



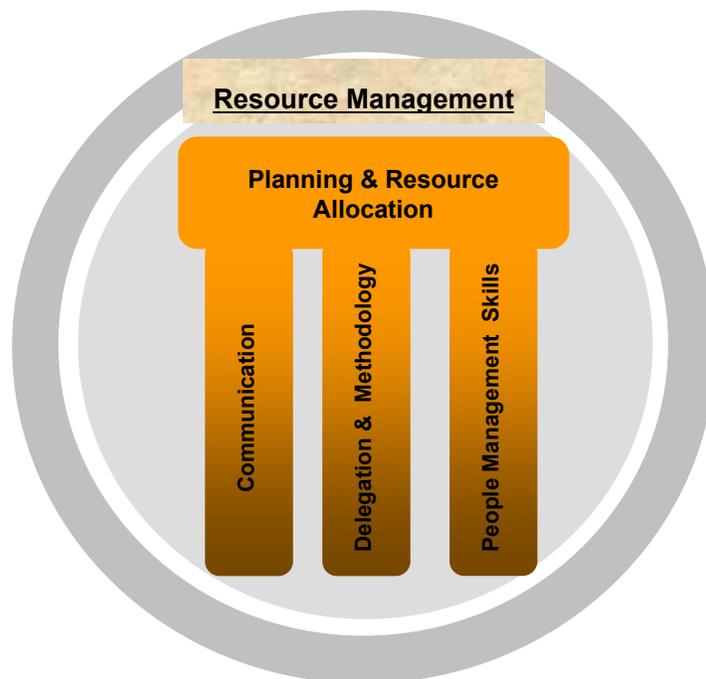
## Resources Management & Communication

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### Overview

This article takes a subjective look and provides practical understanding of Human Resource Management. It is not meant to cover topics such as, resource balancing, crashing, fast-tracking, scheduling etc. This article is intended to help better your understanding of resources management issues. I hope that, the article will assist group heads and delivery managers to sort out their day to day issues and also help them to achieve their long term plans for the organizations.

Today, IT companies talk a lot about employee retention and have put various policies around it. Are these measures sufficient or are they missing an important aspect of keeping the employees happy and interested in their work? Is there anything more to it? Let's find out...



As we see above that, resource management rest on three basic pillars and one common horizontal beam across these pillars. I'll describe each of these below.

### Resource Planning (Skill - Role Mapping) & Allocation

This includes recruitment of the right personnel for the job, people who meet the skills requirements. The person recruited should be offered an appropriate post and job as per his/her qualification and experience. Companies should not cheat the person joining the organization since the new joiner will be unaware of the company policies,

guidelines and approach. He/she relies on the company to offer him/her the proper designation, role and responsibilities.

Many a times, to safeguard the interest of the existing personnel, a lower post is offered to the person joining. This is not a good picture. When the new guy joins the organization and becomes aware of the biased approach, it gives him or her, a wrong signal about the company. He or she may either leave the company or may not work with a full interest in building the future of the organization.

Resource forecasting and planning are done with respect to:

- Project inflows
- Resource demand
- Missing skill sets within the company
- Resource utilization
- Productivity and other factors.

### **Starting the New Resource**

A proper ascertainment of the needs of the resources and backup resources is required. A detailed plan of current resource utilization should be prepared before going ahead with recruiting a new resource. This will make sure that, the resource joining will have a bunch of work and responsibilities associated with him or her. If not, they will be unhappy to be sitting idle and not doing anything productive. This will also result in additional cost for the organization. Small organizations can do this job beautifully. For large organization, it is a challenge. Correct top management policies, healthy culture and ethics should make sure that, in-depth analysis is done.

Resource mapping to skills and roles is a major activity. The roles and responsibilities should be discussed with the resource during and after the recruitment process is over. It is an ongoing activity to be monitored by the group heads. Improper planning and wrong practices will only bring dissatisfaction to the employees, which in turn will bring down the delivery capabilities of the organization and result in an increase in attrition.

Factors like, thick pay package and facilities will help in holding greedy and lazy new starters if proper responsibilities are not allocated.

### **Communication**

Two way communication is a must. Communication is important with the resources in the following areas:

- Clearly defining the Key Responsibilities Areas (KRAs)
- Getting agreement on the KRAs by both parties
- Understanding the interest, skills and capabilities of the person
- Motivating employee and teams
- Appreciating the achievement made without favouritism
- Constantly providing feedback on a person's deliveries
- Educating the team on objectives, goals and expectations
- Group meetings, get-together

The above are some areas of discussion on resource management. The emphasis is to have a constant dialogue on the progress and to track and control the resources needs, performance etc. It is an essential part of making successful project deliveries, stopping attrition and building a positive climate. It provides the necessary motivation and improves the team spirit and work culture.

### **Delegation & Empowerment**

Delegation is an art. The Boss should not delegate everything and should not delegate blindly. Never the less, he/she should learn how to delegate and must delegate for a successful implementation. Delegation requires planning, skills and, maturity.

The leader/manager should know who can do what job most effectively. Every resource is better than other people at doing some activities. Poor managers do not delegate and keep things close to their chest. They fail in delivering on time and with quality. Their perception is that, either nobody can do the job better or they fear that the other guy will take the credit.

By educating and empowering you select the resource to be on your side. He/she is happy to work with you. They always like to work with this type of leader. It will help curb the attrition. Organisation should keep a watch on proper management practices. They should develop methods to measure and analyse the management efficiency before it is too late.

### **Trust Building & Hand holding**

The reporting manager should build trust with their resources by providing him/her a healthy culture. The manager should provide the resource an opportunity to perform otherwise, one is not able to know the potential and capabilities of the resource. Hence, they will not be able to fully utilize the resource. This is also a loss to the organization.

Wherever necessary, where a resource is stuck or wants to know about the relevant system, client etc., hand holding should be provided to speed him or her towards full utilization. If this is not done, it is a failure on the part of the manager. The concept of pairing with senior resource would help bring the required results and create a friendly atmosphere. The boss should be mentor, guide, coach and not a Boss!

### **Key People**

Identifying key people is another activity, a leader has to do. But this is a risky business, since there are people in the organization, who project them as key people and always eat away each other's credit. They play politics to show their strengths. Sometimes a really good person gets hidden or left out in a corner and they have no option but, to leave the organization. This kind of malpractices should be stopped by regularly reviewing the deliveries and capabilities and making a check on the authenticity of the claims made.

### **Deliveries & Methodologies**

The groups/teams should come out with innovative working models and methodologies to suit their type of work. There are many models available but, unless they are practiced honestly, these models do not give results. The common and important factor in all the methodologies is the communication, and the flow of information inter and intra teams.

There should be a smooth handover. The resources should be aligned for achieving the same. Here, senior people should play a vital role and do the hand holding - become mentors, if required. This will ensure successful deliveries. It will help in resolving the hurdles in deliveries. It will state clearly the roles and responsibilities of the resource - what is expected out of him/her and what are the benefits they are getting. There should be regular meetings to resolve issues and bottlenecks.

### **Resource Utilisation**

Resource utilization is the most important factor for resources as well as the organization. Not only does it improve the organisation's ability to post higher profit but it also helps in curbing the attrition. Higher resource utilization means greater operational efficiency. The cost to the company is reduced.

If every resource is not billable to the client, the resource can be utilized for internal project and/or R&D. Resources can be utilized for creating proof of concept. They can be trained further in idle time. They can help in other development as functional, technical or managerial experts. Using this approach, the organizations ability to deliver increases many times over. The crunch of resource number requirements can be carried out through fast-tracking, crashing etc.

### **People Management skills**

People management is one of the most vital features to achieve success in management. People working on projects are not routine workers. They have special skill sets. They should be handled with a better understanding of the situation. Top management should be sensitive towards people issues.

### **Avoiding conflicts in advance**

Managers address the conflicts, as and when they appear. A leader will always smell the conflicts in advance and does not allow them to take on a bigger size even though, no one can get completely rid of all the conflicts. There are also positive conflicts that can bring great efficiency in the way of working. The key to manage conflicts is to support right attitudes with a good amount of competency.

### **Motivation for right candidates**

Worthy candidates should be motivated through increase in salaries, promotion, recognition, providing more challenges and backing the right cause. The project is the prime loser if the right candidate quits their job. Of course, the job will go on but, no one can replace the same person in exactly the same way. Also the rich experience and maturity goes away. Management has to reinvest and rotate the wheel again. More money is lost in this process with a consequent loss of credibility.

### **Tracking People's satisfaction**

Managers cannot wait till the team member come to him or her and pronounce that, they are not satisfied - particularly when the member is an asset to the organization. The satisfaction of the team members should be tracked in case there is a negative opinion in the mind of even the right member. The organisation is then no longer, a respected one in the eyes of the resource. People then starts working out of compulsion and loose the enthusiasm thereby, loosing the quality and output. It can end with the member leaving the organization.

### **Accessing people's delivery in terms of benefits brought to the project**

The ideal manager will value the contribution of the employee in many dimensions, e.g. A candidate providing training to other team members, establishing superb relations with client, motivating others, taking lead and bringing results, introducing and practicing right procedures and way of working, showing the way to others apart from his/her normal routine.

### **Successful Leaders**

Successful deliveries are always lead by bright, dynamic and mature leaders. Dull, lazy and immature leaders cannot create successful teams. Definitely it is a team who makes the success but, without great leadership, it cannot be achieved. Today, we lack the right leaders! A true leader does not only fight for himself. He has a major concern about people working with him or her. He/She is sensitive to people issues and concerns. He/She thinks and casts a successful career path for many. He shows the right way to go and leads by example.

### ***About the Author***

The author is currently working in a company known as, Tech Mahindra as a Project Manager in Mumbai. He has 14.5 of industrial experience including 9 years in IT. He has handled fortune 100 clients and has handled the service deliveries of varied range and scope. He has handled resources tactically which has achieved high client satisfaction through quality service.

Project Perfect is a project management software consulting and training organisation based in Sydney Australia. Their focus is to provide creative yet pragmatic solutions to Project Management issues.

Project Perfect sell "Project Administrator" software, which is a tool to assist organisations better manage project risks, issues, budgets, scope, documentation planning and scheduling. They also created a technique for gathering requirements called "Method H"<sup>TM</sup>, and sell software to support the technique. For more information on Project tools or Project Management visit [www.projectperfect.com.au](http://www.projectperfect.com.au)