



The Future of Management And Associated Social Implications: A Position Paper

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ABSTRACT

Management cuts across every facet of our lives and from an organizational perspective has shaped economic activities for centuries through the division of labor, coordinating different units and achieving efficiency and economies of scale. However, various scholars have called for the revolution of management from what it was Management - 1.0 to something better Management - 2.0. This paper summarized the literature on management, models, theories and concluded with how the future of management may unfold in consideration of the challenges facing traditional management models. Conceptually, the future of management would involve less bureaucratic and flexible structures that foster creativity as well as the consideration of social and environmental impacts of management choices and actions.

Keywords: Management, models, theories, social change

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1. FUTURE OF MANAGEMENT AND THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Management fundamentals, vis-à-vis structures, processes, methods, and models have been instrumental in maximizing human labors, shaping economic progress over the centuries and, thus, one of humankind's most significant discoveries (Hamel, 2009). Management is "an art as each manager, or executive fulfils his or her task in a subjective way, while using an individual style, based on personality, attitudes, and values thus making the process a personal activity; and a science, as it is based on a vast accumulation of knowledge developed to aid managers in performing their jobs" (Shenhar & Renier, 1996, p. 26). According to Kotter (1996), "Management is a set of processes that can keep a complicated system of people and technology running smoothly" (p. 25) and include planning and budgeting; organizing and staffing; and, controlling and problem-solving in an organization.

In a more general term, Koontz and Wehrich (as cited in Olum, 2004) defined management as "The process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims" (p. 4). Similarly, Brown (2010) posited that management is all about coordinating the day-to-day workings of an organization. In other words, management is about pulling all the organizational units together to support and achieve its set goals. According to Denning (2013), management is a critical factor in shaping the quality of life in a society and in the absence of it, people will be homeless, hungry, uneducated, lack access to health services, poorly communicate, as well as being unable to run companies and the government successfully. Denning (2013) stated further that, "If management is right for its time, most of the people live lives that are inspired and energized and rich with meaning and fulfillment" (para. 2). In other words, the right kind of management at the right time brings some form of balance to the society.



In the same vein, good management according to Koprowski (1981), encompasses high productivity, growth, and adaptability in the market environment. Thus, management should not only be about organization growth and profitability but also about ethical and social impacts. Management is not without its issues and challenges. Research by BMGI (2015) identified uncertainty in the global economy; innovation struggles; government policy and regulations; diversity; and weak supply chain strategies as some of the top 10 management problems. Other management issues include sustainable strategy, corporate governance, change management, and corporate social responsibility. Meer (2013) outlined globalization, information technology, workforce diversity, competitive low-cost labor, and organizational learning as the top modern challenges of management of the 21st century. Similarly, Skibinska and Kott (2015) identified information overload, strategic thinking, problem-solving, innovation, diversity and government regulations as some of the greatest challenges of management.

The issues of globalization, technology, innovation, corporate governance, and diversity are important as the business landscape is changing. Mitigating these challenges would require managers to integrate new approaches to the work environment. Managers will have to alter styles and organizational structures to accommodate societal and cultural differences in a global world as well. For instance, a flatter and collaborative structure will facilitate timely information processing and dissemination. Learning new technical skills, open communication, and flexibility would also be critical. Also, diversity and respect for others as well as fostering an environment that supports creativity and innovation would be essential.

Overall, managers need to exhibit an in-depth knowledge of the organization, communicate very well, be team oriented, delegate accordingly, and exemplify honesty. Also, managers as leaders must create visions, inspire others and lead them on the path to actualizing it, be humble, aggressive, take risks, be open to new ideas and solicit opinions of others to remain competitive. In this paper, I analyzed management models, theories, the future of management and its implications for social change.

2. MANAGEMENT THEORIES

In general terms, theories help to highlight the relationships between concepts or variables in a controlled environment. According to Olum (2004), "A theory is a systematic grouping of interdependent concepts (mental images of anything formed by generalization from particulars) and principles (are generalizations or hypotheses that are tested for accuracy and appear to be true to reflect or explain reality) that give a framework to, or tie together, a significant area of knowledge" (p. 9). Wacker (1998) equally defined theory as "A statement of relationships between units observed or approximated in the empirical world and having four components vis-à-vis definitions, domain, relationships, and predictive claims to answer the natural language questions of who, what, when, where, how, why, should, could and would" (p. 364). In other words, theories aid the understanding of linkages among variables or concepts.

An understanding of management theories by managers can help them reshape the future of their organizations and mitigate organizational difficulties. Theories "provide a stable focus for understanding what we experience, provides criteria for what is relevant, enable us to communicate efficiently and thus move into more and more complex relationships with other people and challenge us to keep learning about our world" (Olum, 2004, p. 11). From a management perspective, theories can help practitioners make connections with practice. Historical theories of management include scientific management, bureaucratic management, human relations while contemporary theories include of contingency, systems, and chaos. According to Olum (2004), "contemporary theories of management tend to account for and help interpret the rapidly changing nature of today's organizational environments" (p. 11), and as such, provide the theoretical underpinnings of actual practice.



3. MANAGEMENT MODELS

From a broad perspective, a model is "representation of a system that allows for investigation of the properties of the system and, in some cases, prediction of future outcomes, and is often used in quantitative analysis and technical analysis, and sometimes in fundamental analysis" (InvestorsWords, n.d.). Management models shape the direction of an organization, and the choice of models will vary depending on the type of business. Birkinshaw and Goddard (2009) described management models as the choices top executives make on how they manage their organizations relating to setting objectives, allocating resources, motivating employees, and coordinating business activities.

Also, multicultural diversity can influence the management and leadership models of organizations. As Duchatelet (1998) argues, "if a management/leadership model emanates from the national culture, management should indeed be recruited from among those with personality traits congruent with the prevailing management paradigm because they correspond closest to the national culture profile" (p. 98). This is particularly important for multinational corporations, as the culture of the host country must be taken into consideration in their recruitment and placement processes. For example, a company where I did my internship some years ago had to hire local consultants to rework their Asian market model after two years of unsuccessful operations. Consequently, Birkinshaw and Goddard (2009) using their "ends" and "means" dimensions as well as "tight" and loose "principles" distinction for emphasis, came up with four generic management models listed below:

- The planning model where ends (i.e., managing objectives, motivating individuals) and means (i.e., coordinating activities, making decisions) are both controlled by a strict hierarchical structure.
- The quest model where ends (i.e., managing objectives, motivating individuals) are tightly controlled and means (i.e., coordinating activities, making decisions) are loosely controlled.
- The scientific model where ends (i.e., managing objectives, motivating individuals) are loosely controlled and means (i.e., coordinating activities, making decisions) are tightly controlled.
- The discovery model where ends (i.e., managing objectives, motivating individuals) and means (i.e., coordinating activities, making decisions) are both loosely controlled.

Overall, the choice of model by managers will vary depending on the type of business and industry. For example, hi-tech companies that operate in an unstable, fast-paced, and innovative sector would find the discovery model useful to respond to challenges and take advantage of novel opportunities.



4. FUTURE OF MANAGEMENT

Despite management being one of humankind's most significant creations, the future of management means a shift from the contemporary hierarchical control, standardization, and coordination of resources for economies of scale and specialization to a flexible and innovative sphere (Hamel, 2009). Similarly, Hamel and Breen (2009) pointed out that organizations can be reinvented to embrace less bureaucracy, innovation, and flexibility away from the old order. In other words, management has not reached its climax (1.0) rather the future possibilities of management (2.0) are endless.

Hamel (2009) talked about some of the possible steps towards management 2.0 vis-à-vis a shift from a management about maximizing shareholders' goals to focus on significant social goals; change from individualistic work environment to a more collaborative one; incorporation of experiences from diverse fields into the organization; change formal hierarchies to a "natural" hierarchy, where status and influence correspond to contribution rather than position; encourage a low-fear and high-trust culture; encourage peer review over top-down supervision; redefine leadership from grand visionaries to social architects, constitution, writers, and entrepreneurs of meaning; embrace diversity and tap into the opportunities it creates; fostering an environment where new strategies emerge and evolve; and the collapsing of rigid unit boundaries and functional silos. In the same vein, Hamel and Breen (2007) saw management 2.0, which they also referred to as web 2.0, as indicative of an environment where decentralization is ubiquitous, employees are empowered with information, ideas compete equally, evidence of peer-based decision making, free flow of information, and the effortless connections of buyers and sellers.

Interestingly, Hamel and Breen (2007) noted that management 1.0 and 2.0 are not exactly compatible and as such result to a conflict between the status quo that cherishes the powers of bureaucracy and the new age pushing for a less structured organization. In light of these, I believe the future of management would unfold as follows:

- A hybrid bureaucratic structure where central authority deals with decisions as regards strategic vision and leaves the daily coordination of decisions up to the various units
- The creation of more diverse, flexible, and nimble teams to adapt to local and global changing markets
- A rise in virtual organizations creating the need for more collaboration with others.
- More accountability and openness will be demanded of organizations for business choices made.
- Organizations imbued with creativity and innovative culture

5. MANAGEMENT'S FUTURE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

In light of the future of management as discussed above, one can pinpoint some possible scenarios that could impact social change. Rogers (1971), defined social change as a process by which modification happens in the structure and function of a social system and as such, a continuous process. According to Michael Porter (TED Conferences, LLC, 2013), there is awareness of social issues such as poverty, poor access to healthcare, food, water, and pollution. For Porter, organizations can profit from solving social problems by using models that do not trade-off social development and economic efficiency in the long-term. The implication of this is that, as the reinvention of management continues, it inadvertently impacts social change. Therefore, organizations should embrace models that create value by addressing part of the social challenges and becoming profitable as well. This social consciousness brings organizations in alignment with the principles of corporate social responsibility. As Wood (as cited in Moir, 2001) stated, "The basic idea of corporate social responsibility is that business and society are interwoven rather than distinct entities" (p. 16). Further, the social consciousness would engender the ethical management of businesses (Ademola, 2016).



Overall, the discussions about the future of management revealed a shift towards decentralization, flexibility, innovation as well as more openness and accountability. These variables impact social change as organizations will no longer be thinking about just profit making for their shareholders, but how their activities affect the entire society. On the other hand, members of society have also changed how they view the activities of organizations. For example, Weinzimmer and Esken (2016) showed that consumers are more favorable to the business they perceive as socially responsible which in turn can positively affect the bottom-line financials of the firm. In a nutshell, the current discourse of innovation and socially responsible business models is an indication of more social changes to come as management is reinvented. As Bruce (1993) noted, innovation can bring about significant and positive social change. Therefore, as the future of management changes, social change becomes intertwined in the evolution process.

6. CONCLUSION

Management, despite its challenges, has shaped economic activities all over the world through the division of labor, specialization, coordination, and economies of scale. Over the years, managers have been able to use management theories to understand current practice and models to shape the future of their organizations. As management evolves, old practices would have to be shed. Changing old way can be challenging as old habits die hard. In summary, the future of management is one that will exhibit less bureaucracy, diverse teams, virtual collaboration, creative and innovative culture as well as socially responsible business practices. For managers, this future of management is inevitable and must be embraced.



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