

Items	Description of Module
Subject Name	Management
Paper Name	Principles of Management
Module Title	Coordination
Module Id	Module no.-26
Pre- Requisites	Basic knowledge of what Management and its Functions
Objectives	To know about Coordination
Keywords	Management, Co-ordination, Planning, Organising, Leadership

QUADRANT-I

Module 26: Coordination
Learning Outcome
Introduction
Significance of co-ordination for an organization
Principles of co-ordination
Techniques of co-ordination
Types of co-ordination
Summary

Learning outcome: - After completing this module the students will be able to:

- To know about co-ordination
- Role of co-ordination in each function of Management.
- Various types of co-ordination
- To know how co-ordination helps in achieving the goals of an organization.

Introduction: -

Co-ordination means synchronization of the efforts of group members so as to provide unity of action for pursuing common goals. It is the hidden force which binds all the other functions of management.

According to **Mooney and Reelay**, “Co-ordination is orderly arrangement of group efforts to provide unity of action in the pursuit of common goals.”

According to **Charles Worth**, “Co-ordination is the integration of several parts into orderly whole to achieve the purpose of understanding.”

Management seeks to achieve co-ordination through its basic functions of Planning, Organising, Staffing, Directing and Controlling. Co-ordination is not a separate function. It is the essence of management and is inherent in all functions of management. Harmony between the efforts is the key to success for performance of any function.

For example, The process of manufacturing shirts include knitting of thread, dying, designing, spinning, stitching, finishing and then packaging. This process requires co-ordination at each step because each step in manufacturing is dependent upon the other. A firm which has to complete the order of manufacturing one lakh shirts, needs to coordinate at every step. If cloth is not ready in time, stitching will be delayed which will further delay every activity. Production is possible in time if other departments coordinate to speed up their work . If they do not, goodwill will be affected and firm might also lose the order.

Significance / Need of co-ordination for an organization: -

Co-ordination is required to achieve common objectives when people work together. It is the basic cementing force in an organization. Co-ordination becomes necessary because of the following reasons:-

1. Increase in size and complexity of operations: - Growth in the number and complexity of operations is the major factor which requires coordination. Whenever, there are people who work together for achieving common objectives, their efforts needs to be coordinated otherwise, they will not be able to achieve the objectives. Need for coordination arises as soon as the operations become multiple, diversified and complex. In large organisation, formal Coordination of activities is established through the proper organisational structure. More hierarchal levels make organisation complex which makes communication system complex and hence coordination. Also, the organisations have become multinational today. Coordination is required at every step both for their survival and growth. Constant efforts must be made to ensure harmonious functioning of the enterprise.

2. Specialization: Specialization promotes focus on one owns work. With division and sub division of work, each individual handles small portion of the work but work of each of them is related to other. For example, in production department of a unit manufacturing shirts, the work of sewing is dependent on the spinning of cloth. Similarly, production department may insist on the manufacture of those products which are convenient and economical to produce. They are not that much concerned with consumer's needs. So, it becomes necessary to coordinate the diverse and specialized activities of different units to create unity in the midst of diversity. Generally, greater the division of labor more is the need for coordination. Specialization will not yield desired results unless specialized activities are effectively synchronized. Also, specialization leads to horizontal and vertical differentiation of organizational activities. The greater the differentiation, more serious is the problem of communication. Hence coordination becomes evitable.

3. Clash of interests: Coordination helps in integrating individual goals with the organizational goals. An effective leader has an important role to play in coordination. He tells them how the achievement of organizational goals will help then pursue their individual goals as well. Since individuals have their own goals, which may be, the achievement of their physiological and psychological needs. Individuals often are not aware as to how the achievement of organizational goals will satisfy their personal goals. They may run behind fulfilling their personal interests at the expense of the organizational goals. Coordination helps to avoid conflict between individual and organizational goals. It brings harmony between the two types of goals by telling individuals how the achievement of organizational goals will help contribute to their personal goals as well. This way, coordination promotes focus on organizational objectives.

4. Different outlook:

No two individuals are same. Each individual has his own way of working and has a different approach towards problems. Each has his own talent, speed and working capacity. For effective pursual of work, it is must to fill the gap between the different approaches, timing and effort to secure unity of action. So, these differences need to coordinated. Greater these differences, tougher is the coordination.

5. Interdependence of units:

Each unit of organization has a different work to do but they together aim at achieving the common objectives of the organization. The units of an organization depend upon one another for their successful functioning. The output of one unit serves as the input of another unit. There are three types of interdependence as identified by James D. Thompson namely, (a) pooled interdependence, (b) sequential interdependence, and (c) reciprocal interdependence. Under pooled interdependence various units contribute to the organizational pool in their own way and do not depend on each other for the performance of their day-today-activities. In sequential interdependence, the output of one unit becomes input of the other. Thus, other unit cannot do its work until the work in preceding unit has completed. In reciprocal interdependence, different units are related reciprocally and share a give and take relationship. *The need for coordination increases with an increase in the interdependence between organizational units.* It is highest in reciprocal interdependence and least in pooled interdependence.

6. Conflicts: Coordination of activities avoids potential sources of conflict. Coordination can be ensured through proper planning, clearly defining the role and responsibilities and their authorities, proper communication and through effective leadership and control procedures.

7. Empire-building: Some members in the organization may have a tendency to show their importance and hence, may over-emphasize their own activities. They may try to take maximum possible share of the total resources for their own units as if the units were separate entities. This tendency leads to conflicts between various organs of the enterprise leading to lack of cooperation and self-coordination. Proper synchronization of efforts keeps check on such empire-building tendencies.

8. Personal jealousies and rivalries: Organizations comprise of human beings and personality clashes are quite common in human organizations. These personality clashes encourage rivalry and lead to the deliberate distortion of coordination. Such rivalry is often accentuated by lack of clear-cut goals and specific authority limits. Proper definition of authority and responsibilities of each and every job position serves as a formal coordination procedure and reduce possibilities of any such rivalry.

Principles of co-ordination

Principles of coordination serves as a guide in establishing coordination within the organization and helps in making it more effective. The four principles of coordination as given by Mary Parker Follet, a great sociologist and political philosopher have been :

1. Principle of Direct Contact:

The main problem which widens the gap between the organizational members is the lack of proper communication. In an organization, the entire team involved in the completion of task must have as much direct contact with each other as possible. It helps avoid long communication channels. Inadequate communication triggers misunderstandings and organizational conflicts.

2. Principle of Coordination in Early Stages:

Coordination among the organizational members should be established from the earliest stages of work flow. In other words, effective coordination is possible only when all the members, be the managers or those working at the lowest level of work flow coordinate with each other.

3. Principle of Continuous Process of Coordination:

Coordination is not a one time job or drive. In fact, it is an ongoing process to conduct the on-going orchestra of organizational activities. If coordination breaks at any stage, it digs heavy on the organizational resources.

4. Principle of Situational Authority:

To ensure coordination, managers may even need to exercise the authority vested in them as per the situation emerges. The purpose of using such authority is not to gain dominance over others but to bring about integration and harmony in the functioning of an organization. Follet terms this as the 'Law of the Situation'.

Techniques of co-ordination

Coordination brings harmony in performance of the functions of the organization. Effective coordination can be ensured through the follows techniques:

1. Sound planning:

Planning is the ideal stage for coordinating the activities. It infuses coordination in the very blood of the organization. Planning establishes the unity of purpose, which is the first essential condition for coordination. Goals of the organization and goals of each of its unit must be clearly defined. Planning tells what each member is expected to do, how to do it, when to do it. Planning clarifies each member's share in contributing towards the overall objectives of the organization. Different plans also need to be integrated properly. Precise policies and comprehensive programmes facilitate coordination of activities and individuals.

2. Simplified organization:

Organization structure should be kept as simple as possible. A complex organization structure is difficult to understand and manage. A simple and sound organization promotes coordination. The authority and responsibility relationships for each job position should be clearly defined. It helps to avoid conflicts. It also allows fixing accountability. According to Stan Kossen, Organization Structure defines how tasks are to be allocated, who reports to who, who does what and the formal coordinating mechanism and interaction pattern. A well-drawn organization charts, helps achievement of objectives smoothly. An organizational structure may sometimes need to be redesigned if it does not align with the organizational strategy.

3. Effective communication: Open and regular communication is the key to coordination. Effective exchange of opinions and information helps promote mutual understanding and paves way for resolving differences. Face-to-face communication is considered most effective means of communication for promoting coordination as it allows for on- the- spot feedback which helps clearing all doubts and misunderstandings effectively.

It is the Organizational structure which facilitates formal communication within the organization. It determines the flow of communication. Formation of committees, provide an opportunity for free and frank exchange of views. They help promote unity of action. Collective decisions can be taken in committees which ensure coordination. When those who have to implement the decisions are themselves involved in decision making, they whole heartedly perform the work and coordinate with others for its successful implementation. Informal communication also can also serve as an effective tool for the purpose of coordination if used judiciously.

4. Effective leadership and supervision: Effective leadership ensures coordination of efforts both at the planning and the execution stage. A good leader continuously directs his subordinates towards the right path and motivate them to work together for the accomplishment of common objectives.

Effective leadership helps subordinates to integrate their personal goals with the organizational goals. When the subordinates can find their personal goals accomplished through achieving organizational goals, they feel motivated and work in harmony for accomplishing the organization's objectives. Effective leadership does not require any formal authority, rules and procedures to get the cooperation of the followers. In fact, no technique of coordination can replace effective leadership. Coordination is a human task and a manager can accomplish it through interpersonal relations. Informal communication with subordinates is more effective to create climate of mutual trust and cooperation. Luther Gallic has described the use of leadership in coordination as coordinating by ideas.

5. Chain of Command: Coordination can also be achieved through the exercise of authority. The organizational structure defines the authority of each position and thus defines the superior subordinate relationships. Exercise of authority through hierarchy is the traditional means of coordination. Hierarchical chain binds together the different parts of an organization and relates them to a central authority as for example, all the subordinates are linked to their superior through the chain of command. The inter personal and inter group conflicts between the subordinates can be resolved by the superior by using his authority. He can issue orders and instructions to subordinates to work in coordination. However, use of formal authority for coordinating activities can just be a short term solution. It cannot work for long and is inconsistent with the needs of mature personality. It may further impair communication and decision-making.

6. Incentives: Providing adequate incentives may also help to secure coordination. Employees may not like to work whole heartedly when not properly incentivized. For example, sharing of profits with the employees may be helpful in promoting team-spirit and cooperation between employers. Having mutual interest reduces tiffs and ensures better coordination.

7. Liaison departments: Liaison officers may also be appointed in the organization to facilitate communication and coordination. In some cases, frequent contact between different organizational units is necessary. Liaison officers may be employed to link those units. For instance, a liaison department may link the production department and sales department by ensuring that production is going as per specifications promised to the sales department. Special coordinators may also be appointed in certain areas. Liaison officers work as the 'linking pins' and compensate for lack of face-to-face communication.'

8. Voluntary coordination: Under self-coordination, members of an organization voluntarily adjust their behavior according to the needs of the situation. Every organizational unit appreciates the working of related units and modifies its own functioning to harmonize with the overall functioning of the organization. They take into account the effect of their actions on others. Self-coordination is possible when there is dedication and mutual cooperation. It results from team-spirit and a sense of belongingness to the organization. For self-coordination individuals must have adequate knowledge of organizational goals, adequate information and should be well motivated to do something on their own. However, self-coordination cannot be relied upon fully as these conditions are hard to be fulfilled. It is not a substitute of formal coordination. Managers need to make deliberate efforts to bring unity of purpose in the activities of subordinates. Harman has rightly said, "neither the principle of self-coordination nor the concept of self-adjustment is a substitute for coordination. Manager and leaders need to bring coordination, so that the goal of the enterprise can be successfully attained.

Types of Co-ordination

George Terry, a great management thinker and philosopher, view coordination as a dynamic activity. He explains the following types of coordination:-

a) Coordination within the individual:

It relates to coordinating own efforts by an individual. This type of coordination is probably least important from the viewpoint of management. However, the ability of an employee to perform a certain type of work satisfactorily depends upon his success in coordinating his own efforts. Take example of driving a car. Successful driving needs mind-body coordination only then a driver can reach his destination.

b) Co-ordination among-Individuals of a Group:

It is more difficult to coordinate the efforts of a team rather than an individual. Where the members work as team, coordination becomes much essential. Success of the work depends upon the integration of efforts. For example, in football team if the players do not coordinate at each step like passing the ball, making the goals, it will be an easy win for the opponent and your team will shatter like anything. Similar is the case with the organization.

c) Co-ordination among Groups of an Enterprise:

Co-ordination is essential not only within a group but also within different groups. These groups are a part of the bigger enterprise and must move together for achieving the purpose. An organization consists of different departments. Take for example, production and sales department. If the production department produce anything without bothering about the sales specifications, organization cannot survive.

d) Co-ordination along Enterprises and Forces of World:

All efforts of an entire enterprise must be made, keeping in account the external forces like competitors, government regulatory measures, and the status of the national and world economy. These forces are beyond control and can even threaten the very survival of the organization.

Types of co-ordination:

Co-ordination can also be classified on the following basis:

- On the basis of scope
- On the basis of flow
- Procedural and substantive co-ordination

On the basis of scope or coverage, co-ordination can be classified as :

- Internal co-ordination – Co-ordination between different units of an enterprise is called as internal co-ordination and can be achieved when the goals and activities of different departments are properly integrated.
- External co-ordination – Coordinating the policies and activities of organization as per the external environment comprising of government, community, customers, investors, suppliers, competitors, research institutions, etc. is external co-ordination

On the basis of flow, co-ordination can classify into:

- Vertical co-ordination – Vertical co-ordination implies co-ordination between various hierarchical levels of the organization. Vertical co-ordination can be assured by top management through delegation of authority.
- Horizontal or Lateral co-ordination – Horizontal co-ordination refers to co-ordination between various departments and units at the same level in the hierarchy.

Co-ordination may also be:

- Procedural and Substantive: Procedural coordination is the coordination of various procedures and activities being followed in the organization.

- **Substantive co-ordination:** Substantive co-ordination is concerned with the coordination within each activity which are to be performed for achievement of organization's goals

Benefits of co-ordination

Coordination offers the following benefits or advantages:

1. Higher Efficiency and Economy:

Coordination helps to improve the efficiency of operations by synchronizing them. It integrates and balance the individual efforts and lead to harmony. Coordination synergizes the efforts. It binds organization together and enables it to make optimum use of its resources.

2. Good Human Relations:

Coordination improves the morale and job satisfaction among the employees. It provides cordial working conditions where employees can work with maximum efficiency. They feel a sense of belongingness towards the organization. A well-coordinated organization can attract, retain and better utilize their personnel.

3. Unity of direction:

Co-ordination synchronizes the group effort so as to provide unity of action for pursuing common goals. In a well coordinated organization, all employees work with zeal for the accomplishment of objectives. By binding together different departments and sections into one entity, coordination ensures the stability and growth of both the organization and the employees.

4. Essence of management:

Coordination is a key to all managerial functions. It is the essence of all management functions and also the end result of management. Management is nothing more than coordination of all activities and efforts and all internal and external forces which affect the organization.

5. Organizational Effectiveness:

Coordination enhances the effectiveness and stability of the organization. It provides good working conditions, job satisfaction to the employees and promotes sense of belongingness towards the organization. Labor unrest and employee turnover gets reduced to the minimum. Wastages are minimized. Employees feel contented and work for the betterment of the organization. It also attracts efficient personnel towards the organization. All this leads to organizational effectiveness.

Summary

Co-ordination means integrating the efforts of group members to ensure unity of action to achieve common goals. Coordination binds all activities of the organisation. It brings harmony between the efforts. Co-ordination is very important for smooth functioning of an organization. It is necessary at each step and every step and at each level of organization right from planning to control. No work can be effectively completed without co-ordination. Co-ordination improves relation between employees and also between top management and lower level employees. It creates good working environment in

the organization and organization works smoothly and efficiently. By ensuring effective communication through sound planning, through a sound organizational structure, and through effective leadership, co-ordination can be achieved easily.