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Developing Management Skills:
Introductory Analysis
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Course: *MGT 370*
Title: *Management Skills Development* (3 units)

"There are five managerial roles; they are to set objectives, organize, motivate and communicate, measure, and develop people."
---*Peter Drucker (1909-2005)*

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to help structure the discussion for the critical management topics of *planning, organizing, leading, and controlling*.

Part I. — Principles of Management and Organizational Behavior

The first part of this document is related to the central topics learned in MGT 360: *Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling*.

Planning

In the movie *Buck*, the rider (manager) gives the horse (professional) "something to do". The rider "warms-up" the horse in the morning. The horse has developed skills in order to accomplish goals. The horse learns what a typical work day "at the office" involves.

"Planning is the process of setting performance objectives and determining what actions should be taken to accomplish them. Through planning, a manager identifies desired results—goals and objectives, and ways to achieve them—action plans."

1. With respect to a horse, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to planning.

2. *(Bonus)* With respect to an individual, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to planning.

Organizing

In the movie *Buck*, the rider (manager) and the horse (professional) work together to "round-up" the cattle. The horse has learned its existing surroundings, knows its own stable, and how to interact with other horses. The horse has learned how to use space and time effectively.

"Plans must be implemented. <u>Organizing</u> is the process of assigning tasks, allocating resources, and coordinating the activities of individuals and groups to accomplish plans. Organizing is how managers put plans into action by defining jobs and tasks, assigning them to responsible persons, and then providing support such as technology, time, and other resources."

1. With respect to a horse, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to organizing.

2. *(Bonus)* With respect to an individual, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to organizing.

Leading

In the movie *Buck*, the rider (manager) develops a relationship with the horse (professional) both through task-related skills and emotionally-related skills. Eventually, the rider doesn't need to train the horse. It's a "feel". The rider and the horse are one.

"<u>Leading</u> is the process of arousing people's enthusiasm and inspiring their efforts to work hard to fulfill plans and accomplish objectives. Managers lead by building commitments to a common vision, encouraging activities that support goals, and influencing others to do their best work on the organization's behalf."

1. With respect to a horse, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to leading.

2. *(Bonus)* With respect to an individual, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to leading.

Controlling

In the movie *Buck*, the rider (manager) can get injured, physically and emotionally, when the horse (professional) is "out of control". The horse developed poor skills, knowledge, and abilities because the horse's prior rider (the horse owner), prior parent (mother), and prior peers (other horses, especially "studs") did not provide timely and relevant feedback when it was most needed.

 "The management function of <u>Controlling</u> is the process of measuring work performance, comparing results to objectives, and taking corrective action as needed. Managers exercise control by staying in active contact with people as they work, gathering and interpreting performance measurements, and using this information to make constructive changes."

1. With respect to a horse, identify at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to controlling.

2. *(Bonus)*   With respect to an individual, at least one management skill displayed by Buck that is related to controlling.

Part II. — Management Skills Development

The second part of this document is related to the topics discussed in our textbook Chapters: Introduction and Developing Self-Awareness (Chapter 1). In Management Skill Development, explanation or prediction from academic theories is important because that knowledge applies—often widely and generally—in organizational practice.

We will also use material from the Davidson and Buchanan articles. In Management Skills Development, an analogy from practice is important because it is demonstrated ability that we desire.

Recall that this class is about Management Skills *Development*. We make the assumption that management skills can be acquired, improved, and demonstrated by any individual.

1. Can you identify something from the movie that demonstrates a *change* in <u>Buck</u>? That is, can you identify something that initially appeared to be a gap (or deficit) in Buck's management skills but then eventually Buck acquired (or learned) a management skill over time.
   a. Identify a management skill that Buck learned.
   b. Explain your answer using at least one of the key ideas from the textbook for this week (either the Introduction or Chapter 1).
   c. Support your answer with an analogy from one of the key ideas from the supplemental readings for this week (Davidson or Buchannan).

2. *(Bonus)* Can you identify something from the movie that demonstrates a *change* in <u>someone other than Buck</u>? That is, can you identify something that initially appeared to be a gap (or deficit) in that person's management skills but then eventually that person acquired (or learned) a management skill over time.
   a. Identify a management skill that person learned.
   b. Explain your answer using at least one of the key ideas from the textbook for this week (either the Introduction or Chapter 1).
   c. Support your answer with an analogy from one of the key ideas from the supplemental readings for this week (Davidson or Buchannan).

(Key Ideas)

Textbook—Introduction

- *Management Skills*: Verbal communication (including listening); Managing time and stress; Rational and creative decision-making; Recognizing, defining, and solving problems; Motivating and influencing others;

Delegating and engaging others; Setting goals and articulating a vision; Self-awareness; Team building; Managing conflict
- *Developing Management Skills*: Self-assessment, Skill learning, Skill analysis, Skill practice, Skill application
- *Leadership and Competing Values*: Collaborate ("clan" skills), Create ("adhocracy" skills), Complete ("market" skills), Control ("hierarchy" skills)
- *Essential skills*: Personal-level, Interpersonal-level, Group-level

Textbook—Chapter 1. (Developing Self-awareness)

- *Sensitive Line*: The point at which individuals become defensive or protective when encountering information about themselves that is inconsistent with their self-concept or when encountering pressure to alter their behavior.
- *Emotional Intelligence:* This refers to the ability diagnose, understand, and manage social cues (especially related to self-awareness, self-control, empathy, motivation, and social skills).
- *Personal Values and Moral Maturity*: Values help define our morality and our conceptions of what is "good". Moral maturity refers to the stages of growth in moral judgment: from self-centered to conformity to principled.
- *Cognitive Style*: This refers to the inclination each of us has to perceive, interpret, and respond to information in a certain way.
- *Orientation towards change*: This refers to the fact that as the environment in which managers operate continues to become more chaotic, more temporary, more complex, and more overloaded with information, your ability to process information is at least partly constrained by your fundamental attitude about change (it is especially affected by one's "tolerance for ambiguity" and "locus of control").
- *Core Self-evaluation*: Beyond personality, this refers to the fundamental evaluation one has of oneself.

Supplemental—Davidson (soft-skills)

- *Scope of issue*: [The gaps in soft-skills] spans age groups and experience levels. "[It's hard] to teach someone "common sense" [or] work ethic."
- *Proportion:* [Increasingly…many jobs…] require workers to take on broader responsibilities that demand critical thinking and empathy. [Overwhelmingly, executives] said soft skills were equally important or more important than technical skills. [Technical skills are needed in the short-run, but] soft-skills are needed for success in the long-run.
- *Competition:* Competition is heating up for workers with the right mix of soft skills.
- *Resources:* [Increasingly] companies are investing more time and capital in teasing out job applicants' personality quirks, [developing] tests and other screening methods, and beefing up training programs.
- *Recruiting:* "We've never spent more money in the history of our firm than we are now on recruiting".

- *Teams:* [The] firm's associates must be able to work in teams. "You can't just be the general of your own army."
- *Employment Life-Cycle:* Soft-skills have always been important tools for managers, but now employers are finding them more important than ever before "at the lower end of the org chart," and "the focus is earlier on in one's career."
- *Technical Areas:* [Soft-skills, perhaps may be especially important] for recent college graduates in technical fields such as computer sciences, accounting, and finance.

Supplemental—Buchanan (Drucker on Management)

1. Make sure your own objectives and your team's objectives are in alignment with the company's overall mission.

2. Maintain a clear list of priorities--never more than a few, and always tackled one at a time--as well as "stop doing" and "never start" lists.

3. Carefully track where your own time goes and never waste others' time by triggering the "recurrent crisis" through lack of foresight, overstaffing projects, holding too many meetings or sending out information that is either irrelevant or hard to understand.

4. Favor the future over the past and focus on opportunities, not problems.

5. Staff and promote by, first, gaining clarity around "What are we trying to do?" and then matching people's strengths with those key activities.

6. Invite dissent and be confident that important decisions "should be controversial" and "acclamation means that nobody has done the homework."

7. Remember that every decision you make is "like surgery". It is an intervention into a system and therefore carries with it the risk of shock."

8. Don't blame others when things go wrong.

9. Understand that the critical question is not, "How can I achieve?" but "What can I contribute?"

10. Routinely demonstrate that "leadership is not characterized by the stars on your shoulder. An executive leads by example."