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| LECTURE | : | 3 |
| TOPIC | : | TASK MANAGEMENT |
| AIM | : | TO IDENTIFY AND ANALYSE TASK MANAGEMENT |

LEARNING OUTCOME

Once you have completed this chapter, you should be able to understand:

- 1) What is Task Management
- 2) The Disciplines in Task Management

TOPIC OUTLINE

1. The functions of a office diary
2. Rolling "to do" lists
3. Managing Deadlines

INTERROGRAMS

1. What types of jobs should not be delegated?
2. Why do managers delegate?
3. What are the benefits of delegation?

1. FUNCTIONS OF AN OFFICE DIARY

One of the most underused tools that we have available to us at work is the diary. Most of us keep a diary of some description. The diary is useful not only for the secretary to keep tabs of the task(s) that she needs to mind, but also a reminder of the things that the manager needs to attend to.

The diary is used as a reminder of meetings that we need to attend and sometimes things that we do not want to forget. By writing meetings and appointments, we are basically committing our time to other people. For example, when we write that there is a meeting from 3.00pm-4.00pm, we are giving that time for the said meeting.

A more effective way of using the diary is to plan in time or make appointments to carry out tasks. This will allow the individual to build in time in a realistic and workable way so those things will not go wrong.

In the Ideal World, we might write in our diary that we need just one hour to complete a report or a letter. However, in the Real World, we may need more than an hour to complete the task(s) as there may be interruptions or something may go wrong.

Given the opportunity to estimate how much time a job is going to take for completion, people will always underestimate time needed. Using the diary in this way, it will help to make sensible decisions on how time should be allocated to others as well as realistically meeting deadlines without effecting the rest of the work.

2. ROLLING "TO DO" LISTS

A rolling to do list is a book, which is dated, or a page in your diary. This is a list where task(s) that you are unable to complete on the said day, is rolled to the next day for completion. You write down the task(s) on the dated page of the following day and complete it as soon as you come to work the next day. If you are still unable to complete the task(s), you may roll it to the following day, but you are only allowed to roll this task(s) for a week. Meaning, the rolled task(s) must be completed by the said week (7 days).

There are no hard and fast rules to this method. You will frequently find yourself re-arranging diary appointments and to-do list as things crop up. However, you will forget these things that you need to do. So, it is best that you immediately roll the task(s) to the next day for completion.

3) MANAGING DEADLINES

Every day at work, you are either setting or agreeing to deadlines. Deadline matter and everyone has them.

Some deadlines are obvious and it occurs because the job is an on-going process and it occurs because the job needs to happen by such and such a date in order for something else to happen.

However, the main problems with deadlines are that we are either totally unrealistic, or we agree to it without really thinking through the implications. You will probably tend to agree to a deadline without thinking if you can meet it at all.

Just because

your manager is determined that you meet the deadline, you agree to it without even giving a thought if you can manage it with your other task(s). If you had missed the deadline, your manager will only remember that you agreed to the deadline and that you did not keep your word to it.

The only way to solve these kinds of problems is that you stand on your ground when accepting a deadline. If the given deadline is not up to your marking, then negotiate a reasonable date that you can meet.

To meet a realistic deadline, you should:

- 1) Give a deadline which you can meet. Stand on your ground.

Explain the exact reason why you cannot meet other deadlines, and only the one that you proposed.