

Paper –Principles and Practice of Management

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## **TOPIC- TECHNIQUES OF EFFECTIVE COORDINATION**

The basic objective of all managerial functions is to get things done by coordinated efforts. Thus, every management function should lead to coordination. However, conflicts frequently arise since it is virtually impossible to achieve a mechanically perfect system of clear-cut jurisdictions. Therefore, managers have to achieve coordination by making some special efforts. Some of these efforts may be in the following direction:

**1. Coordination by Chain of Command.** In an organisation, the chain of command is the most important method of coordination, particularly vertical coordination. Vertical coordination is required to harmonise the work allocated to several levels in the organisation. It ensures that the various levels do not act out of accord with each other or with policies and objectives of the organisation. The concepts of unity of efforts, timing, and orderly efforts apply to all levels and all units of the organisation. A manager can achieve the vertical coordination by using his authority. Because of his organisational position, he can issue orders and instructions to his subordinates. This process can go down the organisation. He can define the authority of his subordinates, their functions, and timing of performance of these functions. However, role of chain of command is limited even to achieve vertical coordination.

**2. Coordination by Leadership.** If coordination cannot be achieved by mere exercise of authority, managers can use their leadership to bring coordination among their subordinates.

Leadership is the process of inducing subordinates to cooperate willingly. Leadership brings individual motivation and persuades the group to have identity of interests and outlook in group efforts. Thus, many conflicting situations can be overcome by inducing people to work in harmony by exercising leadership.

**3. Coordination by Committees.** Committee is a body of persons entrusted with discharge of some functions collectively as a group. The role of a committee is significant in achieving horizontal coordination. Coordinating horizontally is a matter of relating the efforts of functional, divisional, or territorial units to each other. Committee ensures that problems which arise out of relationships among various units can be solved by group decisions. The core of group decision making, so far as coordination is concerned, lies in the opportunities for free and open discussion and interchange of ideas, problems, proposals, and solutions. Improved understanding of organisation-wide matters leads to better coordination.

**4. Staff Meetings.** Periodic staff meetings can be highly effective in promoting coordination through better communication. Usually, it is desirable for a regular time to be set aside for meetings. These meetings generally contribute in the following ways to achieve coordination (i) to give everyone present a sense of the unity and interconnectedness of the work of the organisation as a whole; (ii) to learn from the superior manager about new problems and developments which affect their work; (iii) to solicit and enlist the thought and cooperation of staff members in the solution of problems; (iv) to provide an opportunity for subordinates to bring up questions which the superior manager should know about and which may affect the operations of parallel divisions of the organisation; and (v) to provide a forum in which friction points or areas of inadequate coordination are brought into the open.

**5. Special Coordinators.** Generally, in large organisations, special coordinators are appointed. They normally work in staff capacity to facilitate the working of line managers. A coordination cell may also be created. The basic responsibility of the cell is to collect the relevant information and to send this to various heads of departments or sections so that interdepartmental work and relationship is coordinated. In some cases, a particular person is appointed to coordinate the work of a particular nature. For example, in a particular project and to keep information project, along with various functionaries, a project coordinator can also be appointed. His basic function is to coordinate various activities about the development of the project.

**6. Self-coordination.** The basic principle of self-coordination is modification of functioning of a department in such a way that each department coordinates with other departments. Each department, section, or individual affects others and is also affected by others. Therefore, if these departments, sections, or individuals apply a method of working which facilitates others, self-coordination is achieved. This can be done by better horizontal communication. However, mere communication does not work unless there is a proper organisational climate in which each one sees the integration of his goals with organisational goals and also the benefits of his department with others.