

Decision - Making and Problem Solving

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DECISION-MAKING: AN INTRODUCTION

No organisation can run without decision: and if it has to be run in the right direction then effective decision has to be taken at the right time. Thus decision is the key to administration in public sector as well as in private sector organisations. Administrative procedure although is very important, is a complex subject. To solve many problems, very limited time, fear of the repercussions, ignorance of what action is to be taken, these are some of the difficulties faced by an administrator. He does not know correctly what is to be decided, that is he may not be capable of selecting the right option out of the several available. In any organisation an administrator may have to face three pronged problems in decision-making.

1. **Out** of the many problems which one should deserve his attention?
2. To remove uncertainty related to the problem how much time, effort and money should be spent by him?
3. Which solution of the problem has to be used by him?

In any organisation decision is being taken by men: these are joint ventures. A single individual hardly decides those issues which are subject to public scrutiny. In Seclor Hudson's words "Decision-making in any government is a multi-dimensional activity.

The decision may be announced by a single individual, but many people have contributions in reaching to that particular decision. This is a part of the political system." Still in the ultimate analysis either the administrator or the chief executive of the organisation should take the final decision. Any administrator as per his designation cannot shirk this responsibility; he has to take a decision or should tender his resignation letter. While taking decision the administrator should make himself familiar with the factors which have tried to influence the problem earlier. Moreover it would be better for him to prejudge/foresee the effect of his decision depending upon the circumstances and happenings.

Meaning

Dictionary defines "decision as action which one wants to take in respect of any work or proceedings."

"Decision making involves selecting the pragmatic option out of the two or more alternatives."

"We can consider decision as **the** gist of the earlier considerations. This conclusion can form prelude for major decisions" Accordingly there are three stages of decision making i.e. to get an opportunity to take a decision, to find out the possible sequence related to the work and to select the right sequence.

Highlights of Decision Making

Decision making takes place at every stage and by every employee of an organization. It is just possible that some employee takes a serious and high level decision and some other employee takes an ordinary decision. Majority decision is the result of joint efforts.

Each decision is related to any particular issue. The process of decision making continues in respect of the particular issues.

Whatever the decision it is influenced by the decision maker's knowledge, bearing and the nature of the organization.

The basis of decision lies in **the wisdom** of the decision maker.

Decision making is a process which is perpetual. Although it appears that taking decision is the last stage, but it is true that other activities of the organization can start only after a particular decision has been taken. Earlier decisions form the basis of today's concept and today's decision forms the background of future views.

In decision making a particular option is selected out of the two or more probables.

Every decision is taken with a purpose and without any purpose no decision can be made. Not to take a decision on any issue is also a decision.

Time factor plays an important role in the process of decision making. This is because time itself is an effective component in the processing of a decision.

Decision by itself is not an end but a way to reach the goal.

It is not necessary that every decision should reflect commitment, determination and clarity still efforts are made to reach to such decisions.

Generally decision means to reach to a particular conclusion. In administration 'Policy' has the most important role for taking any decision. Policy by itself is the result of some decision still decision is an element in the process of policy determination. Since policy is the base of an extensive and well considered view thus decisions are more influenced by the same.

The nature of decision is a specialized issue. In administrative organizations the correlation between policy and decision is very extensive. Policy and decision both are contributory factors for the achievement of the objectives of the organization. It is extremely difficult to find essence of purity and permanency in decision. This is because decision is the result of human wisdom. It is evident that policy is also one of its products thus it has to be defined from time to time. Thus decision is a phenomenon, a process as well as a result which is visible in the organization perpetually.

Basis of Decision

Decisions taken at the organizational level do not solely depend upon individual principles and power but on the basis of certain well established principles and bases. These are either taken into account in the process of decision making or should be taken. •

Time factor is considered very important in the decision making process. This is because some decisions are spot decisions while some decisions which have far reaching consequences are taken after a lot of consideration. Although it is not in the interest of the organization to delay a decision still decisions taken in a hurry may prove to be counter productive. As such in the process of taking decision the gravity of the issue, promptness, the status of the resources of the organization and time limit should be taken into account.

Constitutionality is the basis of the administrative organizations. Thus before taking any decision it is important to ensure that the decision does not violate the settled principles of law and limitations of the rules. The decision maker should have the authority and constitutionality to take the decision.

Practicality

The decision should be such that it can be implemented in a practical and effective manner. This means that the decision can be implemented with the available resources, following rules, processes and in the social and political scenario of the time.

The human resource available in the organization and its work culture should also be taken into account. On the other hand the acceptance of the decision is also a very important factor. This means the decision should be acceptable to both for whom it is taken and those who would implement it.

Maximum Benefit

Whatever may be the decision, it has its effect directly or indirectly in the financial status of the organization. Thus while taking decision economy and optimum benefit should be taken into account. This is because finance has become the life line of the modern administration. Greater production at lower cost and the decision to provide quality goods or service is in the interest of the organization.