

MANAGERIAL ROLES IN ORGANIZATIONS

Management Roles:

Managers fulfill a variety of roles. A **role** is an organized set of behaviors that is associated with a particular office or position.

Dr. Henry Mintzberg, a prominent management researcher, says that what managers do can best be described by looking at the roles they play at work. The term management role refers to specific categories of managerial behavior. There are three types of roles which a manager usually does in any organization.

Interpersonal roles are roles that involve people (subordinates and persons outside the organization) and other duties that are ceremonial and symbolic in nature. The three interpersonal roles include being a figurehead, leader, and liaison.

Informational roles involve receiving, collecting, and disseminating information. The three informational roles include a monitor, disseminator, and spokesperson.

Decisional roles revolved around making choices. The four decisional roles include entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator.

In the late 1960s, Henry Mintzberg concluded that managers perform 10 different, but highly interrelated roles.

Follow-up studies of Mintzberg's role categories in different types of organizations and at different managerial levels within organizations have generally supported the notion that managers perform similar roles.

However, the more traditional functions have not been invalidated. In fact, the functional approach still represents the most useful way of classifying the manager's job.

As depicted in following table, Mintzberg delineated ten managerial roles in three categories.

a. Interpersonal roles grow directly out of the authority of a manager's position and involve developing and maintaining positive relationships with significant others.

- 1) The **figurehead** performs symbolic legal or social duties.
- 2) The **Leader** builds relationships with employees and communicates with, motivates, and coaches them.
- 3) The **liaison** maintains a network of contacts outside the work unit to obtain information.

b. Informational roles pertain to receiving and transmitting information so that managers can serve as the nerve centers of their organizational units.

- 1) The **monitor** seeks internal and external information about issues that can affect the organization.
- 2) The **disseminator** transmits information internally that is obtained from either internal or external sources.
- 3) The **spokesperson** transmits information about the organization to outsiders.

c. Decisional roles involve making significant decisions that affect the organization.

- 1) The **entrepreneur** acts as an initiator, designer, and encourager of change and innovation.

- 2) The **disturbance handler** takes corrective action when the organization faces important, unexpected difficulties.
 - 3) The **resource allocator** distributes resources of all types, including time, funding, equipment, and human resources.
 - 4) The **negotiator** represents the organization in major negotiations affecting the manager's areas of responsibility
- d. The four major functions of management—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling provide the purpose for managers taking the roles they do.
- E Professor Mintzberg** explained his concept with the help of table; it is given on next page:

| Mintzberg's Managerial Roles | Role | Description | Examples of Identifiable Activities |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| Interpersonal | Figurehead | Symbolic head: obliged to perform a number of routine duties of a legal or social nature. | Greeting visitors: signing legal documents |
| | Leader | Responsible for the motivation of subordinates: responsible for staffing, training, and associated duties. | Performing virtually all activities that involve subordinates |
| | Liaison | Maintains self-developed network of outside contacts and informers who provide favors and information. | Acknowledging mail: doing external board work: performing other activities that involve outsiders |
| Informational | Monitor | Seeks and receives wide variety of internal and external information to develop thorough understanding of organization and environment. | Reading periodicals and reports: maintaining personal contacts. |
| | Disseminator | Transmits information received from outsiders or from subordinates to members of the organization | Holding informational meetings: making phone calls to relay information. |
| | Spokesperson | Transmits information to outsiders on organization's plans, policies, actions, results, | Holding board meetings: giving information to the media. |
| Decisional | Entrepreneur | Searches organization and its environment for opportunities and initiates "improvement projects" to bring about changes | Organizing strategy and review sessions to develop new programs |
| | Disturbance handler | Responsible for corrective action when organization faces important, unexpected disturbances | Organizing strategy and review sessions that involve disturbances and crises |
| | Resource allocator | Responsible for the allocation of organizational resources of all kinds – making or approving all significant organizational decisions | Scheduling: requesting authorization: performing any activity that involves budgeting and the programming of subordinates' work |
| | Negotiator | Responsible for representing the organization at major negotiations | Participating in union contract negotiations |