which it appears an employee has been treated unfairly.

1.13.3 Responsibilities to Co-workers (other than supervisors)

If supervisors act too independently, team work is not possible. Perhaps the supervisor's responsibilities towards co-workers are not as extensive or as important as those responsibilities towards higher management and subordinates. Yet coordination with other departments is essential, as given below:

- Coordinate whatever work flow or paperwork that needs to be exchanged among supervisors.
- Communicate with other departments about mutual needs and problems. If you as a supervisor notice a morale problem in your department, it could be worth checking to see if other departments are experiencing a similar problem. It could be an organization wide concern.
- Coordinate policy interpretations with other departments to ensure consistency and uniformity.

1.14 Supervisory Skills

In order to handle their jobs effectively supervisors need the right mix of five key managerial skills. These are classified as technical, human, conceptual, diagnostic and political. The first three have been recognized for many years. Diagnostic and political skills have also now received attention as organizations have become more complex.

1.14.1 Technical Skill

Technical skill is proficiency in a specific activity that involves methods, processes, procedures, or techniques. Individual performers expect their supervisor to be able to help them with technical problems.

1.14.2 Human Skill

Human skill is the ability to work with, understand, motivate, and communicate with individuals and the group. Human skill also includes the ability to communicate with people, to resolve conflict, and to discipline. Since the supervisor's job involves constant interaction with people, human skills are essential.

1.14.3 Conceptual Skill

- Conceptual skill is the ability to understand abstract or general ideas and apply them to specific situations.
- Conceptual skill usually means understanding how the total organization can be affected by a specific activity.
- Although it may always be apparent, every action taken in an organization has ramifications elsewhere.

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1.14.4 Diagnostic Skill

- Diagnostic skill is the ability to analyze the nature of a problem with people, ideas, things or events. A good diagnosis precedes a recommended solution to a problem (like in medicine or automotive repair or management). Supervisors are frequently called on to size up a problem in order to take appropriate corrective action.
- Diagnostic skill overlaps with four managerial skills. This occurs because managers usually need to use technical, human, conceptual or political skills to make their diagnosis.
- Many administrators regard diagnostic skill as the most exciting part of their jobs. An experienced manager expressed it this way: "Figuring out what's wrong is why I am here. If all problems had a ready solution, you wouldn't need a manager."

1.14.5 Political Skill

Political skill is the ability to acquire the power needed to achieve one's objective. Specific political skills include being able to win others over to your cause.

1.15 Ten Key Qualities for Administrators

In order to fully understand the nature of an administrator's work it is essential to know what qualities he/she is expected to possess. John Humphries (2000) specifies ten key qualities:

1.15.1 Providing clear directions by:

- Establishing clear goals and standards;
- Communicating group goals;
- Involving people in setting targets;
- Being clear and thorough when delegating tasks.

1.15.2 Encouraging open, two-way communication by:

- Being open when dealing with people;
- Being honest, direct and to the point;
- Establishing a climate of trust.

1.15.3 Willing to coach and support people by:

- Being supportive and helpful;
- Being constructive when correcting poor performance;
- Supporting then staff upwards.

1.15.4 Providing objective recognition by:

- Recognizing good performance more often than criticizing;
- Relating rewards to the excellence of performance.

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1.15.5 Establishing on-going controls to:

- Follow up on important issues and actions;
- Give staff feedback on their performance.

1.15.6 Selecting the right people to staff the organization.

1.15.7 Understanding the financial implications of decision.

1.15.8 Encouraging new ideas.

1.15.9 Giving out clear cut decisions when necessary.

1.15.10 Constantly demonstrating high levels of integrity.

John Humphries (2000) has advocated that administrators should possess the following attributes, skills and knowledge:

Attributes (in-born qualities)	**Skills (qualities learned and developed)**	**Knowledge (information learned and acquired)**
Integrity	Communication	Staff needs
Flexibility	Listening	Organization policy
Open-mindedness	Motivation	Organization procedures
Decisiveness	Delegation	Organization objectives
Trustworthy	Innovation	Services
Unbiased	Training	Competition
Enthusiastic	Planning	Financial
Imaginative	Controlling	
Humorous	Influencing	

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2 Effective Communication Skills

Effective communication is very important in establishing a good working relationship between administrators and other employees. If the communication between both the parties is clear, it becomes easy to deal with people.

2.1 Transmitting your message

According to John Humphries (2000), "Good verbal communication is a two-way process: the speaker gives the listeners the opportunity to ask questions and make comments about what has been said in order to clarify or query the statement. Failure to do so means that the communication becomes merely information giving."

If the listener makes no comments, when appropriate the speaker should invite the person to do so. Never say 'Do you understand?' as this puts the onus on the listener and, rather than feeling foolish, they will say 'Yes!' If you say 'Have I made myself clear?' then the responsibility rests with you and the listener is more likely to ask for further clarification. It is only a matter of words.

2.2 What is meant by communication?

Communication means interacting with others:

- To promote understanding;

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- Achieve a result of some kind;
- Passing information to another person so that he/she can take action.

This information does not necessarily need to be hard facts. Sometimes just a gesture, a show of emotion or even a shrug of the shoulder can act as our means of communication.

2.3 Why do we need to communicate?

You might think we could all live quite happily without communicating at all. But no – we all need to communicate throughout our life. Communication is a fundamental part of human life. Even a new born baby crying to attract its mother's attention to the fact that it is hungry is communicating, usually very effectively! Since we spend so much of our daily life communicating in one way or another, we should be very good at it, but unfortunately, this is not the case. Life could be a lot easier if we always knew exactly what others were trying to say. Quite often people fail to communicate in a way that you could understand. According to Ann Dobson (2000), "Nowhere is effective communication more important than at work. Vital information needs to be given, received, exchanged and understood hundreds of times in every working day. Many business transactions go wrong simply because of poor communication between the people concerned."

2.4 Effective communication skills

In order to communicate we interact with others through:

2.4.1 **Face-to-face communication:** It is the easiest. You can explain what you mean. If the person does not understand, ask yourself:

- Are you using the language they understand – not difficult but simple words?
- Are your ideas going over their heads?

❖ 3 areas that matter in communication:
- Words: what we say
- Tone: how we say it
- Body language: how we look when we are saying it

❖ Advantages of face-to-face communication:
- People can see what you mean
- Eye contact helps you establish if the other person is listening and understanding
- Your body language can help them believe what you are saying

❖ Disadvantages of face-to-face communication:
- You can give away your true feelings
- You might wear your heart out on your sleeve
- The other person may not understand the words that you say
- They may not like the way you are saying the words

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2.4.2 **Listening skills:** The art of effective listening is essential to clear communication, and clear communication is necessary to management success. Hearing is not listening. We hear all sorts of noises during every waking moment but we don't listen to them.

❖ Listening is more important than just hearing:

- You often 'hear' what you want to hear
- Listening is the other half of communication

❖ When listening:

- Give your full attention
- Do not assume what the other person is going to say
- Do not waste listening time formulating what your reply will be
- Show by eye contact and an interested expression that you are paying attention.
- Make notes if necessary

2.4.3 **The telephone:** Communicating by telephone is yet another way the profile of your organization is perceived. For the person on the other end of the phone you are that organization.

While on the telephone:

- Listen carefully and concentrate on what is being said.
- Do not allow disturbances in the room to interfere with your listening abilities.

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- Use words or your tone of voice to communicate your understanding of what is being said. Let your caller know you are listening by making verbal indications such as 'Mmm,' 'Yes,' 'OK.'

2.4.4 **Questioning techniques:** To clarify a point questions are asked. There are categories of questions which can be used depending upon the type of information that you want in return.

❖ Categories of questions:

- Elaboration questions: for information of a general nature, for example: 'Tell me about……;' 'Is there anything more?'; 'Would you elaborate on that, please?'
- Specification questions: asking for more detailed information, for example: 'What precisely did she say?'; 'When was the last time this happened?'
- Feelings questions: asked when you want to know the emotional effect of something, for example: 'What did you feel when it happened?'; 'How do you feel when people are aggressive towards you?'
- Behavioural questions: past behaviour is a good indicator of future behaviour, for example: 'How would you usually deal with a situation like this?'; 'What did you do the last time this happened?'; 'How did you react when…….?'

❖ **Warnings about questions:** Bear the following points in mind when asking questions of members of your staff:

- Too many questions from you will appear to be an interrogation of the other person.
- When you ask a question, keep quiet and wait for the answer. Don't be tempted to re-phrase your question unless asked to.
- Ask one question at a time. If you ask multiple questions you will only get one or two answers.
- If you don't get a full answer to a question, ask it again.
- Listen carefully to the answers.
- Refrain from asking leading questions: 'You would agree. Wouldn't you that ……?', except when seeking agreement.

2.4.5 **Letter writing:** In order to communicate effectively you must produce quality letters for your reader.

❖ Planning your letter: Is your objective:

- To give information?
- To sell an idea?
- To promote an action?
- To clarify something?
- To rectify a situation?
- To promote yourself?

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❖ Structuring your letter:

- Greeting
- Heading
- Introduction
- Information
- Action
- Conclusion

❖ Writing your letter: Information and language should be:

- Accurate
- Brief
- Clear

Examples:

Phrase	Short version
At this moment in time	Now
In the event of	If
I have pleasure in enclosing	I enclose

2.4.6 **Report writing:** Quite often you may have to prepare a report on the progress of work, an on-going project, or a planned activity of your department/organization. It is necessary to understand that people want a report that is well thought of, well prepared, and is effective.

❖ The first thing you need to think of:

- Who is my reader?
- What does she/he already know of this subject?
- What are the objectives of this report?

❖ Consider why you have to write:

- Are you an expert in this subject?
- Are you the best report writer in the department/organization?
- Have you been asked because you were there?
- Is it a part of your job profile? (Mostly it is!)

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❖ Planning the report:

- Consider how long it is until the report is required.
- How long do you have to work on gathering the information?
- How long on structuring and writing the report?
- How long on checking, revising, and perhaps even typing the report?

❖ Structure of the report (suggested):

- Title page
- Contents
- Summary/Abstract
- Introduction
- Findings
- Conclusion
- Recommendation
- Appendices, acknowledgements, references, bibliography etc.
- Index

❖ Presentation/Typing:

- Wide margins
- Double spacing
- Paragraphs with headings
- Headings in different type face
- Consistency in numbering system

2.5 Choosing Paper on Spoken Word

Should we communicate on paper or by the spoken word? Different occasions call for different action. If you need to contact someone urgently and for a brief communication, a telephone call would probably be your best choice. You could even go to the person or call him/her and clarify the matter. On the other hand, if you have a very complicated message to explain, then sending a letter/note would be better. The receiver will have time to digest the information properly.

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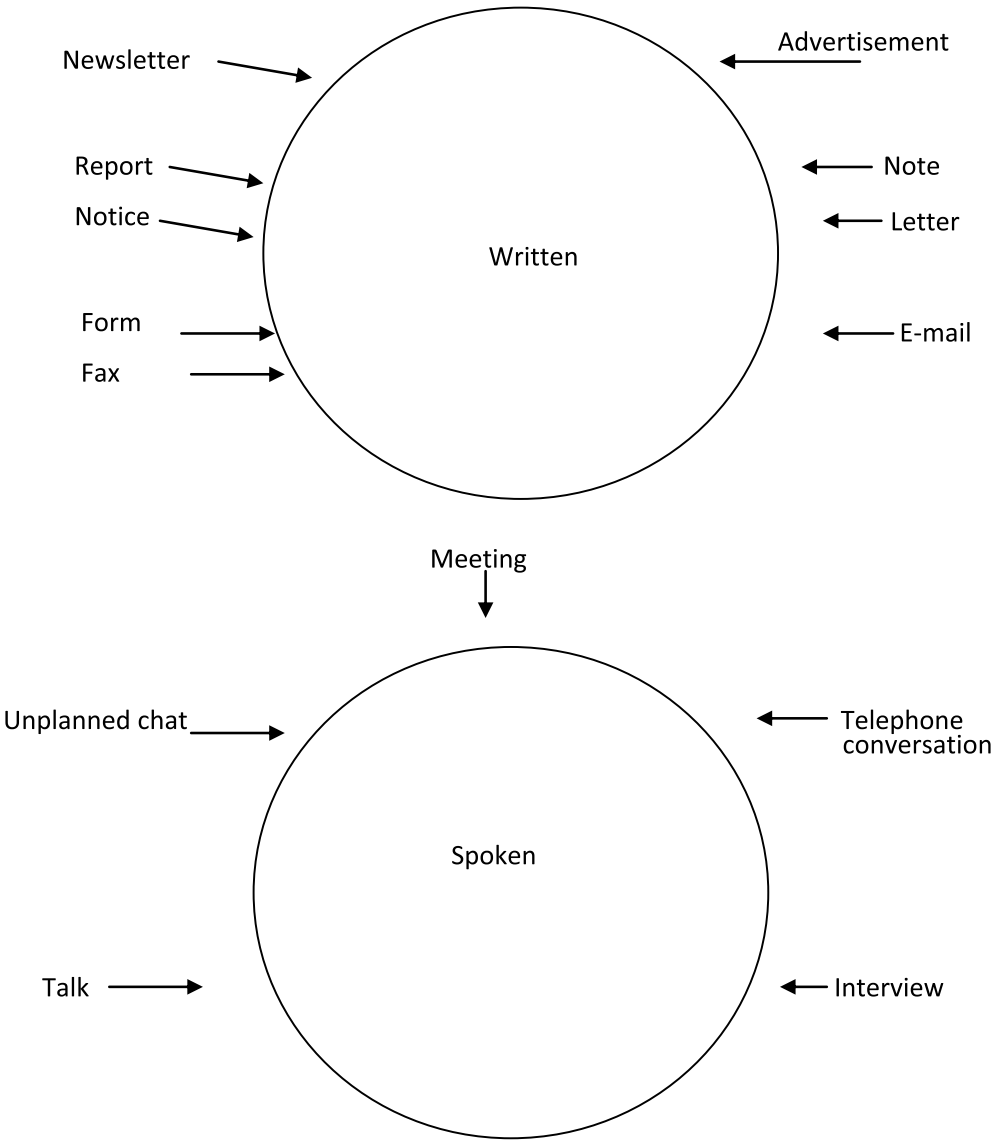

2.6 Barriers to Communication

There are many barriers to communication. In order to overcome these barriers and understand the true meaning of the message that comes through a particular communication, we need to filter the messages.

2.6.1 Identifying communication filters

When we filter coffee the grounds are left on the filter paper and only the liquid goes into the jug. A similar thing happens with communication. There are three types of filters which only allow a portion of the message to get through. As a result, we only receive part of the message and, often, only the part that we want to hear.

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❖ **Attention filters:** Physical distractions such as:

- Noise: other people talking, telephones ringing, traffic, music.
- Environment: too hot, too cold, poor lighting.
- Interruptions: people, telephones.
- Timing: trying to talk to someone when they are about to go somewhere or are in the middle of a job.

❖ **Emotional filters:** These are inherent in the speaker and probably unknown to the other person:

- Prejudice: dislike of the other person, the way they are dressed, the message itself.
- Status: the other person is higher or lower in the organization hierarchy, which can affect the way in which you speak and listen to them.
- Experience: If previous communication with a person has resulted in an unpleasant experience, you will be wary when approaching the next time, not wishing to repeat the experience.
- Assumptions: assuming what the message will be and thus not listening properly.
- Values and beliefs: We all have our own codes regarding morals, religion, and politics and so on. If the message transgresses these standards, we are likely to switch off.

❖ **Word filters:** Certain words and phrases can cause us to stop listening to the person who utters them:

- Criticism: Few of us like to be criticized. 'That was the wrong way to tackle the problem!'
- Moralizing: 'You shouldn't have done that!'
- Ordering: 'I want the report on my desk by Thursday afternoon without fail.'
- Threatening: 'If you don't do what I say, you will be in serious trouble.'

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- Advising: 'I suggest that you …….' People will only accept the advice that agrees with their solution. They will respond to advice with the phrase 'Yes, but.'
- Logical argument: It is too difficult to argue with logic.
- Reassuring: 'Never mind, everything will turn out all right in the end.'
- Diverting: 'Yes all right, but as I was saying…….'
- Jargon: Unless the listener understands the jargon, they will wonder what it means and will not be listening to the rest of the message.

2.6.2 Reducing the filters

Even one filter can reduce the effect of or distort communication but in most instances, two or more are operating at the same time. Being aware that they exist is half the battle in reducing the effect of filters.

It is not always possible or practical to eliminate attention filters, but they can be reduced. If the proposed conversation will take more than a few minutes, find somewhere quiet to hold it and let it be known that you want no interruptions. It is simple enough to get your timing right. If someone approaches you at an inconvenient time, politely tell them so and arrange to meet later.

You can do little about other people's emotions, but try to put your own on hold when talking and listening to others. If you sense emotional filters becoming barriers, keep your conversation brief and to the point.

Take care over the words and phrases that you use. How would you respond as the listener? If you are on the receiving end, question the speaker, ask him to justify the comments.

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3 Understanding Behaviour

Administrators need to understand why people behave as they do. To get things done through other people, you have to know why they engage in certain characteristic behaviours

Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard and Dewey E. Johnson (2002) have emphasized that "Understanding past behaviour is important in itself for developing human skills, and it also provides a framework for the next level of expertise – predicting behaviour. Understanding why people did what they did yesterday enables a supervisor to predict how they are likely to behave tomorrow, next week, and next month under similar as well as changing environmental conditions."

The next level of expertise that an effective administrator or leader needs is the ability to direct, change, and control behaviour. People have many needs, all of which are continually competing. No one person has exactly the same mixture of these needs as another. We must know what our employees really want from their jobs. Administrators have to know their people to understand what motivates them.

If an administrator asks a staff member to do something the member has never been taught to do and expects good performance the first time, and doesn't offer any help to the staff member, the administrator has set the person up for failure. Administrators should remember that no one (including themselves) learns how to do anything all at once. We learn a little bit at a time. As a result, if an administrator wants someone to do something completely new, the administrator should reward the smallest progress the person makes in the desired direction.

The outcome of any situation is dependent on the way you choose to behave. Whether you are initiating some action or responding to someone else's behaviour, you will have three options to choose from:

- Passive: non-assertive, submissive
- Aggressive: direct, indirect
- Assertive

3.1 Passive Behaviour

❖ You are passive when you:

- Want to maintain status quo
- Allow others to make decisions for you
- Verbally agree with others despite your real feelings

❖ What would you look like?

- Standing back (sit at back of groups)
- Little or no eye contact
- Smiling even when upset
- Fidgeting

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❖ What would you sound like?

- Apologetic
- Vague
- Self-hating
- Hesitant
- Moaning

❖ How would you feel?

- Taken advantage of
- Hurt
- Anxious
- Frustrated
- Powerless

❖ How would the others feel?

- Frustrated
- Resentful
- Exasperated
- Guilty

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❖ Passive behaviour doesn't help you achieve your goals, therefore you:

- Feel a victim
- Blame others for what happens to you
- Allow others to choose for you
- Choose passive behaviour because it is low risk

3.2 Aggressive Behaviour

❖ You are aggressive when you try to:

- Impose your position on others
- Accuse, blame others and find fault with others despite their feelings
- Act with belligerence and humiliate others
- Behave in an unpredictable manner

❖ What would you look like?

- Leaning forward
- Pointing fingers
- Piercing or glaring eye contact
- Jabbing

❖ What would you sound like?

- Loud
- Sarcastic
- Emphatic
- Defensive
- Arrogant

❖ How would you feel?

- In control of others
- Guilty
- Isolated
- Power over them

❖ How would others feel?

- Defensive
- Humiliated
- Afraid
- Resentful

❖ Aggressive behaviour:

- Helps you achieve your goals only to a limited extent
- Gained at the expense of others
- Is 'high risk' as it sets you up in a very visible way

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3.3 Assertive Behaviour

Assertiveness is about self-esteem and respect of others, not about winning. It is about modifying behaviour, not changing personalities. It is also the key to good, clear, honest and professional communication. Assertive behaviour provides people with the skills that enable them to communicate successfully at work. as administrators you provide the first line of communication for your organization – both internally as well as externally – and you should be able to deal with various situations effectively.

What do you say and feel if:

- Your superior makes an unreasonable request of you?
- You want to disagree with the point of view of a senior member of staff?
- You get an angry customer/client on the telephone (or in person) who is shouting abuse?

❖ Develop an assertive approach, and you will be able to:

- Avoid conflict situations
- Save time
- Get more of what you want
- Handle your appraisal
- Work more effectively with your superiors and colleagues
- Put forward your ideas and your behaviour
- Feel good about yourself and your behaviour

You can recognize the signs of assertive behaviour by analyzing the following situations:

❖ You are assertive when you:

- Are honest with yourself and others
- Protect your rights
- Respect the rights of others
- Are able to express yourself socially and emotionally
- Have confidence in yourself
- Are able to behave in an adult and rational way

❖ What would you like?

- Eye contact direct but not staring
- Relaxed, moving easily
- Open hand movements
- Head held up

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❖ How would you sound?

- Steady and firm
- Spontaneous
- Sincere
- Clear

❖ How would you feel?

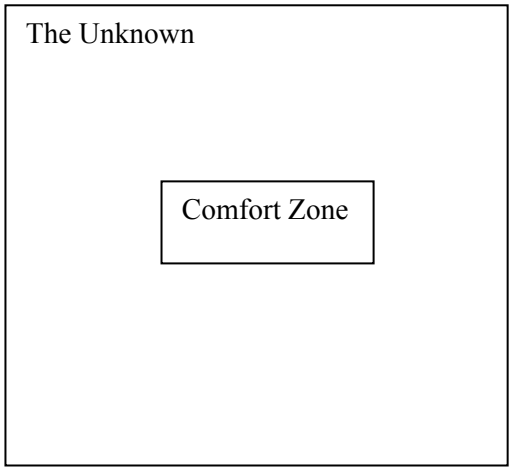
- Good about self
- Confident
- Responsible for your actions
- Power within

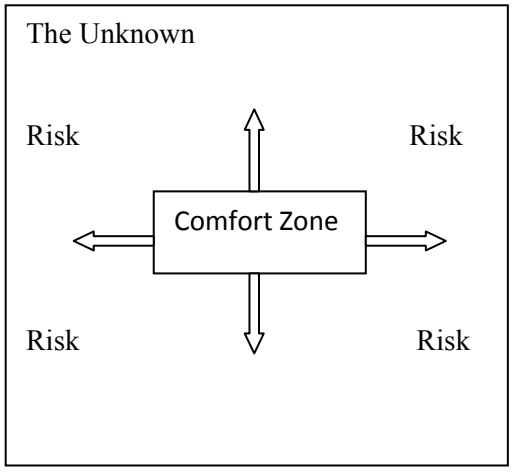
❖ Assertive behaviour:

- Helps to achieve goals without hurting others
- Is about choosing for ourselves
- Is about responsibility for our own actions
- Can provide us with a gentle forward strength and inner confidence

In order to practice assertive behaviour you must ensure that you have positive and assertive beliefs, feelings and attitudes.

3.4 Comfort Zones





❖ Comfort Zone = Situations you enjoy, things you feel comfortable doing.

❖ Unknown = Situations you find unpleasant and difficult.

- You avoid them
- You remain static

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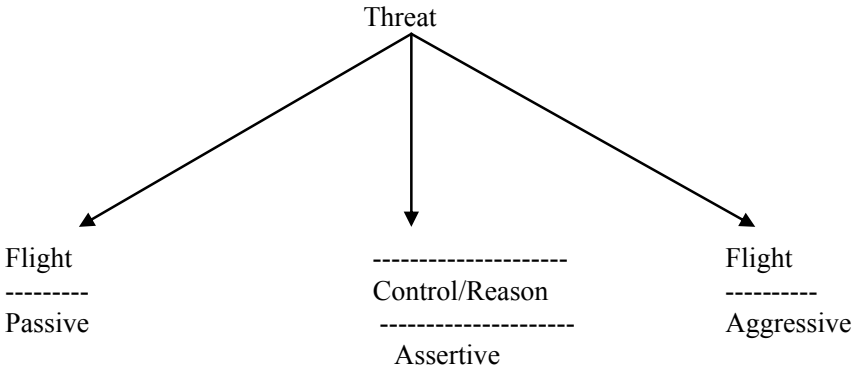
- ❖ Inside box = Your potential
- ❖ Come outside Comfort Zone + take a small risk = increase the size of your Comfort Zone.
- ❖ By regularly taking risks you will always grow.
- ❖ Areas outside Comfort Zone = Threat
- ❖ Look for middle ground of reasoned control.



- ❖ Stepping stones to assertiveness:
- Listen to other person, show you understand.
- Say what you think or what you feel.
- Say what you want to happen.

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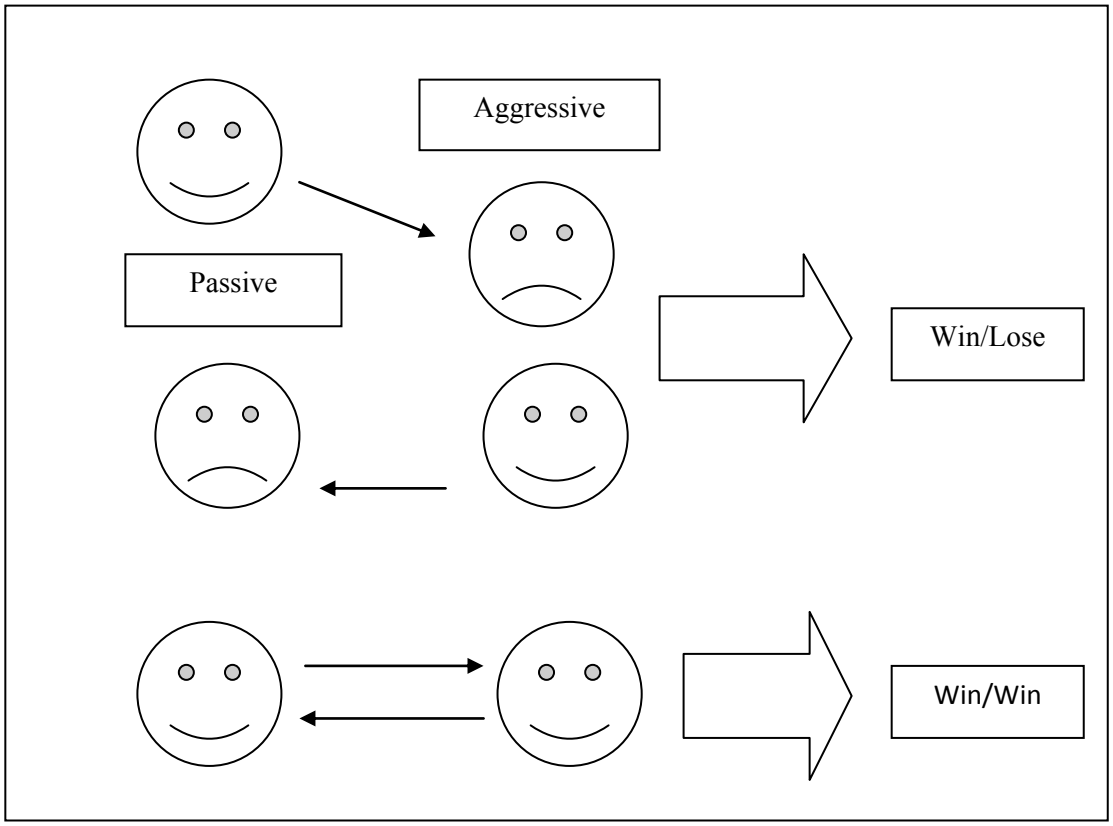
(Often you will carry out Steps 1 and 2 and then fail to say what it is you want. It is only by following through with Step 3 that you are giving yourself the chance of getting what you want.)

3.5 Getting to WIN/WIN

You must ensure that both parties come away from the situation in a positive position. Look for a Win/Win solution.



- Negotiate a joint solution – a workable compromise.
- Your solution + My Solution = OUR SOLUTION

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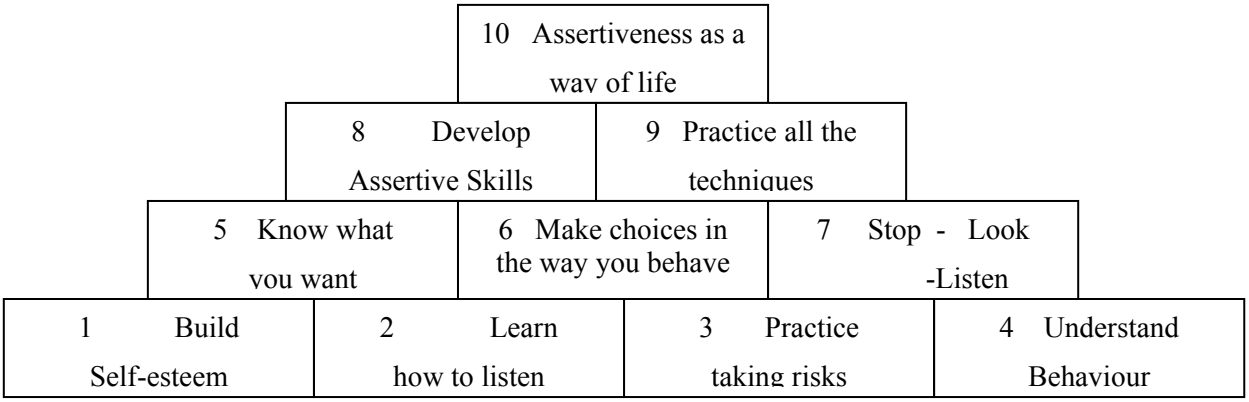
3.6 Assertiveness Building Blocks



3.7 Human Hypothesis

According to Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard and Dewey E. Johnson (2002), "Human beings are basically motivated by social needs; they seek meaning in the social relationships on the job and are more responsive to these than to the incentives and the controls of the organization." It implies that administrators should not limit their attention to the task to be performed but should also give attention to the needs of the people. In educational setting administrators should be concerned with the feelings of their people and, in doing so, must often act as the communication link between the employees and higher management.

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4 Leadership

The organization is made up of groups of people. An essential part of administration is coordinating the activities of groups and directing the efforts of their members towards the goals and objectives of the organization. This involves the process of leadership and the choice of an appropriate form of behaviour.

4.1 Meaning of Leadership

Leadership might be interpreted in simple terms, such as 'getting others to follow' or 'getting people to do things willingly,' or interpreted more specifically as 'the use of authority in decision making.' It is interpersonal influence which is exercised in a situation and directed through the communication process towards the attainment of a specified goal. It is often associated with the willing and enthusiastic behaviour of followers. Since leadership is an inspirational process, a leader influences long-term changes in attitude. It doesn't necessarily take place within the hierarchical structure, and many people operate as leaders without role definition. Leadership is related to motivation and the process of communication through which one person influences the behaviour of the other people. The process of leadership is not separable from the activities of groups. Effective leadership is a two-way process.

4.1.1 Lea dership Relationship

❖ A leader may be:

- Imposed;
- Formally appointed;
- Chosen informally;
- Emerge naturally.

❖ Leadership may be:

- Attempted leadership: When any individual in the group attempts to exert influence over other members of the group;
- Successful leadership: When the influence brings about the behaviour and results that were intended by the leader;
- Effective leadership: When successful leadership results in functional behaviour and the achievement of group goals.

❖ Leadership may also involve:

- Exercise through greater knowledge, expertise or reputation;
- Personal qualities or charisma;
- Manner of exercising authority;
- Adoption of a particular style of leadership.

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❖ Leadership is a dynamic form of behaviour and there are a number of variables which affect the leadership. According to McGregor (1987), 'Leadership is not a property of individual, but a complex relationship among these variables.' He has specified the following variables:

- The characteristics of the leader;
- The attitude, needs and other personal characteristics of the group members;
- The nature of the organization, such as its purpose, its structure, the tasks to be performed;
- The social, economic and political environment.

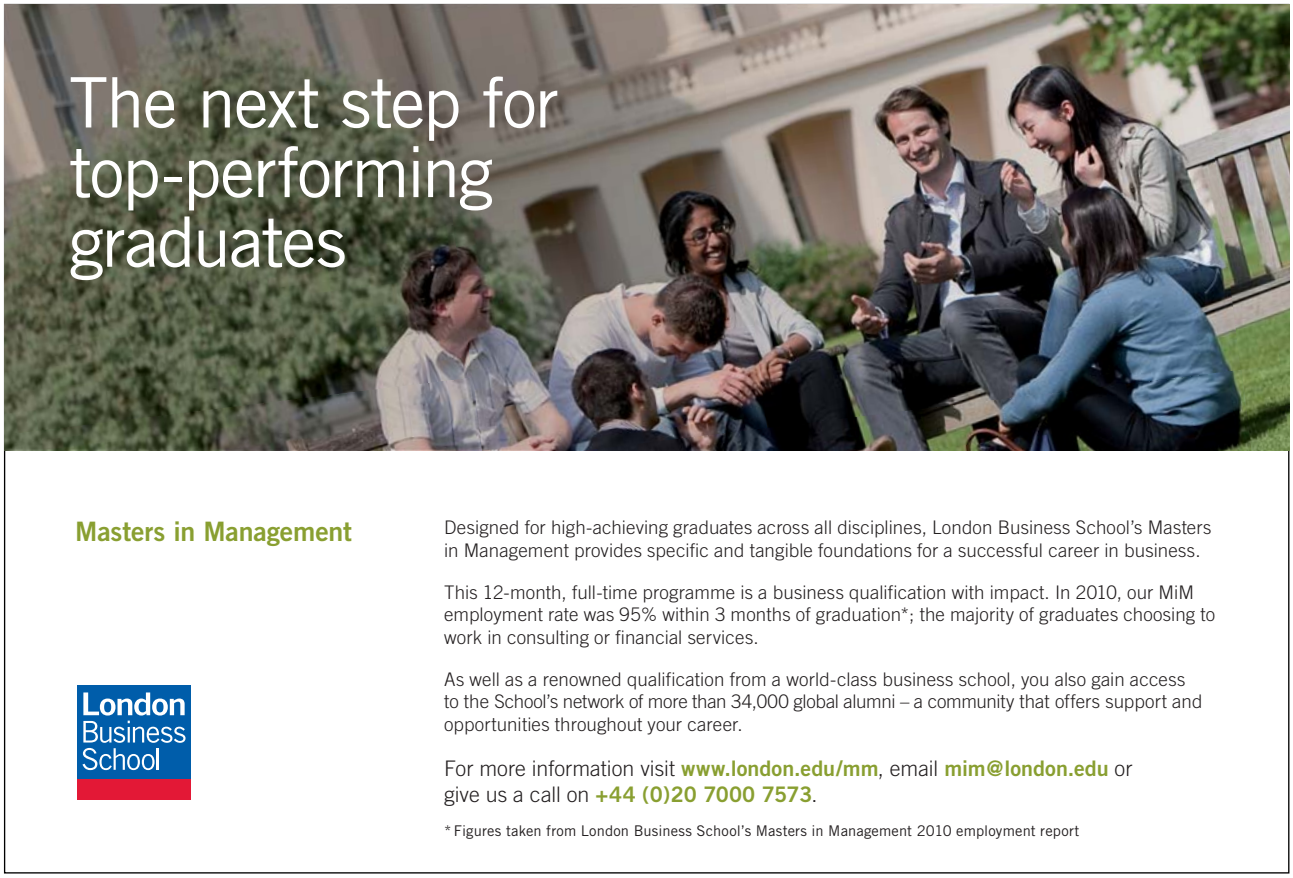
4.2 Approaches to Leadership

There may be ways of analyzing leadership. It is helpful, therefore, to have some framework in which to consider different approaches to study of the subject.

One way is to examine leadership in terms of:

❖ The qualities or traits approach:

- Focuses attention on person in the job and not on job itself.
- Subjective judgment in determining 'good' or 'successful' leader.



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The list of possible traits is too long and there is not always agreement on the most important.

❖ The situational approach:

- Emphasis on the importance of professional knowledge or technical expertise.
- Focus on what the leader actually does rather than on his personality characteristics.

This approach has its limitations. Quite often a person with knowledge doesn't emerge a leader. At the same time there is no focus on interpersonal behaviour. In such a situation the organization can't wait for a leader to emerge.

❖ The functional group approach:

- Focus on functions of leadership
- Focus on content of leadership

A general theory on the functional approach is associated with the work of John Adair (1979) and his ideas on 'action-oriented leadership.' The effectiveness of the leader is dependent upon three areas of need within the group:

- Need to achieve common task
- Need for team maintenance
- Individual needs of group members

4.3 Task, Team and Individual Functions

Administrators should have a clear concept of various task functions, team functions, and functions of individuals within the group.

4.3.1 Task functions involve;

- Achieving the objectives of the work group
- Defining group tasks
- Planning the work
- Allocation of resources
- Organization of duties and responsibilities
- Controlling quality and checking performance
- Reviewing progress

4.3.2 Team functions involve:

- Maintaining morale and building team spirit
- The cohesiveness of the group as a working group
- Setting standards and maintaining discipline
- Systems of communication within the group
- Training the group
- Appointment of sub-leaders

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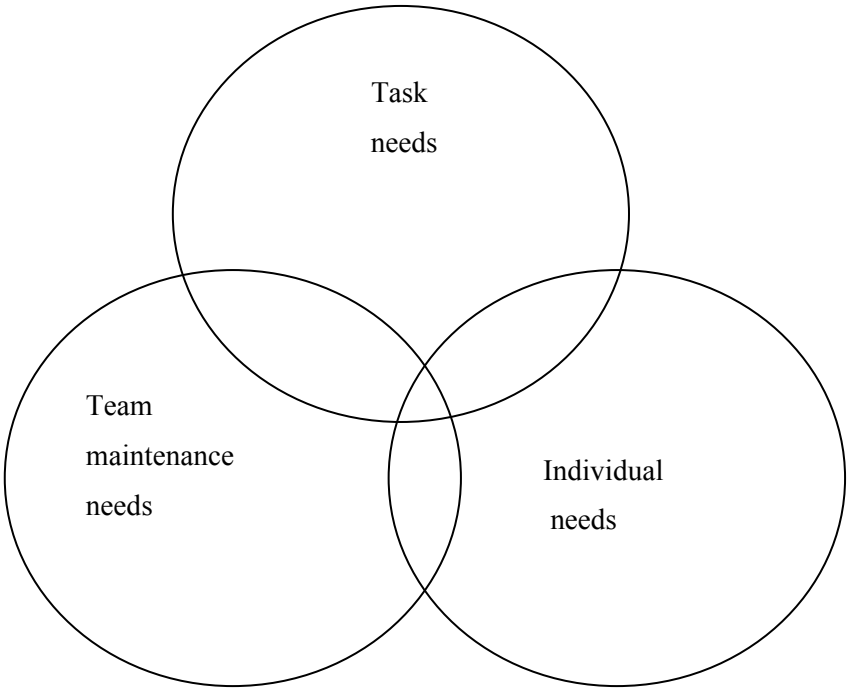
4.3.3 Individual functions involve:

- Meeting the needs of the individual members of the group
- Attending to personal problems
- Giving praise and status
- Reconciling conflicts between group needs and needs of the individual
- Training the individual

The action by the leader in any one area of need will affect one or both of the other areas of need. The ideal position is where complete integration of the three areas of need is achieved. In any work group the most effective leader is the person who sees that the task needs, the needs of the group and those of the individual are all adequately met. The effective leader elicits the contribution of members of the group and draws out other leadership from the group to satisfy the three interrelated areas of need.

4.4 Interaction needs within the group



4.5 Functions and responsibilities of leadership

In order to meet the three areas of needs – task, group and individual – certain leadership functions have to be performed. Not all of these functions are required all the time.

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❖ The leader needs:

- Awareness of what is going on in groups, the group process or underlying behaviour, and the actual content of discussion;
- Understanding, that is knowing that a particular function is required;
- Skill to do it effectively, which can be usually judged by whether the group responds or changes course.

4.5.1 Functions of a leader:

- As executive: top coordinator of the group activities and overseer of the execution of policies.
- As planner: deciding the ways and means by which the group achieves its ends. This may involve both short-term and long-term planning.
- As policy maker: the establishment of group goals and policies.
- As expert: a source of readily available information and skills, although there will be some reliance on technical expertise and advice from other members of the group.
- As external group representative: the official spokesperson for the group, the representative of the group and the channel for both outgoing and incoming communications.
- As controller of internal relations: determines specific aspects of the group structure.
- As purveyor of rewards and punishment: control over group members by the power to provide rewards and punishments.
- As arbitrator and mediator: controls interpersonal conflicts within the group.
- As exemplar: a model of behaviour for members of the group, setting an example of what is expected.

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- As symbol of the group: enhancing group unity by providing some kind of cognitive focus and establishing the group as a distinct entity.
- As substitute for individual responsibility: relieves the individual member of the group from the necessity of, and responsibility for, personal decision.
- As ideologist: serving as the source of beliefs, values and standards of behaviour for individual members of the group.
- As father figure: serving as focus for the positive emotional feelings of individual members and the object for identification and transference.
- As scapegoat: serving as a target for aggression and hostility of the group, accepting blame in case of failure.

It is important to understand that leadership resides in the functions and not a particular person. The various functions of leadership can be shared among members of the group. If a member provides a particular function which is relevant to the activities of the group, and accepted by group members, then in those circumstances this could become a leadership function.

4.6 Styles of Leadership

In the work situation it has become increasingly clear that administrators can no longer rely solely on the use of their position in the hierarchical structure as a means of exercising the functions of leadership. In order to get the best results from subordinates, the administrators must also have regard for the need to encourage high morale, a spirit of involvement and cooperation, and a willingness to work.

Leadership style is the way in which the functions of leadership are carried out, the way in which the administrator typically behaves towards members of the group.

4.6.1 The Authoritarian Style

It is where the focus of power is with the leader, and all interactions within the group move towards the leader. The leader exercises decision making and authority for determining policy, procedures for achieving goals, work tasks and relationships, control of rewards or punishments.

4.6.2 The Democratic Style

Here the focus is more with the group as a whole and there is greater interaction within the group. The leadership functions are shared with members of the group. The group members have a greater say in decision making, determination of systems and procedures.

4.6.3 A genuine Laissez-faire Style

With this style the leader observes that members of the group are working well on their own. The leader makes a decision to allow them freedom of action and not to interfere, but is readily available if help is needed. This is to be contrasted with the leader who could not care, who deliberately keeps away from the trouble spots and does not want to get involved. The leader just lets members of the group get on with the work on hand. This is more a non-style of leadership. It can perhaps ne labeled as abdication.

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4.6.4 The Situational Style

Leadership behaviour is determined by two main situational factors – the personal characteristics of subordinates, and the nature of the task:

- The personal characteristics of subordinates determine how they will react to the leader's behaviour and the extent to which they see such behaviour as an immediate or potential source of need satisfaction.
- The nature of the task relates to the extent that it is routine and structured, or non-routine and unstructured. For example, when a task is highly structured and the goals readily apparent, attempts to further explain the job or to give directions are likely to be viewed by subordinates as unacceptable behaviour. However, when a task is highly unstructured or the nature of the goals is not clear, a more directive style of leadership behaviour is likely to be welcomed by subordinates.

Leadership behaviour is based, therefore, on both the willingness of the leader to help subordinates and the needs of subordinates for help. Leadership behaviour will be motivational to the extent that it provides necessary direction, guidance and support, helps clarify path-goal relationships and removes any obstacles which hinder attainment of goals. By using one of the four styles of leadership behaviour the leader attempts to influence subordinates' perceptions and motivation, and smooth the path to their goals.

4.7 Path-Goal Theory

The path-goal theory of leadership suggests that the performance of subordinates is affected by the extent to which the leader satisfies their expectations.

❖ Dynamic leadership:
- Giving specific directions
- Expecting subordinates to follow

❖ Supportive leadership:
- Friendly and approachable
- Concern for subordinates' needs

❖ Participative leadership:
- Consulting subordinates
- Evaluating their suggestions before deciding

❖ Achievement-oriented leadership:
- Setting challenging goals
- Seeking improvement in performance
- Confidence in their ability

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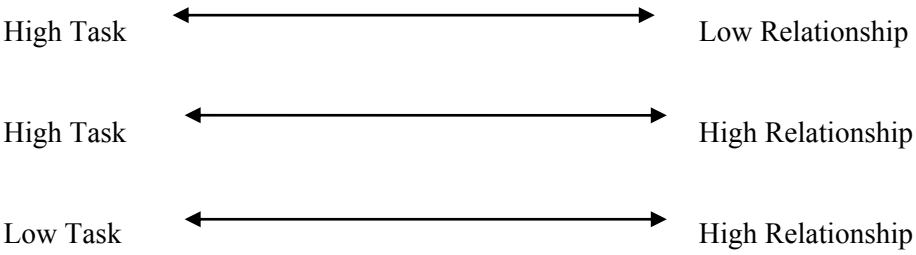
4.8 Situational Leadership Model

It is a combination of:

- Task behaviour: provides direction, sets goals, defines their roles, and directs how to undertake roles.
- Rational behaviour: two-way communication, listens to the group, provides support and encouragement.



4.9 Team Building

For the successful functioning of an organization it is essential that the administrators devote sufficient time and effort to promote the spirit of team work. no individual can do the work all alone and effectively too. Building a strong team of employees for performing various responsibilities ought to be the prime objective of administrators. The task is not as easy as it

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seems. It is easy to get the players, but getting them to play together is the hardest part, but with a clear vision and sustained efforts it can be done.

4.10 Characteristics of High Performance Teams

The teams that are able to demonstrate high levels of performance are the ones that have been carefully nurtured.

They:

- Set high output, high quality targets and achieve them
- Gain a high degree of job satisfaction
- Cooperate well with one another
- Have leaders who are well-respected for the example they set
- Are well-balanced with respect to the roles people play in relation to their skills
- Have a high degree of autonomy
- Learn quickly from their mistakes
- Are client-oriented
- Have high problem-solving skills and regularly review performance
- Are motivated

4.11 Attributes of High Performance Teams

High performance teams are easily recognizable by the following attributes they have:

- Participative leadership
- Shared responsibility
- Aligned on purpose
- High communication
- Future focused
- Focused on task
- Creative talents
- Rapid response

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5 Effective Decision Making

An administrator is required to take decisions in various situations. Decision making is the foremost aspect of administration. The method of decision making is quite often responsible for far-reaching consequences. "Decisions are basic to management in action," says George R. Terry (1993). He further emphasizes that "to make management more meaningful, decisions must be made. They are mandatory for planning, actuating and controlling to have significance." Decision making may be defined as the solution from among alternatives of a course of action. According to Koontz and Weihrich (1988), a plan cannot be said to exist unless a decision – a commitment of resources, direction, or reputation – has been made. A decision is the outcome of hunch, intuition, reasoning and planning. It is made to achieve goals. Though decision making has its own limitations – as no administrator can simultaneously plan the future, invent the video monitor, and prepare the budget – he can definitely make a significant contribution to the way in which activities of the organization are to proceed further. It is the administrator who has to take key decisions, which take development from the mere oratorical to the real.

5.1 Features

Decision making has a number of important features:

- Decisions are made to achieve identifiable goals.
- They imply the existence of a set of alternatives to choose from.
- The process of decision making is extremely dynamic.
- Decisions are made in relation to the environment.
- It is implied that a decision maker has the freedom to do so.
- When a decision has been taken, the matte does not end there. Decision making is an ongoing process.
- Decisions are not taken in haste. The process is intellectual or rational.

5.2 Scope

The role of the administrator can be seen as a role concerned with three main classes of decision:

- The decisions regarding the allocation of resources within the system – the organization function of administration.
- The decisions regarding taking the organization in a well-defined specific direction – the directive function of administration.
- The decisions relating to monitoring or checking – the control function of administration.

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5.3 Purpose

An organization makes an effort to respond to challenges and pressures of the environment, and decides to cope with it. This ensures that there is some sort of equilibrium. Management as such is concerned with taking decisions and implementing them. The function of a decision is to ensure that the organization determines the right course at the right time in response to the circumstances. Tannenbaum (1949) suggests that administrators are really concerned with decision making for three main purposes – organization, direction and control. In the 'organization' aspect it is determined what 'parts' there shall be in the system and what relationships shall exist between them. 'Direction' provides for the purpose of action and the methods and procedures to be followed in achieving them. 'Control' ensures that the purposes of action are attained.

In the past, the administrator alone was responsible for taking all the decisions. But now the size and complexity of the organization has changed the whole concept. The administrative functions of the administrator – forecasting, planning, commanding, and coordinating – have become specialized and fall within the compass of the professional. As the size of his staff increases, the administrator has to concern himself more with setting up standards of performance for the members of his staff.

5.4 Types

The decision making task of an administrator involves taking various types of decisions:

- Institutional decisions: They relate to scheduling or policy-making covering various programmes and activities.

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- Strategy decisions: They involve the implementation of institutional decisions. An administrator has to decide who should be involved in what, when and how.
- Programmed decisions: These decisions are structured and are applied to routine problems and repetitive work.
- Non-programmed decisions: They deal with problems that result from unusual and unstructured situations. They are aimed at the problems that are not well defined.
- Initiative or forced decisions.
- Decision making under certainty, uncertainty and risk conditions.
- Personal decisions.
- Individual or group decisions.

5.5 Process

Decisions do not occur in a vacuum. There is an orderly process to decision making. Griffiths (1959) states, "Decision making is the process which one goes through in order to be able to pass judgment and terminate a controversy." This process passes through a series of steps:

- Recognizing, defining and limiting the problem;
- Analyzing, diagnosing and evaluating the problem;
- Establishing criteria or standards by which a solution will be judged as acceptable;
- Discovering alternate solutions;
- Collecting data;
- Selecting the best solution;
- Converting the decision into effective action.

5.5.1 Recognizing, defining and limiting the problem

The first step in decision making is to find the real problem and to define it. One's knowledge about the areas of the problem has a direct bearing on his perception of the problem. One has also to determine the conditions for its solutions, and go through the objectives for the solution. The objectives should be focused on performance and results. They should have a balance between the immediate future and long-range goals. It is also necessary to spell out the rules that limit the solution because in many cases the right decision will require a change in accepted policies or practices.

5.5.2 Analyzing, diagnosing and evaluating the problem

The next step is to analyze the problem by classifying it and finding the facts. A decision maker must ask himself: What does the problem mean to me? What does it mean to the organization? What do I want to do about it? Is this a problem on which a decision needs to be made? Classification of the problem helps in determining who must make the decision, who must be consulted in making it and who must be informed. This will ensure that decision is not endangered, and that it is clear who has to do what in order to convert the decision into effective action.

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5.5.3 Establishing criteria

A decision maker functions in a framework of values – personal values, cultural values and the values of the organization itself. One must consider legal and social values before coming to the final decision with regard to important problems. Hence an administrator has to look for solutions the standards of which will be acceptable as per social norms. Griffiths (1959) rightly states, "In a sense, a decision on criteria and standards must be made prior to the major decision."

5.5.4 Discovering alternate solutions

The process of decision making involves considering several alternative solutions. They are the means of compelling us to look at our basic assumptions, examine them and test their validity. A central problem for organizational decision makers is to choose between maintaining the systems of action 'as is', or changing them in desirable and feasible directions by desirable and feasible amounts. In fact, the phase of search for solutions places emphasis upon how creative the individual has to be in looking for solutions. Though alternative solutions may not ensure taking the right

decision, they prevent us from making the decision what we would have known to be the wrong one if we had given a serious thought to the problem.

5.5.5 Collecting data

In getting the facts, the administrator has to ask: What information do I need for this particular decision? He has to decide about the relevance and validity of data available. He may not be able to get all the facts he should have. A large number of decisions are based on insufficient knowledge. This happens because either the information is not available or to get it one may have to spend a lot of time or money. Decision making is not hindered by incomplete information if the decision maker knows what information is lacking. This will help in judging how much of a risk the decision involves. Moreover, sometimes there is no time for collecting data. For example, if there is a total breakdown in the electricity supply system of the organization, the administrator cannot wait for the procedural delays of calling for tenders etc. He has to take an immediate decision to get the electricity supply restored whatever it may cost.

5.5.6 Selecting the best solution

Before deciding upon the best solution from among the alternatives available one must consider the following criteria:

- Risk: An administrator has to examine the risk involved in taking a particular decision. In order to minimize the risk factor he must consider the possible consequences of a decision.
- Economy of effort: Sustained effort, avoidance of frequent changes in plans and delegation of responsibilities (coupled with authority) as per the aptitude and capability of staff go a long way in taking a suitable decision.
- Timing: Too long procrastination or haste does not contribute to effective decision making. While a delayed action does not bear fruit, a decision taken in haste may prove to be dangerous. Any decision has to be timed well.

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- Limitations of resources: One must consider the limitations of human beings who will carry out the decision. What they can and cannot do depends upon their vision, competence, skill and understanding. An administrator must provide for raising the ability and standard of people, or new people may have to be found. He must ask himself: Do I have the means of carrying out my decisions? Do I have the people who will do so? In addition to the above, an administrator can use the following three basic approaches while selecting from among various alternatives:

- Experience: Experience plays a large part in decision making. However, reliance on past experience as a guide for future action can be dangerous. Lessons of experience may not be applicable to new problems. As a matter of fact, good decisions must be evaluated against future events, while experience belongs to the past. On the contrary, if we analyze experience carefully and understand the basic reasons for success or failure, then experience can be a powerful tool for decision analysis.
- Experimentation: An easy way is to try one of the alternatives but it is likely to be very expensive in terms of expenditure on capital and personnel. At the same time, there are many decisions that cannot be made unless the best course of action is ascertained by experiment.
- Research and analysis: In this approach, one must first comprehend the problem, search for relationships among the variables and premises. However, this type of analysis and study are likely to be cheaper than experimentation.

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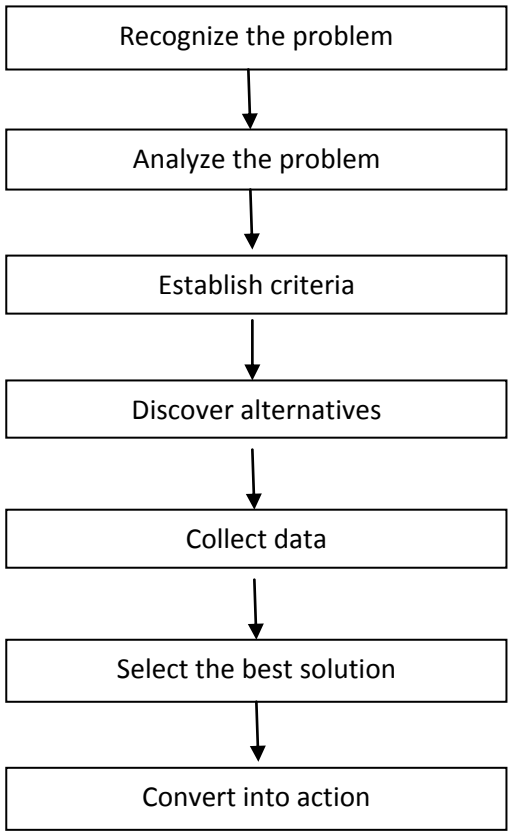
5.5.7 Converting the decision into effective action

Any decision has to be made effective in action. An administrator's decision is always a decision what other people should do. For this, it is not enough that they buy it. They must make it their own. Since the subordinates are affected by their superiors' decisions, they try to influence them. They can easily sabotage any programme they are not convinced about. Hence it is essential that the perceptions of the personnel be taken into account. In some respects, they behave like competitors who seek recognition for their ideas and skills. In practical matters, the question almost gets settled, but it is a man and not an opinion that wins. The administrator is not only choosing among alternatives; he is inescapably choosing among advocates as well. However, an administrator can carry the people along with him if he is able to communicate effectively and in clear terms with those who are to implement a decision. According to Peter F. Drucker (1993), "to convert a solution into action requires that people understand what change in behaviour is expected of them, and what change to expect in the behaviour of others with whom they work."

The following flow chart represents the process of decision making:



5.6 Effective decision making

Various other factors influence effective decision making:

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5.6.1 **Personal values and organization culture:** The intellectual make-up, education, experience and personal values of an administrator influence the direction of the organization. An administrator with healthy attitude of mind will naturally be more successful than the one with negative disposition. Emotional and motivational factors coupled with courage on the part of the administrator to make and implement the decision are also important. Similarly, the pattern of behaviour, shared beliefs, and values of members of an organization do influence decision making.

5.6.2 **Involving the staff:** Decisions cannot usually be made in a closed-system environment. One of the myths about decision making is that the top administrator makes decisions. On the contrary, all levels of personnel participate in the process to some degree. People within the organization are a part of the social system, and their thinking and attitudes must be taken into account whenever an administrator takes a decision. During discussions with the staff, it is essential to understand that there has to be dissent and disagreement. Dissent is needed, but an administrator must make it productive. Peter F. Drucker (1993) advises: "If you can bring dissent and disagreement to a common understanding of what the discussion is all about, you create unity and commitment." However, it is often neither advisable nor feasible to democratize the decision making process to the extent that for all decisions a vote is taken. At some point, a decision has to be made.

5.6.3 **Group decision making:** In modern organizations decisions are often made by groups of individuals, such as by committees or teams. The committee system is the best means of taking decisions collectively and for ensuring accountability. It:

- provides a stable structure for introducing problems;
- is a testing ground on which proposals can be assessed in terms of feasibility;
- provides a forum where justifications of action can be tested.

5.6.4 **Decentralized authority:** An effective administrator should have the ability to see the value and consequences of ideas suggested by subordinates. For this, it is necessary to have some sort of decentralization:

- Decentralization must occur whenever an administrator supervises personnel who are highly specialized, as he may not have the competence to make their decisions – for example, supervision of the work of technicians if the administrator is not a competent person to do so.
- Most administrators may not be able to handle all the problems – for example, maintenance of plant and machinery.
- The subordinates must primarily make decisions about problems arising out of local circumstances – for example, sensitivity to certain products.
- Sometimes decentralization becomes necessary because of internal power arrangements. For example, if a subordinate receives contradictory instructions from two or more bosses, he finds himself in an unenviable position of making or not making a decision.

Decision making in administration is a difficult process. But if an administrator has a good understanding of the whole process and concepts, it will help him in seeing the job through in most situations.

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6 Time Management

Effective time management is simply about self-discipline. There are no magic formulas, no piece of paper to fill in which will suddenly make you good at managing your time.

Everyone has a lot of work to do and not enough time to do it. However, we can all think of people who seem very organized and others who have the same amount of work to do, but the first kind manage to do it better.

The first lesson to learn about time management is that in the real world of work, things go wrong. Computers break down, files go missing, and problems crop up and so on. These things will ALWAYS happen and there is really no way of avoiding them. This means developing and using a simple set of time management systems that work for you.

Before you can start to plan on what and when you spend your time you need to know how much time you have available to you. Managing and budgeting your time is very similar to how you manage and budget your money. Imagine your salary. At the end of each month you are paid a sum which you know about in advance. You therefore know how much you can afford to spend on things like mortgages, bills, food, clothes etc. If in any given month you receive a particularly large bill you adjust your money accordingly. You may choose not to go out for dinner for instance, or not to put money away to save. You can do this because you know exactly what your income and expenditure is.

You also know how much time you have available to you, which is, 60 minutes in an hour, and 24 hours in a day and so on. The amount of time available is static. You also usually know how long you have to take to complete any particular task because most tasks have deadlines.

So once you know this you can start budgeting your time, just as you would budget your money.

6.1 How do you manage time?

6.1.2 Identify your priorities:

- What is the purpose of your job?
- What are you expected to achieve and in what time scale?
- What do you need to do (which tasks do you need to carry out) in order to achieve that purpose?

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6.1.3 Manage your priorities:

- ✓ Work falls in two categories:
- Reactive tasks: immediate response to something
- Proactive tasks: know in advance and can plan for
- ✓ You need to know roughly what percentage of your working day and week you spend on either proactive or reactive tasks. Plan for proactive and leave time for reactive.
- ✓ One of the most common mistakes that people make in managing their priorities is that they leave the 'big' and important tasks until last while they clear up the 'little' jobs. Of course, what normally happens is that they get to the end of the day and realize they have spent all day in relatively unimportant tasks and interruptions and then feel stressed because they still have the important jobs to attend to.
- ✓ Never leave things until the last minute. Plan in the time that you intend to spend on a certain job and stick to it.

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7 Managing Stress

Increasingly you are called on to deal with stressful situations at work. You are often judged on how you perform on these occasions. But how often do people discuss 'administrative stress'?

7.1 What is stress?

Stress is derived from the Latin 'stringere' meaning 'to pull light'. Through centuries it has meant many different things to different people. In 17th century it was associated with hardship and distress. In 18th and 19th centuries it was associated with Physics and Engineering when people were concerned with metal withstanding stress. However, it has become an inescapable part of modern life. Everyone seems to rush and hurry, with deadlines to meet and targets to achieve yesterday, thus creating stressful situation. In fact, stress is about pressure and the reaction it produces within you. It can be brought about by external or internal factors; internal factors are harder to deal with. Stress creates an imbalance between the level of demand placed upon you and your capability of meeting that demand.

7.2 Recognizing Stress

You need to recognize what stress is and what causes it. Only then you can learn how to deal with it. You must understand that:

- Stress is normal, and indeed with no stress at all we would be dead;
- Stress is a very individual thing and everyone has very different stress levels;
- Successful stress management requires you to recognize when you are experiencing stress;
- We are like a set of scales with stressors being the various weights, and we need to recognize optimum levels in order to maintain a balance.

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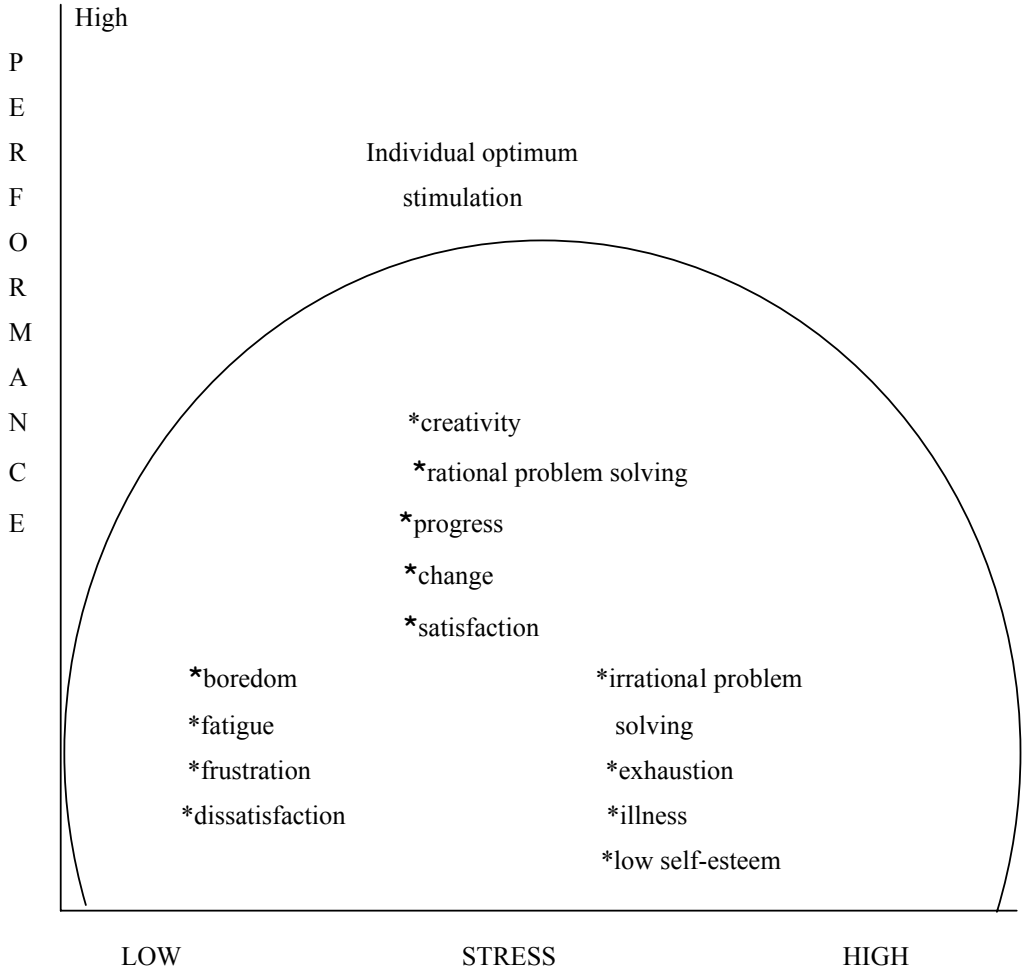

Common Signs of Stress

Physical	**Emotional**
Appetite	Sense of failure
Sleep – increase or decrease	Tearful
Breathlessness	Loss of confidence
Hot/cold	Isolated
Dry mouth	Withdrawn
Trembling	Low self-esteem
Nervous twitches	Clumsy
Nausea	Irrational
Muscular tension	Inability to concentrate
Headaches	Loss of interest

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7.2.1 Feelings when under stress

When you are under stress, you can often recognize the following feelings:

- Your self-esteem is low;
- You act in a clumsy manner;
- You feel over-whelmed;
- You feel guilty;
- You are always angry;
- You feel less competent.

7.3 Coping with stress

In order to cope with stress you must go through the following steps:

7.3.1 Understanding and acceptance of self:

- Understand your needs and motives.
- Know your own values and limitations.
- Accept yourself and your limitations.
- Recognize your stressors: be honest with yourself and look at where your demands come from. You will place much higher demands on yourself than others do, but you may still blame everyone also for your stress.

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- Trying to be perfect leads to burn out: often the standards you set yourself are irrational and unrealistic; 'Everyone must be like me.' 'I should be a perfect wife/husband, mother/father, housekeeper AND employee!'

7.3.2 Tackling the problem:

Often you may spend time worrying about a situation but not actually doing anything. 90% of that time is wasted in worrying about things that may never happen, and as Winston Churchill said: 'There is lot of trouble in life, most of which has not happened.'

7.3.3 Tackling process:

- Identify the stressor.
- Attempt to change it.
- If unable to change, accept it.
- If unable to accept, move away.
- Understand this prayer: '\

  God please grant me the serenity
  To accept things I cannot change
  The courage to change the things I can
  And the wisdom to know the difference!'
- Make your list of stressors NOW and identify those which you can take action on and give yourself realistic deadlines:

Problem/Stressor	Proposed Action	When

7.3.4 Self-nurturing:

When under stress you need to pay extra attention to yourself and look after your body and mind. Boost your self-image:

- Accept compliments (don't deny them).
- Acknowledge your value (write a list of things you are good at)
- Praise yourself when you do well.
- Work at having pleasure without guilt – feel great.
- Treat yourself as you would like other treat you.
- Treat your body well – it is the only one you have got – take a break.
- Learn to like yourself (after all you want others to like you).
- Write a list of things you like about YOU (if you find this hard, ask a friend).

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7.3.5 Emotional expression:

- To be healthy and energetic you need to maintain positive emotions and not let the negative ones take over. Express your feelings. Take action by:
  - ✓ Developing a supportive network;
  - ✓ Having regular two-way communication (particularly with your boss!)
  - ✓ Accepting that emotions are OK.
  - ✓ Accepting your own feelings – let them out; don't deny them.
  - ✓ Sharing your feelings with someone you trust.
  - ✓ Using the powerful natural tool of laughter.
  - To help you smile (and I don't mean a fixed grin!) which will make you relax, you can:
  - ✓ Keep a few funny pictures in your desk that you can take out and look at;
  - ✓ Remember an embarrassing moment;
  - ✓ Think of a funny story or joke (or person);
  - ✓ Take a mini-vacation (shut your eyes for a few moments and take yourself to a place where you feel peaceful).
  - ✓ Remember that you are not the centre of the universe and it really is not the end of the world.

7.3.6 Active distraction:

You should:

- Be able to switch off and recharge your stressed batteries so that your body is not under constant pressure;
- Take a mini-vacation;
- Take tea/coffee break;
- Play with a stress toy;
- Relax your body by tensing and relaxing;
- Scrunch toes tight and then relax whilst imaging all the stress flowing from each toe as you release and relax;
- Relax your mind by thinking of something funny or different;
- Keep a perspective of your problem;
- Be able to:
  - ✓ Draw the line;
  - ✓ Mark the end of the day by leaving work behind;
  - ✓ Take time out: 'ME' time which is for YOU!
  - ✓ Exercise;
  - ✓ Relax.

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Mr. Man Mohan Joshi, M.A., M.Ed., Cert.EA, Dip.HRD, has over 40 years' teaching, training and administrative experience. He has worked as Principal of large and reputed schools in India, Kuwait and Sultanate of Oman.

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