

# MANAGEMENT OUTLOOK



Jagan Institute of Management Studies

## Management Skills Pyramid

To be successful, there are many skills a manager needs to master. I adapted Kammy Hatnes' pyramid structure to show the increasingly difficult management skills you must master at each level and to also display how these management skills build on each other to help you achieve success in your management career.

### The Management Skills Pyramid, Level 1

Level 1 of the Management Skills Pyramid shows the basic skills a manager must master just to get the job done. These are the fundamentals of the management job:

Plan  
Organize  
Direct  
Control

### The Management Skills Pyramid, Level 2

After you have mastered the basic skills in level 1, you need to move on and develop your skills on Level 2 of the Management Skills Pyramid. These are the management skills that you use to develop your staff. There are many specific skills required, and these are discussed in Level 2 of the Management Skills Pyramid, but they are grouped into these categories:

Motivation  
Training and Coaching  
Employee Involvement

### The Management Skills Pyramid, Level 3

When you have become skilled in developing your staff, it's time to focus on Level 3 of the

Management Skills Pyramid, improving your own development. These management skills are grouped as:

Self Management and  
Time Management

Time management gets its own category because it is so important to your success in all the other skills.

### The Management Skills Pyramid, Top Level

The peak of the Management Skills Pyramid, the single skill that will help you the most in developing success in your management career, is leadership. As you develop your skill as a leader, as you make the transition from manager to leader, you will achieve the success you truly want in your management career.

Level 1 of the Management Skills Pyramid shows the basic skills any beginning manager must master. It is the foundation of the management skills pyramid, which shows the skills a manager must master to be successful and shows how these management skills build on each other toward success.

### Basic Management Skills

There are four basic management skills anyone must master to have any success in a management job. These four basic skills are **plan, organize, direct, and control** and are discussed separately in detail below.

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### Plan

Planning is the first and most important step in any management task. It also is the most often overlooked or purposely skipped step. While the amount of planning and the detail required will vary from task to task, to skip this task is to invite sure disaster except by sure blind luck. That's what gives us the adage of the 6 P's of planning (or 7 P's depending on how you count).

Although most people associate the term planning with general business planning, there are also different levels of planning:

- Strategic Planning
- Tactical Planning
- Operational Planning

And there are different kinds of planning:

- Disaster Planning
- Succession Planning
- Crisis Planning
- Compensation Planning

### Organize

A manager must be able to organize teams, tasks, and projects in order to get the team's work done in the most efficient and effective manner. As a beginning manager, you may be organizing a small work team or a project team. These same skills will be required later in your career when you have to organize a department or a new division of the company.

Clearly, there is a lot of overlap between planning the work and in organizing it. Where planning focuses on what needs to be done, organization is more operational and is more focused on how to get the work done best. When you organize the work, you need to:

- determine the roles needed,
- assign tasks to the roles,
- determine the best resource (people or equipment) for the role,
- obtain the resources and allocate them to the roles, and
- assign resources to the roles and delegate authority and responsibility to them.

Whether you have been assigned a small team or a project to manage, beginning managers must also be able to organize offices and data systems. You may not be able to physically move people around in order to get your team together, but you should consider it. On the other hand, you may need to move several people into a small space and you will have to organize things so the team can work effectively within that space. Later in your career, you may need to organize an office to accommodate teams from several different departments and their specific needs. You will also need to be able to organize all the systems that will handle the data your team needs to collect or distribute. These days, those are probably computer systems. You must decide whether, for example, you need to set up shared web pages on the company's intranet or just a shared folder on the file server. How are you going to organize the systems so everyone who needs information has access to it (and that it is not available to those who should not see it, like your competitors)? If your team needs or produces something other than information, you must organize so that your team gets what

they need, when they need it, and can get out to others what your team produces at the right time.

Don't forget about organizing yourself. We will go into this at a higher level in Level 3 of the Management Skills Pyramid, but even as a beginning manager you must be able to organize yourself, your time, and your space so you can be most effective.

Finally, remember, that it is seldom enough to organize things once. With constant changes in resources, goals, and external factors you will usually need to re-organize to adjust for them.

### Direct

Directing is the action step. You have planned and organized the work. Now you have to direct your team to get the work done. Start by making sure the goal is clear to everyone on the team. Do they all know what the goal is? Do they all know what their role is in getting the team to the goal? Do they have everything they need (resources, authority, time, etc.) to do their part?

### Pull, Don't Push

You will be more effective at directing the team toward your goal if you pull (lead them) rather than push (sit back and give orders). You want to motivate the people on your team and assist and inspire them toward the team goals.

Management Skills Pyramid

