

# **GOVERNMENT ARTS COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, SALEM-8**

**Re-accredited with “A” grade by NAAC  
(Affiliated to Periyar University, Salem - 11)**



**PG & RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

## **STUDY MATERIAL**

**PAPER NAME: OFFICE ORGANISATION**

**PAPER CODE : 17UCME03**

**CLASS & SEMESTER: III B.Com. & V**

# **OFFICE ORGANISATION**

## **UNIT-I**

Modern office – Meaning, Importance – Function – Location of Office – Office layout – Open and private offices – Office Environment, Lighting, Ventilation, freedom from noise and dust, sanitary, security and secrecy.

## **UNIT – II**

Office organization – Importance – Types – Organisation chart – Office manuals – Delegation of authority and responsibility – centralization Vs decentralization.

## **UNIT-III**

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## **UNIT- V**

Office furniture – Types of furniture – Office machine and equipments – Object of mechanization – Types of office machine – Computers and it's in office – Criteria for selection.

### **TEXT BOOK:**

- Office Manager - R.K.Chopra.
- Office Management - R.K.Ghosh.

### **REFERENCE BOOK:**

- Manual of Office Management and Correspondence – B.N.Tanden.
- Office Organisation and Management – C.B.Gupta.

## **UNIT – I**

Modern Office – Meaning, Importance – Function – Location of Office – Office Layout – Open and Private Offices – Office Environment, Lighting, Ventilation freedom from noise and dust, sanitary, security and secrecy.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

An office is understood to be a place where all the clerical and paper work is performed like letters, correspondence, files, record, etc. The office also maintains and deals with every paper or documents received in an office. In other words, Office is “a central place where all sorts of clerical work is done to coordinate and control the affairs of the whole organization.”

### **MEANING OF OFFICE:**

A few definitions may be noted:

(i) “The office is the administrative centre of business. The purpose of an office has been defined as the providing of a service of communication and record.”

— *Mills & Standingford*

(ii) “An Office is the place where the control mechanisms for an enterprise are located; where records are initiated for communication, control and efficient operations of the enterprise.”

(iii) “An Office is the place where work in connection with the preparing and furnishing of information is done.”

(iv) “The acts of collecting, processing, storing and distributing information comprise the functions of the Office.”—*George R. Terry*

— *Edward*

### **THE PURPOSE OF AN OFFICE**

The purpose of an Office is mainly to provide the services of communication and of record. Office is, in fact, a processing medium. In addition, it is responsible for directing and coordinating the various activities of the organization. It is like the brain in a human body and the mainspring in a watch. It is the central directing force. The main purposes of an office are:

- (i) To direct and coordinate the activities of the various departments;
- (ii) To plan the policies of the business and ensure their implementation;
- (iii) To preserve all the records of the business;
- (iv) To handle inward correspondence; and
- (v) To maintain accounts, statutory and non-statutory books, etc., of the business.

### **FUNCTIONS OF AN OFFICE:**

The functions of a modern Office may be classified into two categories:

- I. Basic functions (or routine functions); and

## II. Administrative management functions.

### ***I. BASIC FUNCTIONS:***

The basic functions of an office may be analyzed under the following headings:

**1. *Receiving Information:*** Information relating to the activities of an organization may be received from a variety of sources, which may be internal sources or external sources. From internal sources, information may be received from various departments, sections or divisions of the organization. From external sources, it may be received from suppliers, customers, visitors, other organizations, government departments, etc.

**2. *Recording Information:*** The object of keeping records is to make information readily available to the management, whenever required. For this purpose, the information that is received, is converted into some form of written record. The records normally kept in a business office include financial and cost accounts, orders, progress of work, hours worked by employees, correspondence, etc. While some records are required to be kept by law, some others should be kept to meet the needs of the management in planning and controlling the business. The records so maintained by the Office serve as a reference library for future use.

**3. *Arranging Information:*** The information accumulated by an office is rarely in the form in which it is given out; facts have to be gathered from various sources and calculations, tabulations, etc., may have to be made. An office is responsible for supplying information in the form which best serves the purpose of the management, and this is a function of the highest importance and which must be carried out by a properly trained staff. Examples of arranging information are: preparing invoices, payrolls, cost accounting statements, statistical statements, and reports.

**4. *Giving Information:*** An office furnishes information from its records as and when it is required by the management. The information required by the management may be of a routine nature or of a special nature, and may be supplied verbally or in writing.

### ***II. ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS:***

Apart from the basic functions of an office, there are certain administrative management functions which have to be performed for a smooth functioning of the office. These functions are outlined below:

**1. *Management Functions:*** For the efficient functioning of an office, the management functions include:

- (a) Planning;
- (b) Organizing;
- (c) Staffing;
- (d) Directing;
- (e) Communicating;
- (f) Controlling;
- (g) Coordinating;
- (h) Motivating.

Office work has to be properly planned, and then organized and executed according to the plan. A proper control must be exercised over office activities, and the affairs of the different individuals and departments in the organization must be coordinated.

**2. Public Relations Function:** An office has not only to maintain cordial relations with other departments in the organization but also with outsiders. It has, therefore, to perform public relations function as well. Good public relations enhance the reputation and goodwill of the organization. Public relations include the reception service, the liaison service, etc., provided by the organization.

**3. Instituting Office Systems and Routines:** Systems and routines indicate a planned and systematic approach to the problem of management. A system may be regarded as a planned approach to the attainment of desired objectives. An office routine may be defined as a series of steps in the performance of Office Work, each step in the series being performed in the same order and in the same way every time. A procedure is a planned sequence of operations for the handling of recurring business transactions uniformly and consistently. Office routines, systems and procedures, etc., should be developed to ensure an uninterrupted and smooth flow of Office Work so that it may be efficiently performed.

**4. Retention of Records:** Office records include correspondence, letters, invoices, orders, financial and cost records, reports, statistical records, minutes, etc. These records have to be retained for future reference. Apart from maintaining records, which is a basic function (see 'Recording Information' above under the heading "Basic Functions"), an Office has to perform functions like those of filing and indexing, and the preservations and destruction of outdated records.

**5. Safeguarding Assets:** It is the function of an office to safeguard the assets of the organization, which may be fixed assets like building, plant, machinery, office equipment, lighting and air-conditioning equipment; or which may be movable assets like furniture, typewriters, calculating or accounting machines, equipment of various types; or which may be in the form of cash, title deeds, securities, records and documents, etc. Vital records such as major contracts must be properly protected; cash must be held in safety or banked; stock records must be properly maintained and deficiencies may be immediately brought to the notice of the management; fixed assets should be protected against hazards of fire and theft by taking out suitable insurance policies and by other means.

**6. Form Designing and Control:** Since office work is mostly paper work, office forms are extensively used to perform the recording function of the office. "A form is a standardized record which is used to accumulate and transmit information for reference purposes." office forms serve as a store-house of information. It is the task of the management to design, standardize, produce and control the forms to be used in the Office as well as the other departments of the organization.

**7. Stationery and Supplies Control:** Office Work requires the supply of office stationery of suitable quality and in adequate quantity. It is the duty of the office to carefully procure and maintain an adequate supply of stationery items. Since stationery is a very costly item these days, it should be bought at competitive prices in economic order quantities;

reasonable levels of stock must be maintained and made available at all times; and it should be issued only against authorized requisitions and stored scientifically to avoid damage, loss or deterioration.

**8. Selection and Purchase of Office Appliances:** Office Work also requires adequate equipment and machines — furniture, fixtures, telephones, intercom systems, Dictaphones, calculators, accounting machines, filing cabinets and drawers, typewriters, duplicators, (and, in some cases, computers), etc. It is the duty of the Office Manager to purchase the right type of machines, equipment or furniture (according to the requirements of the office), and also to maintain these in efficient working order. The principles which should be followed in the selection of office appliances include:

- (a) Full and proper use;
- (b) Suitability for the purpose for which purchased;
- (c) Simplicity of operation and maintenance;
- (d) Flexibility and adaptability to different uses; and
- (e) Analysis of cost and benefit. Appliances should be purchased, keeping in view the financial resources of the organization.

**9. Personnel Function:** The efficiency of an Office depends on the personnel manning it. The personnel should be scientifically recruited and trained, and assigned work after a proper appraisal. The personnel function is performed by the personnel department, which is generally assisted by the office. The Office Manager must make a provision of adequate and trained staff to ensure the systematic, timely and efficient performance of Office Work. Job evaluation and merit rating should be periodically done; the staff should receive reasonable remuneration and should be properly motivated to attain the best performance. Opportunities for betterment and promotion should be made available to the Office staff.

**10. Controlling Office Costs:** With the adoption of scientific methods for Office Management, a modern Office is further supposed to discharge the function of “controlling Office costs”. This may be done by:

- (a) Mechanization of the Office;
- (b) Adopting time and labour saving devices in the Office;
- (c) Using better forms;
- (d) Analyzing the existing Office routines and adopting improved ones.

## **IMPORTANCE OF AN OFFICE**

An office is an important and indispensable part of every organisation, big or small. The office acts as a storehouse and nervous system of every operation of a business concern. A well managed Office is an indispensable aid to management. It helps the management to plan its operations intelligently and to put them in action competently. The office coordinates all the activities of the business. Without an efficient and organised Office, business activities cannot be carried through systematically.

Its importance has rightly been explained by L.R. Dicksee, Office is to a business what a mainspring is to a watch.” As the watch cannot work without its mainspring, we cannot think of running a business without the office.

The importance of an Office to a business enterprise may be further studied with the help of the following points:

**1. Office as Information Centre:** An office may be described as the information centre of a business. It collects information from all sources, internal and external, records it, arranges and analyses it and provides it to the management when required. (See “Functions” above). The information furnished by an office helps the management to forecast and plan its operations well in advance and to exercise control over the entire spectrum of business activities. An office is also called a “storehouse of information” or a “memory centre of an organisation” since all kinds of information and figures, whether past or present, are available in the office.

**2. Office as an Intermediary:** An office connects different departments with the outsiders and *vice versa*. For instance, all the “purchase orders” are routed through the office and all the “sales orders” are received through the office. It is office that links the business organisation with its suppliers, customers, the Government and the general public. It is, in short, responsible for:

- (i) Attending to enquiries, orders and complaints of its customers and suppliers;
- (ii) Creating a good image of the organization in the minds of people; and
- (iii) Maintaining liaison with the Government and other institutions.

**3. Office as a Coordinator:** The processing of information in a modern office may be grouped under four headings: namely, communications, written and oral; computing and summarizing operating results; record-keeping through accounting and filing records; and systematization and cost reduction — through systems and procedures analyses. These four activities are necessary for the efficient coordination of production, distribution, and financing of the merchandise or services in a business concern. This coordination is provided by the focal centre — the office. The process of coordination is almost impossible without an office, which provides competent clerical services to all in the business who need it. It keeps contact with all the other departments, and provides necessary information and knowledge for the coordination of the various activities of the organization.

**4. Office as a Service Centre:** Since an Office is the focal point in a business organisation for the co-ordination of the work of production, distribution, finance and personnel, its activities are in the nature of services to all the other departments and to the business as a single unit. Frequently an Office is referred to as the Office services department. It exists to provide clerical and other services to the various departments, divisions, sections or branches of the organization, and cannot operate apart from them.

**5. Office as an Administrative Nerve Centre:** As an inclusive executive function, an Office acts as an administrative nerve centre. It helps in making the decisions about the products to be manufactured and sold, when to purchase materials, what reports to prepare, and a variety of similar activities. It becomes the heart of all business activity, through which circulates information on purchases, sales, finances and communication.

**6. Office as Control Centre:** An Office also acts a “control centre” of the organization, since it helps the management to take decisions and implement them. It prepares and presents all the necessary data, information and plans to the management so that it might take decisions. It is the Office where all the policy decisions originate, and it is from there that the activities of the organization are controlled and remedial or corrective action taken to ensure that the objectives of the organization are accomplished.

Leffingwell, and Robinson have summed up the importance of an Office thus: “A well organized Office makes it possible for the management to plan its operations intelligently, to put its plans into effect surely, to follow their progress currently, to determine their effectiveness promptly, to appraise their result without delay and to coordinate all the activities of the business”.

### LOCATION OF OFFICE

Every Office Manager should give a full and proper consideration to a suitable location for his office. This location or site is an important consideration because an unsuitable location may result in a waste of resources and efforts and loss of time, inconvenience to the office staff as well as to the persons dealing with it. The problem of location arises under one or the other of the following conditions:

- (i) At the time of starting a business enterprise.
- (ii) The increased volume of work may require a change of office location.
- (iii) The facilities provided in the original location plan are no longer sufficient for the expanding business, and, therefore, the entire expansion of the existing office or anew location is necessary.
- (iv) The lease for the office premises has expired and the owner of the premises was not prepared to renew it.
- (v) Shifting of the business by the business enterprise from one place or one State to another.

### PRINCIPLES OF LOCATION

Decisions regarding location and buildings are not made frequently by any firm; but when they are made, they have far reaching consequences. These are some of those very important decisions which make the difference between success and failure of the business. While deciding about the location of an Office, the Office Manager should bear in mind the following principles:

- (a) When the office staff is small, the office may be located in the same building where the other activities of the enterprise, *e.g.*, manufacturing, sales, etc., are carried on.
- (b) When the office staff is large, the office should be located in a separate building. In such a case, it is advisable to centralize office activities.
- (c) When all the business functions are carried on at one location, it is better that the office should be in the same location so that it may serve most efficiently all the



functions of the business. But when different functions are “located at different places, it should be located at some central place or in or near the premises of the main function of the business.

- (d) In other cases, the decision on location should depend on the factors governing the location.

### **TYPES OF OFFICE LOCATION:**

Each business unit should select the proper location for the office building according to its requirements. It is better to decide in the choice of office location whether the office building should be located in an urban area or a sub urban or rural area.

Each area has its own merits and demerits. But, the office manager has to select the place with due care. The relative merits and demerits of the two types of locations are briefly discussed below.

### **I - URBAN AREA FOR BUSINESS LOCATION:**

The general trend in the selection of location for office building is urban area. The merits and demerits of urban area are presented below.

#### ***Merits of Urban Area for location of office:***

1. Nearness to related business / office.
2. Nearness to service units like banks and post offices.
3. Transport facility for the staff and the customers.
4. Availability of communication facilities.
5. Prestige value to the business unit.
6. Facilities for the purchase of raw materials and selling of finished goods.
7. Municipal or corporation facilities.
8. Abundance of recreational facilities.
9. Easy availability of skilled employees.
10. Immediate action can be taken to enlarge customer’s satisfaction.
11. The important government offices like Income Tax, Sales Tax etc. are situated in urban area.

#### ***Demerits of Urban Area for location of office:***

1. High rent, rates and taxes.
2. High cost of land.
3. Traffic congestion and over crowding.
4. Inadequate space for office building.
5. Difficult in future for expansion.
6. More noise, dust and fumes.
7. Less scope for modernization.
8. High cost of living for employees.

## **II - RURAL AREA FOR BUSINESS LOCATION:**

The recent trend in the selection of location for office building is rural area. The merits and demerits of rural area are given below.

### ***Merits of Rural Area (Sub Urban Area)***

1. Low wages of the labour.
2. Cheap value of land.
3. Accessibility to real customers.
4. Less congestion and less crowding of people.
5. Pure air and water.
6. Quiet and hygienic environment.
7. Low rent of building.
8. Less construction cost.
9. Ample scope for future expansion and modernization.
10. Lower cost of living.
11. Insanitary conditions will not prevail.

### ***Demerits of Rural Area (Sub Urban Area)***

1. There is no proper transport and communication.
2. Office location may be far away from related trades / offices.
3. There is a poor or lack of service facilities like banks and post offices.
4. Regular electricity is not available.
5. There is a difficulty to accessing the customers.
6. There is a poor or lack of recreational facilities.
7. The business has no scope for expansion due to low sales.
8. Skilled labourers are not available.
9. There is a possibility of delay in getting certain essential materials.
10. Specialized agency like Engineering and Insurance are not available.
11. Regular or immediate contact is impossible with important government offices which are situated only in cities and urban areas.
12. Office staff are not ready to work in the rural area.
13. Office staff is not ready to work in the rural area.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING LOCATION:**

It is rather difficult to lay down any hard and fast rule about the location of an Office, for a desirable location is usually determined by the requirements of each business. Different kinds of offices require different locations. However, the following factors should be taken into consideration in choosing an office location.

The following factors should be taken into consideration while determining office location:

***(a) Availability of sufficient space***

The office should have sufficient accommodation and facilities i.e., rooms, storage space etc. Future expansion and requirements should also be kept in view.

***(b) Proximity to other departments***

The office should be located in a central place so as to be easily accessible to other sections, units and departments of the organisation.

***(c) Proximity to other offices***

The office should be located in or near an existing office complex which will enable it to derive the benefits of common services like Post Office, Bank, Transport etc. available in the locality.

***(d) Availability of transport facilities***

Every office requires adequate transport facilities for the convenience of office workers and outsiders dealing with the office.

***(e) Service facilities***

Besides transport, availability of banking, postal, internet, telephone and telegraph facilities are also necessary for the efficient conduct of office functions. The services of insurance agencies are also needed for various purposes. The office should, therefore, be located where such facilities exist.

***(f) Availability of office employees***

It is desirable to locate the office where it may be easier to recruit and retain different categories of office staff e.g., stenographers, computer operators, accountants, clerks, typists, peons, etc.

***(g) Healthy environment***

Every office requires healthy surroundings. The place must be free from dust and noise. It should not be located in a congested area. Unhealthy surroundings adversely affect the efficiency of the employees.

In short, the location chosen must be one from where the entire organisation can be served efficiently at a reasonable cost.

## **OFFICE LAYOUT**

According to **Littlefield**, "Office layout may be defined as the arrangement of equipment within the available floor space".

The object of an office layout is to make arrangements for placing of men, materials, machines, furniture and equipment within the available floor space of the office in such a way that everything can be utilized in the best possible manner. An office layout involves:

- The determination of the correct amount of space for each employee and for machinery and equipment they use
- The correct arrangement of furniture, equipment and machinery and
- The best possible environmental conditions.

### **OBJECTIVES OF OFFICE LAYOUT:**

The objectives of an office lay out are:

1. The available floor space should be used to the greatest extent
2. Service such as electricity and telephone should be available wherever needed
3. Good working conditions should be provided for everyone.
4. The individual clerks should be so located that the supervisor should be able to see the staff at work.
5. A sense of belonging and loyalty to the working group should be encouraged.
6. Communication and work flow should be facilitated
7. The movement of clerks between desks, filing cabinets, etc should be made easy. The work desks should be located within easy reach of equipment and machines which the clerk may need to use in course of performing the work.
8. Noisy and distracting operations should be segregated.
9. Mutual interference between clerks should be avoided.
10. Privacy and security should be provided to departments or individuals dealing with work of confidential documents or records.
11. Adequate safety arrangements should be provided for departments dealing with secret or valuable documents or records.

### **IMPORTANCE OF OFFICE LAYOUT:**

A well planned layout brings a number of benefits to the office and to the employees. The benefits of proper office layout is given below:

- a. Assists in the efficiency of getting the work done from employees.
- b. Proper utilization of office floor space.
- c. Facilitates smooth supervision.
- d. Speeds up intercommunication.
- e. Utilization of office machines and equipment to their optimum capacity.
- f. Ensures better comfort and self esteem of the employees.

## **TYPES OF OFFICE:**

The following are the types of an office.

### **I - OPEN OFFICE**

A large room where all the departments, staff and equipment are accommodated without partition wall is known as Open Office. Each department or section of the office is allotted a separate space under the same roof and separated by wooden/steel partitions. This helps in full utilization of space and ensures better control. Office managers normally prefer to have an open office because of the following reasons:-

#### ***Advantages of Open Office***

1. It facilitates better utilization of office space as more number of employees can be accommodated by raising cabins upto the height of 4-6 feet. This results in reducing the cost of office operations.
2. Free flow of natural light and air is possible as there is no high partitions. It may help in having uniformity in lighting and ventilation. This increases the efficiency of the staff.
3. Open office reduces the cost of supervision as the number of supervisors required to supervise the staff in an open office is less.
4. The staff does not have to move from one place to another for the want of some file or discussion as they are provided filing cabinets within their cabin. Hence, it minimizes the movement of the staff. This helps in saving of time.
5. It facilitates greater flexibility in planning and layout. It can be arranged or rearranged as per the changing requirements of the office.
6. As the employees can see each other, communication among them becomes easier and quicker.

#### ***Disadvantages of Open Office***

1. No unit or section will have a separate entity in an open office.
2. The staff gets disturbed by the noise due to conversation among employees and working of machines may affect the efficiency of the office staff.
3. It may cause overcrowding in the office.
4. The concept of open office is not suitable for the work which requires secrecy and concentration of work
5. It may lead to distraction caused by visitors to the office.
6. It is difficult to regulate ventilation, lighting, heating or cooling to suit

needs of every individual working in the office.

## **II - PRIVATE OFFICE:**

Even though the modern tendency is to adopt the open office system, it should be noted that the private offices cannot be dispensed with completely because a few private offices will have to be provided for top executives and for work which is of a confidential nature and which requires privacy and concentration. Private offices are small rooms which are separated by partitions. They are usually meant for top executives like Managing Director, General Manager, Personnel Department Manager, etc.

### ***Advantages of Private Office***

1. It increases the status and prestige of the officer. He commands the respect of employees.
2. It suits very well for such work which is of a confidential nature.
3. Work requiring absence of noise can be done properly in a private room.
4. In a private office, noise is eliminated, and this increases efficiency.
5. Disturbances caused by ringing of phones, conversations between the employees and other types of sights and sounds in an open office set up can be avoided in private offices.
6. The private office layout provides the sufficient amount of room space and desk. In an open office, employees are provided cubicles or small desks space which is often not sufficient for employees handling tons of paperwork on daily basis.

### ***Disadvantages of private office***

1. There is wastage of valuable space because of partitions and corridors.
2. Supervision becomes costly and less effective.
3. Because of barriers and obstructions, the flow of natural light and air is prevented.
4. Layout becomes less flexible and changes in the layout cannot be made quickly.
5. Because of walls and partitions, free flow of work is hindered.
6. It necessitates the movement of staff from one room to another.
7. The presence of a number of private rooms may affect inter-communication.

## **OFFICE ENVIRONMENT**

The efficiency of the workers depend not only on their training and aptitude but also on their capacity and willingness to work which is possible when proper environment and working conditions are provided to them. Physical discomforts produce fatigue and cause mental strain. Favorable working

conditions increase the efficiency of the workers. Such conditions induce concentration and avoid distraction. The following physical conditions and environments in the office can be considered for increasing the efficiency of the workers and consequently the output.

**Ventilation:-** The office should be well ventilated. Constant flow of fresh air in the office will reduce the fatigue. The rooms will become suffocated if there is no proper ventilation especially in the rainy season. It will create drowsiness in the workers which lowers their efficiency. In summers, when hot winds blow cause irritation to staff working in the office. Ventilation can be improved by the following methods:-

- a. Lobbies should have two doors, the outer and the inner, so that both the doors do not open at the same time. Similarly in winter the rooms will remain warm.
- b. The windows should be protected by fine wire gauge which will help in cross ventilation. Air conditioning of office can also solve the problem but its initial cost as well as the maintenance cost is very high.
- c. Fans/Exhaust Fans may also be of great help.

### **Office Lighting:-**

The office should have adequate natural light. Free flow of natural light is conducive to efficient working. Inadequate light causes strain on eyes. It may cause mistakes and even accidents. In case the natural light is not available, artificial light will serve the purpose. Artificial light increases the cost of office maintenance. Adequate light increases efficiency and consequently the output. This is especially important where figures or drawing work is done in the office.

***Natural Light-*** When selecting or designing a building, care should be taken that the office is not shadowed by other building. The large windows should be paned to allow more natural light. It may not be possible in all cases. Therefore the manager should see that rooms with more light are assigned to the workers who have to do figure work like accounts clerks or those who have to do drawing work as in the office of an architect. If the office occupies the whole of the building the top floor may be given to this staff. If even this is not possible, the tables of the workers may be placed near the window.

***Artificial Light:*** - Artificial lighting system is of four kinds:

- a.**Individual Desk Lighting:-** Each clerk is provided with a lamp in addition to the common light for the room. It is an expensive system and causes consumption of more electricity.

**b.Direct light:-** In such a case lights with shades are suspended from the ceiling and thus the lights falls directly on the tables of the workers, such a system of lighting causes shadow.

**c.Indirect light:-** Under this system the light fixtures are fitted facing the ceiling which in turn reflect it downward. Such a method reduces the glare and gives uniform distribution of light shadows. But it does not give intensity of light on the working surface.

**d.Fluorescent Lights:-** Fluorescent tubes give a diffused light. This system of lighting has become very popular in the office. It is a cheap system of lighting. While fixing the tubes, care should be taken to avoid glare from the unshaded tubes which may cause distraction to clerks. The consumption of electricity is also less. Of course the installation costs are higher. LED lights are more in use these days as it helps in reduction of cost.

### **Cleanliness:-**

A modern well cleaned office will create a lasting impression on its workers and clients. A light bright and clean office contributes to staff morale. If the office is neat and clean it will not only contribute to the general health and well being of the clerks but also to the neatness and accuracy of the work put in by them and the workers will take a pride of their office.

Even though the office room is cleaned once a day dirt is bound to accumulate on the top of filing cabinets, shelves and behind almirahs, typewriting table, etc.. A definite program of special cleaning of such places, say every Monday or once in fortnight, should be laid down and strictly followed. Rooms should be swept every morning before the members of the staff reach the office. Tables and chairs and cupboards should be dusted after the floors have been swept.

### **Sanitation:-**

Maintaining a clean work environment is very important in preventing food borne illness, Bacteria grow on unsanitary surfaces and then contaminate food. Office is a place where the workers spend their lot of time every day. Insanitary conditions will affect their working capacity. The office should be free from bad odours. Proper cleaning of the office every day and spraying it with disinfectants and dousing will be conducive to sanitation. Toilets and urinals should be cleaned several times a day. Sufficient number of such conveniences should be provided according to the number of the workers in an office.

### **Heating and Air Conditioning**



If the rooms of the workers are too cold or too hot they may feel uncomfortable and may not be able to concentrate fully on the job. Humidity of the right type is of utmost importance from the health point of view. Even heat in winters throughout the rooms will be an ideal system of heating. In summer exterior sunblinds or interior venetian blinds keep the office cool. The temperature of the room, if possible should be automatically regulated, if the rooms are hot, the clerks feel drowsiness and consequently may commit mistakes and there might be reduction in the output.

### **Noise**

Noise is common complaint of staff in the offices. It causes distraction to the workers. It is sometimes the cause of irritation. It causes mistakes and delays. It causes fatigue to the workers. It may result in inefficiency of the workers. It decreases productivity especially for complex or difficult tasks. Noise may be

- 1) Internal
- 2) External

#### ***Internal Noise***

The internal noise is usually caused by the following factors:

- i. Office Machines;
- ii. Creaking doors;
- iii. Talking by the clerks;
- iv. Clinging of the bells of telephones and call bells;
- v. Removal of chairs when the workers get up from their seats or the movements of the clerks or peons from one room to another.

#### ***External Noise***

The external noise is caused by transportation systems, motor vehicles, aircraft, and trains. Even the offices situated in busy streets and domestic areas are also conducive to external noise. The external noise can be reduced if the premises selected for office is away from these areas. Double windows with sufficient air space in between the two panes will reduce the noise from the street. Sound absorbent walls will go a long way to reduce the noise.

### **Health**

Health of the employees cannot be overlooked as far as the provision of physical environment to the staff is concerned. Overcrowding in the rooms should be avoided

as it affects the health of the staff. About 40 cubic feet of space should be provided per person. Clean and adequate drinking water should be available for the staff. Washing facilities should be provided where necessary. Clean and hygienic canteens can be set up in the offices where food can be supplied to the employees at subsidized rates. It should be located at a suitable place. Management of the canteen should be in the hands of the representatives of the employers and the employees to see that the quality and quantity sold is not below the standard.

### **Safety – First Aid Box, Fire, Accident etc.**

A few measures for the safety of the workers are given below:

***First Aid Box.*** One first Aid Box should be provided for every workers. The box should be in the charge of a person trained in First Aid. At least two or three members of the staff should be trained to render first aid in case of need. The first aid box should be at a convenient place.

***Fire Precaution.*** Fire extinguishers should be provided. The workers should know how to use a fire extinguisher in case of emergency. Such fire extinguishers should be placed at convenient places. Fire exits and escape routes should be clearly marked. Fire alarm should be fixed and tested from time to time. The workers should be made familiar with those precautions.

**Accidents.** Offices are not usually dangerous places but still accidents do occur. The majority of accidents can be avoided by taking the correct safety measures. To avoid accidents, there should not be patholes on the floors. Carpets and durries should be mended if torn and frayed so that the clerks may not trip over while walking. Stairs must have railings. Files should not be placed on the top of the almirahs lest the clerk might not fell down. Steps ladders should be provided for high reaching shelves. To save the employees from electric wires, cords of heaters or fans should be regularly checked. Electric machines, switches and appliances should be tested from time to time to avoid accidents because of leakage. Razor blades should not be kept in the drawers of the tables. They should not be thrown on the floors after use.

## **UNIT – I COMPLETED**

## **UNIT – II**

Office Organisation – Importance – Types – Organisation chart – Office Manuals – Delegation of authority and responsibility – centralization vs decentralization.

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### **Introduction:**

As size of the office is either small or large, it becomes necessary to organize the works or activities in order to achieve the specified objective effectively with minimum cost. Hence, the entire activities of the concern should be divided into many operations or functions (called departments). A proper arrangement of an organization along with office appliances will facilitate a speedy performance of office work. In this way, office organization is based on the organized routine and procedures and continuous flow of work.

### **Meaning of Office Organization**

Office organization is a process of defining and grouping of office activities into main heads of functions, select suitable personnel, assign jobs to them and delegate authority to them for performing the jobs, coordinate the activities of different individuals and provide necessary facilities like forms, stationery, equipment, machines and suitable working environment to enable the persons to perform their work efficiently.

### **Definition of Office Organization**

Office organization is defined as a process of defining and grouping the office activities and establishing the authority relationship among the employees who are working in an office so that they can be executed assigned activities effectively and economically.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICE ORGANIZATION:**

The characteristics of an office organization are listed below:

1. Fixing of responsibility on each office employee.
2. Assigning of work on the basis of competency of an office employee.
3. Avoiding the delay in doing the office work.
4. Completion of work as per the predetermined system and procedure.
5. Proper and adequate delegation of authority for doing work.
6. Providing adequate supervision for each work.
7. Exercise proper control over the office employees.
8. Proper supply of necessary forms and stationery for doing the work.
9. Effective utilization of available equipment and machines in an office.
10. Creating suitable working environment.

### **STEPS INVOLVED IN OFFICE ORGANIZATION**

The following steps are involved in an office organization.

1. The first step is that an identification of office activities which are to be performed in order to achieve main objectives of the business organization.
2. Such identified activities are classified for facilitate the grouping of activities.
3. Then, all the identified activities are grouped on any one of the basis. The selection of basis is based on the nature of business organization. If the activities are grouped on functional basis, the

departments or divisions are created on functional basis. For example, Production, Sales, Finance, Accounts, Personnel and the like.

4. The grouped activities are assigned to an individual or a group. Generally, production activities are assigned to production manager and production department. In this way, other grouped activities are assigned to each individual and a department. The responsibility is fixed at each level of all the departments.

5. Whenever, responsibility is fixed, there is a need of authority to perform the work. Hence, adequate authority is delegated to every manager for their respective department.

6. A proper organization structure is created in order to facilitate effective coordination of grouped activities both horizontally and vertically. Moreover, structural relationship is also clearly defined.

### **TYPES OF ORGANIZATION:**

According to different methods of distribution of authorities and responsibilities, the organisation are of following types:

1. Line or Scalar Organisation
2. Functional Organisation
3. Line and Staff Organisation
4. Line, Staff and Functional Organisation
5. Committee Organisation.

### **Type 1: Line or Scalar Organisation:**

This type of organisation is also known as departmental or military type of organisation.

In this type of organisation business activities are divided into three groups, namely finance and accounts, production and sales. Each of this department is sub-divided into certain self-contained departments, i.e., sections.

Each departmental head has sole control over his section and has full authority to select his labour, staff, purchase of raw materials, stores and to set the standards of output, etc. Foreman of each shop trains new men and supervises the quality of output.

In such a system superior exercises a direct authority over his subordinates who become entirely responsible for their performance to the commanding superior. No operation is under two bosses:

This is known as military type organisation, because in military discipline is of high order. Orders and instructions issued from the top have to be followed by the lowers. Similarly in this type of organisation, order of General Manager are to be carried out, without any say by subordinates and hence no chances of shifting of responsibility as in military and hence known as military type organisation.

As in this organisation, the flow of authority moves from top to bottom in vertical lines, therefore, this is also called line or scalar organisation.

***Advantages:***

1. A clear-cut division of authority and responsibility, hence no scope of shifting the responsibility.
2. Strong in discipline.
3. It permits quick decisions.
4. As responsibility of each individual is fixed, hence faults can be easily and quickly known.
5. Everybody from top to bottom remains busy like a machine and hence total cost of product will be less.
6. It is simple to understand.
7. Flexible and able to extend or contract.

***Disadvantages:***

1. It requires different departmental heads to be expert in their respective functions, hence lack of specialisation.
2. Departmental heads are over-burdened with various routine jobs, hence no time for further expansion and planning.
3. Certain people become key points and they are loaded maximum with work.
4. Chances of accidents, wastage of material and labour are more because of insufficient knowledge of all the work by one man.
5. Chances of delay in reaching the orders of General Manager or any other departmental head upto the workers and, therefore, possibility of distortion, due to long channel.
6. Over-burdened foreman may not be able to give sufficient time for each job and will cause wastage and error.

7. It has no means of rewarding good workers.

### **Type 2: Functional Organisation:**

The difficulties in finding all round qualified man to be foreman in the line organisation are overcome with this type of organisation. He is replaced by various functionalised people.

This system is advantageous because each supervisor is specialised in a particular field and he attends to one factor in all the departments. Below is its layout:

In this, specialised people like chemists, purchasers, engineers, designers etc. are employed under the production superintendent and everybody is supposed to give his functionalised advice to all other foreman (bosses) and workers. Every foreman (boss) will go to individual worker for his related function.

This type of organisation is sometime called “Taylor’s organisation” as it was for the first time introduced by F.W.Taylor. Taylor said that the well qualified foreman required brain, education (special or technical knowledge), manual strength, tact, energy, honesty, judgment or common sense and good health.

He believed that a man with three of these qualities could be hired at any time. If four were required, it was necessary to secure a higher priced man. The man combining five of the qualities was hard to find and the one with six, seven or eight almost impossible to discover.

Therefore, Taylor employed functionalised bosses and as far as the workman was concerned, instead of coming in contact with the management at one point, only he was to receive his daily orders and help directly from eight different bosses. Four of these were located in the planning room and four in the shop.

#### ***Advantages:***

1. Due to specialisation quality of work is better.
2. This system provides more specialised knowledge and guidance to individual workers through experts.
3. It helps mass production by standardisation and specialisation.
4. If any operation needs improvement, it can be improved even upto the last moment.
5. Considerable expansion of the factory is possible.

6. Since for every operation expert guidance is there, hence wastage of material will be minimum which will reduce prime cost.
7. Unnecessary overloading of responsibilities will not be there, as was in the case of line organisation.
8. No special knowledge of workers is required as the instructions are supplied by drawing and experts.

***Disadvantages:***

1. It is complicated from control point of view as every functionalized expert feels himself to be superior than the other and there is no one-man control over the workers. Therefore, it makes discipline problem difficult to solve among lower level.
2. By employing high waged experts, the total cost of job may become high.
3. As line workers will not be using their skill, their initiative cannot be utilised.
4. Shifting of responsibility is possible.
5. The failure of any of the expert will largely affect the production because, if any expert tells wrong operation, there is no other body to correct him. This will result in large wastage of material.
6. Proper co-ordination of the work of different departments is required but it is difficult to maintain as everybody is working individually.

**Type 3: Line and Staff Organisation:**

In a firm of large size operating on big scale, managers cannot give careful attention to every part of management. They are unable to think and plan. They are busy with ordinary task of production and selling. Hence 'Some Staff is deputed to do other works like investigation, research, recording, planning and advising to managers.

Thus staff brings specialisation by assisting the line officers. The line maintains discipline and stability. Staff provides expert information and helps to improve the overall efficiency. Thus the staffs are 'thinkers' while lines are 'doers'.

A staff man usually controls one function of business of which he is an expert. Usually the staff has no administrative authority, but an expert in some phase of operation. He reports to the executive and gives the advice on the subject of his specialty.

***Advantages:***

1. It is a planned specialised system.
2. Quality of product will be better.
3. Wastage will be less.
4. Expert knowledge is available.
5. Sufficient time is available to general manager for future planning and expansion.
6. Discipline problem is solved because of line relationship.

***Disadvantages:***

1. Sufficient expert knowledge and guidance is not available as compared with functional type.
2. Lack of responsibility among higher levels and hence the discipline as a whole will be poor.
3. The overhead cost of product may rise, because of high salaried staff.
4. The slackness of any section or department will largely affect whole working.

**Type 4: Line, Staff and Functional Organisation:**

Because of scientific methods, enough market competition and complications in the business, to obtain a sound system, the combination of line, staff and functional type of organisation is required.

In this system, as regards the discipline and output are concerned, the workers are kept under the direct control of foreman.

As regards quality, the inspector will have the proper authority to control the quality and he can directly order the workman as in the functional organisation.

In the staff relationship, there may be research department for the analysis of raw materials, semi-finished and finished products to withstand market competition.

In this way all the three are combined together and as this is complicated in nature, therefore, also called complicated type of organisation.

***Application:***

Now-a-days this pattern is followed by all government and private concerns, in which much complicated processes or operations are involved, i.e., in big chemical plants, electricity boards, steel plants and other huge undertakings.



## Type 5: Committee Organisation:

A committee is a group of persons formed for the purpose of giving advice on certain important problems, which cannot usually be solved by an individual. It helps by pooling the thoughts of several persons on problems involving several functions and offered for criticism. Therefore, now-a-days many large companies add a network of committees to the line and staff organisation.

These committees may be either “Permanent” sometimes referred to as standing committees or they may be organised to serve a temporary function only. Examples of committees are Research Committee, Co-ordination, and Advisory Committee, Purchase Committee, Education Committee etc.

A committee is a tool for the development of ideas and recommendations of policy and procedure. It brings better plans and policies for operations and results in better co-operation in their execution. The final decision to put committee recommendations into action rests with the line. The committee simply performs advisory function.

Actually, the committee is similar to the staff and several owners think it a costly substitute for staff but it is found that no other method is so effective in solving common problems or in getting new ideas as committee organisation of collective judgment.

### **FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FOR COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION:**

Committee like other forms of organisation should be varied according to the needs of a given organisation. However, there are certain basic principles given below, which must be considered:

1. In this, members should be minimum, i.e., generally 3 to 5. This is found by experience that too many members result in much wasted time by lengthy discussions and delayed decisions.
2. The chairman of the committee must prepare the agenda to be discussed much in advance of the meeting and circulate among the members so that they can get sufficient time to think over the problems to be discussed.
3. The chairman must control the behaviour and discipline among the members when the meeting is held so that there is least wasted time and thought.
4. Meetings should begin and end at fixed time.

5. Duties, authorities and responsibilities must be clearly defined and owing to circumstances they can be subject to changes.
6. The meetings should be conducted from an agenda containing those things which require attention arranged in the order of their importance.
7. All the members must realise that more time can be wasted unless each member cooperates sincerely to save the time of other members.

***Advantages:***

1. Since “two” heads are better than “one”, quick and valuable decisions can be taken.
2. By this, time schedule and proper follow up are instituted which causes speedy action.
3. Decision taken is impersonal which leave the chairman free from personal criticism.
4. As the members are from the plant side, they know better what is going on in the shops and can give the correct suggestions and team up with other persons and departments.
5. There is a stimulus towards co-operative action.
6. Expert knowledge is utilised.

***Disadvantages:***

1. Sometimes the committees may be too large in strength which cause delayed actions and wasted time.
2. It is an expensive form of organisation as outside members are paid travelling allowance and honorarium for attending the meetings.
3. Committees tend to hang on after its usefulness is over.
4. As members are from different departments, they may not reach to a final conclusion at all.
5. It functions very slowly.
6. As there is joint responsibility of members. Hence, it amounts to irresponsibility, as “Every body’s business is no body’s business”.

## **OFFICE MANUALS**

**Introduction:**

The office system is called office manual when it takes the shape of a book or booklet. Generally, the office manual contains the details of the work to be performed in an office and other important particulars of the organization. Office manual and organization manual are not

one and the same. An **office manual is an authoritative guide** to office organization. But an organization manual is an authoritative guide to the company's organization.

### **Meaning of Office Manual:**

An office manual means a handy form of book or booklet containing information relating to the policy, organization system, routines and procedures methods and standards and the rules and regulations regarding employment.

An office manual is prepared to help the employees know all relevant information regarding the organization, its set up i.e. structure and how he fits into it.

### **DEFINITION OF OFFICE MANUAL:**

According to George R. Terry,

*“An office manual is a written record of information and instructions which concern and can be used to guide the employee's efforts in an enterprise”.*

An office manual has been defined as a **document disclosing the information about an organization**, its set up, conditions of employment, and the established system, routine, procedures, methods, standards, rules and regulations of an office operation.

### **IMPORTANCE OF OFFICE MANUAL:**

A large size organization has a number of branches and/or departments or sections or divisions. Thousands of employees are employed in large size organization. Hence it is very difficult to control the employees by the management. If instructions or guidelines are given in writing to the employees, the management can control the employees very easily and avoid misunderstanding of employees. Besides, frictions among employees are also eliminated. In this way, office manuals help the management and the employees in various ways.

1. Employees understand their position, duties and responsibilities in an Organization.
2. Employees understand their role in the achievement of office Objectives.
3. There is a possibility of maintaining good relations among the employees by themselves.
4. Both existing and new employees freed the management in getting the same information, explanations and instructions repeatedly.
5. The concerned employees are held responsible if the duties are not performed by them in a specified manner.

6. Delegation of authority can be enhanced throughout the organization set up without much difficulty.
7. Each employee can understand the extent of authority delegated to him.
8. New employees are getting training with the help of office manual by knowing policies, practices, systems, routines and procedures.
9. Office manual is imparting refresher training to existing employees.

### **TYPES OF MANUALS:**

Manual may be classified under various heads.

#### ***1. Policy Manual:***

This manual contains policy decisions, resolutions and guidelines given by the management. It gives the scope and limitations within which various policies should operate. The persons concerned with the implementation of policies get proper guidelines and try to ensure the implementation of every bit of it. Manuals also provide the course of action to be adopted for implementing policies.

#### ***2. Organization Manual:***

This manual gives a detailed account of the organization. The authority and responsibility of every person is given in detail. It avoids confusion and conflicts among various persons. The extent of authority and the relationship of executives is explained in this manual. The extent of span of management and delegation of authority are facilitated by a properly drawn manual.

#### ***3. Rules and Regulations Manual:***

It contains various rules and regulations followed in the company. The day-today working of the enterprise is greatly facilitated. The employees get information about working conditions, admissible holidays, procedure for getting leaves sanctioned, the facility and procedure for availing medical facilities, the use of canteen, library, etc.

#### ***4. Departmental Manual:***

Separate manuals are prepared for different departments. A departmental manual gives full details about the working of a department. It will show organization of the department, relationship among various persons in the department including their authority and responsibility, rules and procedures followed for undertaking various tasks, inter-departmental relationship, etc. Departmental manual helps in the smooth working of a department.

## **ADVANTAGES OF MANUALS:**

**Organizational manuals have the following advantages:**

### ***1. Written Information:***

An organizational manual provides written record of every important policy, decision and procedure. There will be no confusion about authority and responsibility. There will not be any scope for misunderstanding about anything.

### ***2. Helpful in Day-to-Day Working:***

A manual contains details of rules, procedures and regulations which help employees to understand the working of the enterprise. The employees will easily follow the routine after reading the manual and it will smoothen the day-to-day working.

### ***3. Avoiding Conflicts:***

Organization clears authority relationship among various persons and it helps in avoiding jurisdictional conflicts. In the absence of this manual there is every likelihood of confusion over some work. There may also be a duplication of work.

### ***4. Helpful to New Employees:***

The new employees are able to understand the working of the enterprise. They will quickly start following various rules and procedures. They also learn the responsibilities of their jobs and their relationship with other jobs.

### ***5. Quick Decisions:***

When all directions and instructions are available in writing then decision taking becomes quick. The persons required to take decisions are clear about their powers and decision taking becomes easy under such situations.

## **DRAWBACKS OF MANUALS:**

**The manuals suffer from the following drawbacks:**

### ***1. Expensive:***

The compilation of manuals requires much costs. The manual being expensive, small-scale concerns cannot even afford them.

### ***2. Time Consuming:***

Preparation of various manuals is a time-consuming process. Moreover, these require a constant review which again takes too much time.

### **3. Rigidity:**

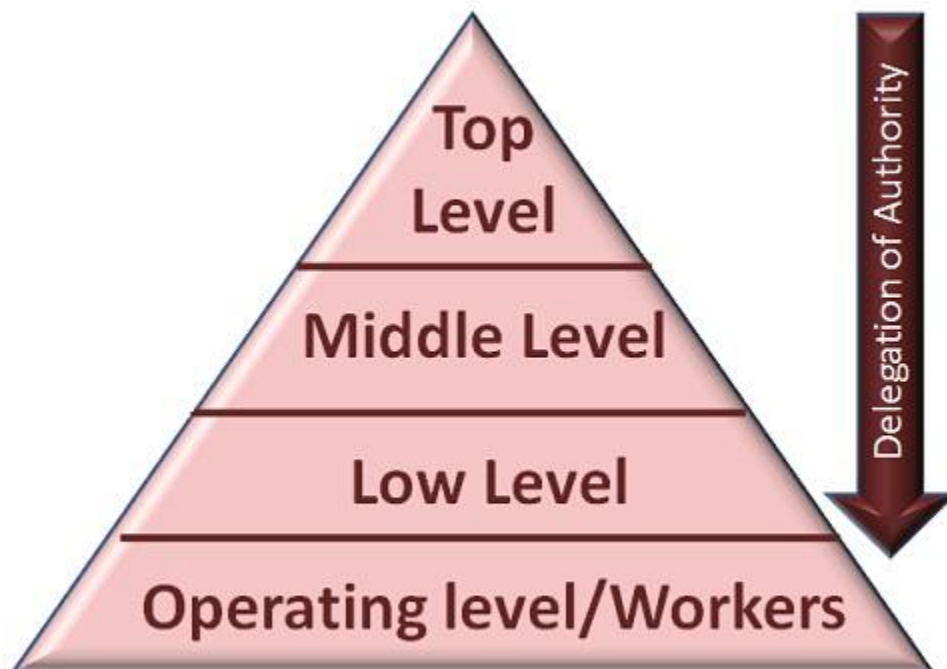
When written guides, instructions and procedures are available then there is hardly any scope for variation. One has to follow standard prescribed procedures in completing a task. There is no scope for discretion and initiative.

### **4. Embarrassing:**

Some relationships are such which people will not like to put in black and white. It becomes embarrassing in revealing such relationships.

## **DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Sharing of work and authority, between a manager and his subordinates, is known as delegation. The process of delegation enables a person to assign work task to his subordinate and give them necessary authority to accomplish it successfully. It helps in completing the work in time, reduces the workload of managers and motivates and develops subordinates. In other words, delegation is a process that enables a person to assign a work to others and delegate them with adequate authority to do it.



Koontz and O' Donnell state that, "The entire process of delegation involves the determination of results expected, the assignment of tasks, the delegation of authority for accomplishment of these tasks and the exaction of responsibility for their accomplishment."

"Delegation is the process by which a manager assigns tasks and authority to subordinates who accept responsibility for those jobs." — Pearce and Robinson

"Delegation is the process by which a manager assigns tasks and authority to subordinates who accept responsibility for those jobs." — Pearce and Robinson

## **FEATURES OF DELEGATION**

1. Delegation means giving power to the subordinate to act independently but within the limits prescribed by the superior. Also, he must comply with the provisions of the organizational policy, rules, and regulations.
2. Delegation does not mean that manager give up his authority, but certainly he shares some authority with the subordinate essential to complete the responsibility entrusted to him.
3. Authority once delegated can be further expanded, or withdrawn by the superior depending on the situation.
4. The manager cannot delegate the authority which he himself does not possess. Also, he can not delegate his full authority to a subordinate.
5. The delegation of authority may be oral or written, and may be specific or general.
6. The delegation is an art and must comply with all the fundamental rules of an organization.

## **ELEMENTS OF DELEGATION:**

**The following three elements are in the scheme of delegation:**

1. Assignment of duties or tasks.
2. Delegation of authority.
3. Accountability for performance of duties and exercise of authority.

### **1. Assignment of Duties or Tasks:**

A manager has to assign a part of his duties to others under him or her because he cannot himself perform all the work. So, when assigning duties he should ensure that the subordinates, to whom work is assigned, perform their tasks sincerely and competently. Even after that a manager assigns duties and tasks to his subordinates; he continues to be ultimately responsible for the proper performance of these duties and tasks.

### **2. Delegation of Authority:**

While the duties and tasks are entrusted to the subordinates by the superior, the authority should be granted them to perform those duties and tasks well. It is called as "delegation of authority".

This delegation of authority is considered as an essential to take all actions, which lead to accomplish their duties successfully, and the organisational goals.

### **3. Accountability for Performance of Duties and Exercise of Authority:**

The person to whom any responsibility is assigned and authority is delegated should also be made accountable or answerable for the proper performance of the assigned responsibility and for proper exercise of the delegated authority.

**The following principles that serve as guidelines for effective delegation of authority are given below:**

#### **1. Functional Clarity:**

The functions to be performed, the methods of operations and the results expected must be clearly defined. The authority delegated must be adequate to ensure that these functions are well performed.

#### **2. Matching Authority with Responsibility:**

Generally authority and responsibility are highly interconnected. So, authority should be delegated as to be equal to responsibility, consigned to the worker. Authority should be adequate and should not only match the duties to be performed but also the personal capabilities of the subordinate.

#### **3. Unity of Command:**

The “**Unity of Command**” means a subordinate should be commanded by one superior only. In this connection a subordinate should be assigned duties and delegated authority by only one superior and he should be accountable for the performance of the assigned duties and exercise of the delegated authority.

In other words, a subordinate should be responsible to only one superior who is delegating the authority to the subordinate.

#### **4. Principle of Communication:**

A misunderstood responsibility can be very dangerous. A general authority can be easily misused. Accordingly, both the responsibility and authority must be clearly specified, openly communication must be continuously kept open for issuing directions as well as for receiving feedback.

#### **5. Responsibility not Delegatable:**



Authority can be delegated, but responsibility cannot be delegated. A manager cannot turn a blind eye to how the assigned duties are performed, and how the delegated authority is exercised. The ultimate responsibility for the performance of duties and exercise of delegated authority remains with him.

#### **6. Limits to Authority to be Well Defined:**

A manager cannot properly delegate authority unless he fully knows what his own authority is. To avoid confusion in this respect, there should be written manuals and orders to indicate the limits of authority and area of operations of each manager.

#### **7. Principle of Management by Exception:**

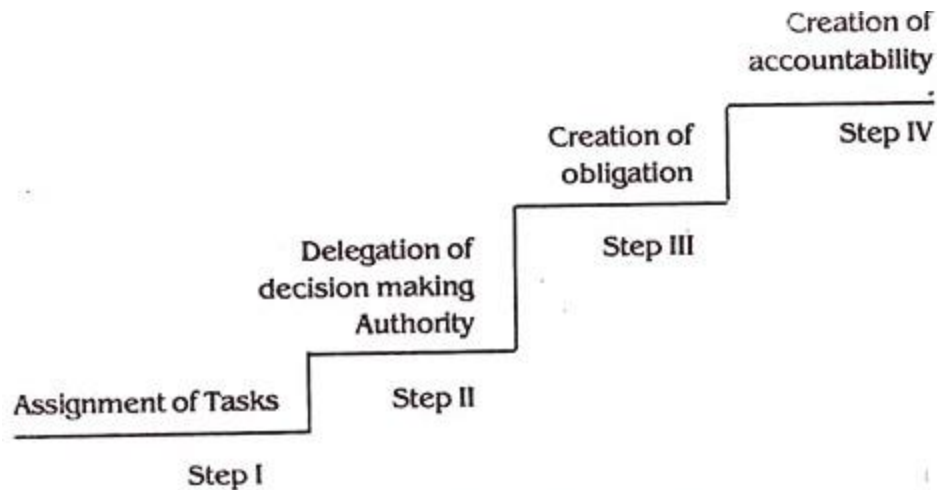
Management should delegate the authority and responsibility for routine operations and decision making to subordinates, but must retain such tasks for themselves for which they alone are uniquely qualified. On the other hand, the subordinates must make decisions and take actions wherever they can and should only refer matters of such nature to their superiors, which are unique, and outside their domain of authority.

This practice saves valuable time of top management, which can be utilised, for more important policy matters. Also by trying to solve most of the problems by themselves, the subordinates prepare themselves for higher challenges and responsibilities.

#### **PROCESS OF DELEGATION:**

The process of delegation involves the following steps:

The step, which is followed when delegating authority, is the process of delegation. Normally four steps are used in the process of delegation. It can be shown in the form of diagram.



**FIGURE 2 : PROCESS OF DELEGATION**

### **1. Assignment of Tasks:**

The first step in this process is to determine clearly what the subordinates are supposed to do. Then the capabilities of each subordinate should be considered to match them with the assigned duties. The tasks should be distributed in such a manner that the subordinates are not unnecessarily overburdened and that each one is capable of efficiently completing the assigned task.

The total task can be divided into identifiable parts so that the manager can handle some parts himself and other parts can be given to skilled subordinates. This way the coordination and supervision would become easier.

### **2. Delegation of Decision making Authority:**

The second step is to give authority to subordinates to make and implement decisions regarding procurement of resources and supervision of activities that are relevant to the duties assigned to them. This authority must be clearly stated, and if possible in writing, so that there is no ambiguity regarding making necessary decisions.

The authority should also be related to tasks so that if the tasks change, so would the authority. Any matters or decisions that do not fall within the domain of delegated authority must be referred to the superiors.

### **3. Creation of Obligation:**

The third step is the creation of obligation on the part of the subordinates to perform their duties satisfactorily. The person assigned the task is morally responsible to do his best since he has willingly accepted these tasks.

Obligation is a personal concern for the task. Even if the subordinate gets part of the task done through other people, he must accept responsibility for timely completion of the task as well as the quality of the output.

#### **4. Creation of Accountability:**

Being answerable to someone for your actions create accountability, an obligation to accept the consequences, good or bad. According to Newman, Summer and Warren, “by accepting an assignment, a subordinate in effect gives his superiors a promise to do his best in carrying out his duties. Having taken a job, he is morally bound to complete it. He can be held accountable for results.

### **ADVANTAGES OF DELEGATION:**

**The following are the advantages of delegation:**

#### **1. It Helps for Effective Functioning:**

Delegation helps the executive to apportion that part of his work to his subordinates. So that he can devote his time to more important areas of his duties like leadership, organisation planning and coordination.

#### **2. It Results in Quick Decisions:**

The process of delegation makes it possible to push decision. Making to the lowest level where information, competence and willingness to make decisions are available. Decisions can be made right away at or near the centre of operations as soon as a deviation occurs or the situation demands.

#### **3. Reduction in Managerial Load:**

Delegation relieves the manager of the need to attend to minor or routine types of duties. Thus, he is enabled to devote greater attention and effort towards broader and more important responsibilities.

#### **4. It leads for Specialised Service:**

Since the work is assigned to the persons who have specialised knowledge and expertise, it helps for specialised services. For example, sales may be delegated to the sales manager, marketing-to-marketing manager, finance-to-finance manager.

#### **5. Delegation is a Motivational Factors:**

Delegation may also be used as a device to motivate the subordinate. Subordinates usually respond to delegated authority with favourable attitude. They become more responsible and more

dedicated to their work and they feel proud of being given such authority and responsibility, this in turn boosts their morale.

#### **6. Aid to Employee Developments:**

Delegation ensures the employees in the organisation to develop their capabilities to undertake new and more challenging jobs and also it promotes job satisfaction.

#### **7. It can be a Training Ground for Executive Ability:**

Subordinates, when given control over the problems they face are able to analyse the situation and make decisions accordingly. This continuous involvement prepares them for problem solving process when they reach a higher executive level. This process will also screen out those from the executive level who have proved to be less successful in handling problems at the lower level.

#### **DISADVANTAGES OF DELEGATION:**

1. Central management is far removed from the actual operations where the decisions are made so that it becomes difficult to pinpoint major problems when they occur because decisions are made by many subordinates.
2. The second problem may lie in the area of coordination. If coordination among these many subordinates is not adequate, then confusion may result and it may become difficult to exercise control over procedures and policies.
3. It may be difficult to perfectly match the task with the capability of the subordinate.

#### **BARRIERS TO DELEGATION:**

Even though there are several advantages on delegation of authority, most managers are reluctant to delegate authority and many subordinates are also reluctant to accept authority and responsibility for several reasons.

##### ***1. Reluctance of Managers or Executives:***

The following reasons for managers are not willing to delegate authority are given below:

- i. A manager may believe that he can do his work better than his subordinates.
- ii. Sometimes, managers might believe that his subordinates are not capable enough.
- iii. Delegation may require a lot of time in explaining the task and responsibility to the subordinates. Here, manager may not have the patience to explain, supervise and correct any mistakes.

iv. A manager may lack confidence and trust in his subordinates, since the managers is responsible for the actions of his subordinates, he may not be willing to take chances with the subordinates, in case the job is not done right.

v. Some managers lack the ability to direct their subordinates.

vi. Some managers feel very insecure in delegating authority especially when the subordinate is capable of doing the job better. The manager, in such a situation, may fear his loss of power and competition from the subordinate.

vii. An executive may be reluctant to delegate if he believes that the control system is not adequate in providing early warning of problems and difficulties that may arise in the delegated duties, thus delaying the corrective decisions and actions.

## ***2. Reluctance of Subordinates:***

Subordinates may reluctant to accept delegation of authority for the following reasons:

1. Subordinates may lack confidence in their ability to accept additional responsibility.
2. Subordinates may reluctant to accept authority and make decisions for fear that they would be criticised or dismissed for making wrong decisions.
3. Subordinates may not be motivated to accept additional responsibility and authority willingly in the absence of suitable incentives.
4. In case of adequate information and resources may not be available to the subordinates to carry out their decisions, they may hesitate to accept the delegation of authority.
5. They find it easier to ask their superiors than to try to solve the problem themselves.

## **OVERCOMING OBSTRUCTION OF DELEGATION:**

The following aspects will help to overcome the obstacles of delegation:

### **1. Delegation to be Complete and Clearly Understood:**

The subordinate must know precisely what he has to know and do. It should be preferably in writing with specific instructions so that the subordinate does not repeatedly refer problems to the manager for his opinion or decisions.

### **2. Proper Selection and Training:**

The management must make proper assessment of subordinates in terms of their abilities and limitations before delegating the proper authority. Additionally, management must work closely with the subordinates in training them in how to improve their job performance. This constant communication will build up the self-confidence of the subordinates.

### 3. Motivation of Subordinates:

Adequate incentive in the form of promotion, status, better working conditions or additional bonuses must be provided for additional responsibilities will performed.

### 4. Establishment of Proper Control:

Shortcoming can be removed by establishing adequate controls. In this regard, adequate checkpoints and controls may be built in the system. For example, weekly reports.

## CENTRALISATION AND DECENTRALISATION

### CENTRALISATION:

Centralization refers to that organizational structure where decision-making power is confined to the top management, and the subordinates need to follow the instructions of their seniors. Centralization of authority is essential for the small-scale organizations which lack resources and finance.

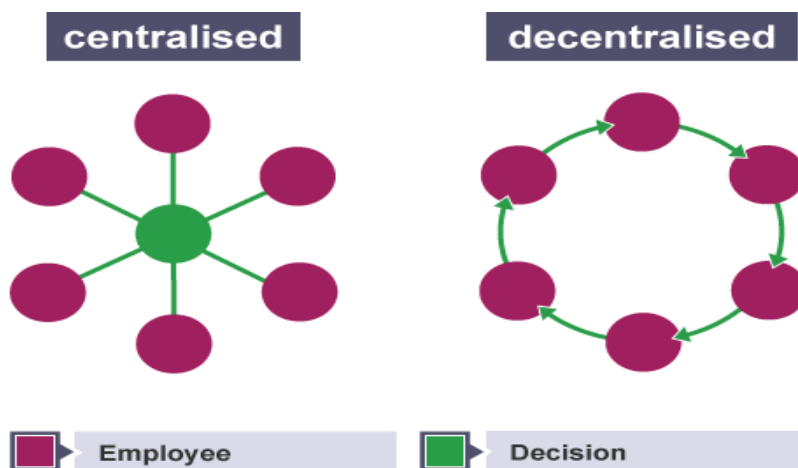
### DECENTRALISATION:

Decentralised organisations delegate authority down the chain of command, thus reducing the speed of decision-making.

Each department within the organisation has the authority to make their own decisions. The business will be more responsive to changes in individual/local markets as staff in each department have a greater local knowledge.

Employees will be more motivated as they are given the opportunity to make decisions and be creative.

“Decentralisation refers to tire systematic effort to delegate to the lowest levels all authority except that which can only be exercised at central points.” —Louis A. Allen



### FACTORS DETERMINING CENTRALIZATION OF AUTHORITY:

In small organizations, the owner or the top management is responsible for making all the business decision solely. Whereas, the delegation of work among the subordinates takes place; therefore, centralization persists in these business units.

The following factors result in the centralization of the organization:



- **Nature of Organization:** When the organization is generally a sole proprietorship or partnership entity with less number of employees to be managed, it can have a centralized system.
- **Size of the Organization:** The organization which are small in size and operating on a small scale can be efficiently managed by the top management hence following a centralized system.
- **Nature of Task:** The organizations engaged in [business](#) operations which does not require much expertise or specialization, can be managed through centralization.
- **Delegation Ability:** The capability of the management to delegate the responsibilities to the subordinates while keeping the charge in their hand is another factor determining the organizational structure.
- **Employee's Efficiency:** If the employees lack skills and efficiency to take up the responsibility and accountability of the work to be performed, the management will go for centralization of the organization.

### Advantages of Centralization



**Cost Efficient:** The management need not spend much on the office and administrative expenses in a centralized organization. Even the cost of hiring experts and highly experienced personnel at each level is saved due to the centralized decision-making process.

**Better Command:** The management can hold a better command over the subordinates and the subordinates also clearly know whom to follow. There is proper control over the subordinate actions, and the management is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the subordinates.

**Enhances Work Quality:** The subordinates are answerable directly to the top management, and therefore they continuously aim at improving the work quality. It also leads to standardization of the process and reduces the wastage.

**Uniformity in Action:** When the control lies in the hands of few, the methods and techniques used are usually the same throughout all the levels and departments, thus encouraging the subordinates to perform uniformly.

**Focus on Vision:** The top management clearly defines and better understand the organizational vision. Therefore, it aligns all the resources, subordinates, activities and strategies towards the achievement of the vision.



**Proper Coordination:** The top management frames a uniform policy for subordinates at different levels, integrate their course of action and ensures coordination among all the subordinates.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF CENTRALIZATION:**

Centralization is not suitable for all type of business organizations. When we talk about a brand like Nestle, it wouldn't have expanded its business to such a vast extent if it had a centralized organizational structure.

Let us now discuss the various shortcomings of centralization in an organization:



**Slows Down Operations:** The top management directs the day to day operations, and the subordinates have to report directly to the senior management. At times when there is no managerial staff, the subordinates are unable to take immediate decisions. Thus, resulting in slowing down of business operations.

**Delays Decision Making:** In centralization, the decision-making process slows down since all the decisions are to be taken by the top management. It is not suitable for handling emergencies or unexpected circumstances.

**Reduces Scope for Specialization:** A person cannot specialize in all the activities alone. Therefore, in a centralized structure where all decisions are taken by the top management, the organization lacks specialized supervision and management.

**Discourages Initiative:** The subordinates are given instructions which they need to follow without questioning the decisions of the top management. In centralization, the subordinates are intimidated from giving their input or suggestions.

**Lacks Adaptability to Change:** The centralized organization runs in a conventional manner where the top management is somewhat rigid with its policies, methods and techniques. Thus, it creates a barrier to adopting modern and improved practices for organizational growth.

**Overburden on Top Management:** All the planning and decision-making work is done at the topmost level of management, they control even the day to day operations. Due to this reason, management becomes overburdened and is unable to concentrate on business expansion and growth.

**Bureaucratic Leadership:** Centralization can be seen as a dictatorship by some, where the top management plans every course of action and the subordinates follow the instructions. Problem-solving becomes quite difficult in such circumstances since the decision-maker, and the implementer is two different individuals.

**Poor Upward Communication:** The subordinates are supposed to follow instructions while the least attention is paid towards their suggestions and feedback. All this hinders the upward communication in the organization.

## **DECENTRALISATION**

Decentralised organizations delegate authority down the chain of command, thus reducing the speed of decision-making.

## **DEGREE OF DECENTRALISATION:**

**The degree of decentralisation is determined by:**

- (a) Nature of the authority delegated,
- (b) How far down in the organisation it is delegated,
- (c) How consistently it is delegated.

So, the degree of decentralisation is determined by the authority given. For example, manager A in a company is given the authority to buy certain material worth Rs. 1500 whereas manager B is allowed to do similar type of work to the extent of Rs. 4500.

It is clear that the degree of decentralisation is less in case of A. Similarly decisions about the matters referred, measure the degree of decentralisation depending upon the power to take decisions vested in an officer without the need of getting consent of somebody else.

## **ADVANTAGES OF DECENTRALISATION:**

### ***1. Reduces the burden on top executives:***

Decentralisation relieves the top executives of the burden of performing various functions. Centralisation of authority puts the whole responsibility on the shoulders of an executive and his immediate group. This reduces the time at the disposal of top executives who should concentrate on other important managerial functions. So, the only way to lessen their burden is to decentralize the decision-making power to the subordinates.

### ***2. Facilitates diversification:***

Under decentralization, the diversification of products, activities and markets etc., is facilitated. A centralised enterprise with the concentration of authority at the top will find it difficult and complex to diversify its activities and start the additional lines of manufacture or distribution.

### ***3. To provide product and market emphasis:***

A product loses its market when new products appear in the market on account of innovations or changes in the customers demand. In such cases authority is decentralised to the regional units to render instant service taking into account the price, quality, delivery, novelty, etc.

### ***4. Executive Development:***

When the authority is decentralised, executives in the organisation will get the opportunity to develop their talents by taking initiative which will also make them ready for managerial positions. The growth of the company greatly depends on the talented executives.

***5. It promotes motivation:***

To quote Louis A. Allen, “Decentralisation stimulates the formation of small cohesive groups. Since local managers are given a large degree of authority and local autonomy, they tend to weld their people into closely knit integrated groups.” This improves the morale of employees as they get involved in decision-making process.

***6. Better control and supervision:***

Decentralisation ensures better control and supervision as the subordinates at the lowest levels will have the authority to make independent decisions. As a result they have thorough knowledge of every assignment under their control and are in a position to make amendments and take corrective action.

***7. Quick Decision-Making:***

Decentralisation brings decision making process closer to the scene of action. This leads to quicker decision-making of lower level since decisions do not have to be referred up through the hierarchy.

**DISADVANTAGES OF DECENTRALISATION:**

Decentralisation can be extremely beneficial. But it can be dangerous unless it is carefully constructed and constantly monitored for the good of the company as a whole.

Some disadvantages of decentralisation are:

***1. Uniform policies not Followed:***

Under decentralisation, it is not possible\* to follow uniform policies and standardised procedures. Each manager will work and frame policies according to his talent.

***2. Problem of Co-Ordination:***

Decentralisation of authority creates problems of co-ordination as authority lies dispersed widely throughout the organisation.

***3. More Financial Burden:***

Decentralisation requires the employment of trained personnel to accept authority, it involves more financial burden and a small enterprise cannot afford to appoint experts in various fields.

***4. Require Qualified Personnel:***

Decentralisation becomes useless when there are no qualified and competent personnel.

### **5. Conflict:**

Decentralisation puts more pressure on divisional heads to realize profits at any cost. Often in meeting their new profit plans, bring conflicts among managers.

## **UNIT – II Completed**

## **UNIT – III**

Office system – Flow of work – Role of Office manager – Office forms – forms of control – forms of designing – control of correspondence – Handing inward and outward mails.

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### **MEANING OF OFFICE SYSTEMS:**

LITTLEFIELD and others describe a system in these words: "Specifically, a system may be defined as a group of inter-related and inter-dependent parts operating in sequence, according to a predetermined plan in order to achieve a goal or series of goals.

### **Need for office systems:**

The task of management can be described as setting objectives for an enterprise to achieve them. This task makes great demands on management because as the enterprise expands and faces tough competition, the cost of each error becomes very high. Due to these difficulties, the enterprise is forced to search for logical relationships and patterns. In other words, it must understand its goals clearly and then it must make things simple and orderly through system. In management, the term system may be regarded as a planned approach to activities necessary to attain desired objective.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICE SYSTEMS:**

1. Office systems are inter-related parts operating in a sequence and they are not isolated actions.
2. Office systems are concerned with the method of work in the office.
3. They aim at achieving the goals of an enterprise or a department

4. They concern with the place and time of performance of work in the office or any part of the enterprise.

### **IMPORTANCE OF OFFICE SYSTEMS:**

- Good system reduces delay and avoids delays and thus eliminates frustration.
- A system assists in speedy dispatch of work in every section of the office since it is based on method of work employed
- A system involves internal check. Thus frauds are prevented and better control over work can be achieved through its application
- Saving in labour and overheads is brought about
- Since a system is related to form design and form control it in turn is related to the degree of bureaucracy in organisation and its functioning.
- A system important for securing coordination amongst differs departments or sections of the organisation or the office
- A good system reduces the chance of errors.
- A system can also assist in the inductions of new clerks in the Office.
- A good system makes it easier to staff.

### **ESSENTIALS OF A SUCCESSFUL OFFICE SYSTEM:**

#### **1. Simplicity**

A system to be successful should be simple both in its design and statement so that it is understood properly and implemented smoothly. Simplicity helps the person implementing it to learn about it quickly and implement it without loss of time. Besides, it lessens some of the problems involved in operation of the system.

#### **2. Effectiveness**

A system is effective if it achieves the objective or goal for which it was established within the time allocated for its implementation. The cost estimated for its implementation. And also it should have the minimum of adverse consequences.

#### **3. Flexibility**

The System should be "open" or, in other words it hold be able to absorb environmental changes or input factors. This is essential because otherwise work may get disrupted and the

may fail miserably. It also means that the system should be well denned and structured and it should not be rigid. Rigidity makes the system inflexible and consequently leads to its failure.

#### **4. Dependability**

Since a well-designed system produces consistent results its output is bound to be reliable. Also a good system has few breakdowns and thus it can operate with a minimum of downtime.

#### **5. Acceptability**

The best of the systems is bound to fail if it is not acceptable to those who are responsible for using it. If a system is not acceptable, it would be sabotaged or else it would fail because of its disuse.

### **PLANNING AND DESIGNING OFFICE SYSTEMS:**

Like other activities of business, systems must be properly planned and carefully designed. In planning and designing systems, the top management must share the greatest responsibility and zeal. Planning and designing of systems with the support and approval of the top management are bound to result in their- successful institution and smooth functioning. The best of the systems is going to meet a sad end if the top management does not take active interest in its planning, designing and implementation.

### **ORGANISATION FOR SYSTEMS DESIGN:**

- a.** Outside consultants make a special of over-all survey of office systems and procedures in force or to be instituted.
- b.** The top management appoints a systems committee to consider every aspect of systems and make suitable suggestions.
- c.** A separate department or section consisting of systems analysis etc. is created to develop systems and suggest procedures and methods.
- d.** In smaller organizations the office manager is assigned the task of systems analysis and the suggestions to be made for their institution.

### **PLANNING OF OFFICE SYSTEMS (PARTS OR STEPS OR PROCESS):**

The work of planning systems can be divided into the following important parts.

**1. Establishment objectives policies.** Establishment of objectives is basic to systems. Establishment of objectives is essentially the task. of top management. Some of the broad objectives are as follows:

- (i) What information is to be supplied and to whom?
- (ii) Is there a case for reducing present cost?
- (iii) What is the expected rate of growth of information?
- (iv) What should be the extent of mechanization?
- (v) What is the extent of competition?

These broad objectives are developed into definite terms as the work of systems design progresses. For example, the true objective of purchase systems is to have the minimum cost of purchases. However, it is necessary not to have too many objectives of a system because that may make the system too complicated, too costly or ineffective.

The person or committee responsible for systems design must establish policies to serve as a guide for decisions in creating the system, e.g., what is the policy regarding space allocation or the policy regarding the extent of mechanisation, etc. In fact there can be numerous policies which must be clearly understood and stated,

## **2. Defining systems boundaries.**

To begin with, it is essential to establish boundaries or limits (though tentative) within which a system is to operate. These boundaries give the framework within which a system is to operate. The boundaries set depend upon the objectives sought and which in turn, depend upon the definition of the proposed system and its contents.

In some cases, suggestions and specific wishes of top managers are communicated to the systems designers. These act as constraints within which a system is to be planned.

## **3. Gathering data.**

The data is to be gathered on the basis of the requirements of the system. To begin, an orderly methodology must be followed to gather data, otherwise irrelevant, insufficient or wasteful data may be gathered. To gather data following points should be noted:



- 1) The type of data to be gathered;
- 2) The source from which data can be gathered;
- 3) The time when data is to be gathered, and
- 4) The approach to be adopted in gathering data.

### **Sources of data.**

To gather data, it would be useful to make use of the following sources of data:

#### **i. Organisation charts and manuals.**

Organisation charts give some sketchy details. But when they are used with organisation manuals, they indicate how activities are grouped, what is the respective authority of members of groups and the tasks performed. It would be necessary to prepare a list of the tasks performed because it identifies the work done, where it is done and whether there are any duplications.

#### **ii. Information flows and systems**

All relevant files should be used to extract data regarding systems and flows of information. They indicate the manner of work performance past as well as current. Besides, they indicate preferences of different managers, their characteristics and their efficiency.

#### **iii Studying accounting data:**

Accounting data reveals the cost and financial accounting controls and how they function. It is likely that in some cases partial, incomplete or rejected accounting systems operate which may even help involving some of the problems in systems design.

#### **iv. Observing work.**

Observation of work is reliable and should always be used. The reliability of data already collected through other sources can be checked with its help. However, proper observation requires adequate training on the part of the observer.

#### **v. Talking to supervisors and operative employees.:**

Persons involved in a process can furnish the best data for the purpose of designing systems. They are capable of giving the answers to many of the un-answered questions. Thus it would be advisable to interview supervisors and employees only towards the end of the process of data collection because by then the questions on which answers are sought are well-known. The task of seeking answers to questions is a very delicate matter and it is essential to use great care in obtaining answers.

#### **4. Organising Information.**

After the data have been secured, they are to be organised. The data are to be organised in a manner that they are easily understood. The manner of their organisation would depend upon the type of study undertaken. Where data have not been gathered in a graphic form, it would be ideal to convert them in graphic form. By this means, interrelationship of data is established, duplication is revealed and a clear picture of systems emerges. This graphic presentation involves preparation of different types of flow charts, process charts, operation charts, and work distribution charts, etc. Facts can be organised in a number of ways, which are stated as follows:

##### **i. On the basis of objectives.**

The facts can be organised on the basis of objectives to which they relate. However, it is not easy to define objectives and also it is not always possible to give clear and distinct divisions to the information.

##### **ii. On the basis of organisation.**

The facts can be organised on the basis of the organisation units (departments, divisions, etc.) and their respective personnel. By doing so, data flow is revealed and who makes which decision and its effectiveness is revealed. Besides, by consolidating different types of information into a single picture for the whole of the enterprise provides for designing an effective and inclusive system.

##### **iii. On The basis of input and output.**

This approach is simple and is very useful where existing systems are to be improved. This basis is difficult to use where a system is to be introduced for the first time.

#### **iv. On the basis of processing means.**

This method reveals the current status of the data processes being followed. It also reveals the use of machines (or their non-use) and the type of information obtained.

#### **v. On the basis of problems.**

During the collection stage, certain major problems or complaints are discovered. However, it is necessary to include only genuine problems or complaints and which are of major importance.

### **5. Evaluating Information.**

To evaluate data, it would be good to express general statements into quantitative terms. For evaluation the following points should be noted:

- (i) A cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken because the systems designed should ultimately be convenient as well as cost-saving.
- (ii) It is possible to obtain accurate data about cost and employee productivity in quantitative terms. The data already obtained on these aspects should be checked through sampling to determine the accuracy of source documents and reliability of reports and records.
- (iii) Some evaluation, to some extent, depends upon the judgment and belief of an individual. This is so because some information is always made up of non-measurable elements.
- (iv) Systems devised for running an organisation smoothly are also greatly influenced by factors operating outside an organisation, for example, the systems in the import and export offices' of the organisation.

### **6. Establishing Systems Premises.**

The steps already outlined for systems design form the basis on which system premises are to be established. The information gathered about the present procedures and systems gives facts about the quality and quantity of work already done. Now, a system has to be designed which has to take into account these facts. Along With these facts, it would be essential to take into account the future possibilities {e.g., introduction of newer office machines)

to build up the systems. In other words, the systems should have in-built flexibility. Although no part of a system can remain the same over a period.

## **FLOW OF WORK**

The analysis of office systems refers basically to the flow of work through the office. Flow of work can be defined as "The way work moves along from one operation to another—the quantity or volume of work going through the rate at which it moves along, and the smoothness of its passage." Flow of work is basically a problem of control of work output.

Flow of work is a problem to be solved by managers. It can be described as the test of their control ability—an ability to analyze and plan proper flow of work so that flows smoothly at the desired speed to meet the work objectives.

### **PROBLEMS IN THE SMOOTH FLOW OF WORK:**

#### **1. Unequal flow of work:**

The work in the office cannot be equal throughout the day, the week or the year. The work may be very heavy on a particular day in the week or it may be very heavy during a particular period of the day. .

#### **2. Interruptions work.**

Quite often work is interrupted. The interruptions to work are internal as well as external. Internal interruptions may be caused by a number of factors, such as, there is lack of materials with which to work, information needed, is not available immediately, changes of work through change of plan and changes of work because of poor planning. gossiping may be other factors. External interruptions to work may be caused by outsiders calling on employees and external telephone calls. It would be necessary to take into account these factors and minimize their incidence.

#### **3. Unequal times needed for different operations.**

This can be a major problem in the flow of work, more particularly where different operations of a job need different times to complete. For example, the sequence of operations,

the first operation may require only one minute, while the next may require three minutes. Thus a clerk performing the first operation would be free too soon and the other may be too busy. Thus between the two operations, idle time would result. It is thus necessary to have a proper study of different kinds of jobs in the office.

#### **4. Lack of standards.**

Lack of standards may burdensome willing workers with greater load of work, while others may languish. It is thus necessary to standardize work for all workers in the office.

#### **5. Lack of planning.**

Where office management lacks systematic planning of work, work can never flow smoothly. The remedy for this lies in the proper planning of all office work.

#### **6. Lack of scheduling.**

The lack of scheduling is the direct result of the lack of planning. The lack of scheduling leads to poor flow of work.

### **OFFICE MANAGER**

It is already seen that the office work is a function of service. The job of the office manager is to control the activities in the office so as to get the maximum benefit out of them.

The manager plans, organizes, directs and controls the activities of his subordinates in the organization. He brings the human resource or human talent of a firm into combination with non-human resources viz. money, materials and machine.

#### **QUALITIES OF A MANAGER:**

1. In addition to general education, he must have undergone management training. There is no hard and fast rule as to the minimum qualifications to be possessed. The qualifications are based on the job he does.
2. He must have a good command of language.

3. He must be a good organizer.
4. He must have an ability to teach others.
5. He must be tactful and skilful in his dealings.
6. He must be sincere to do his duties.
7. He must be a good leader. He must be able to create team spirit.
8. He must have ability to delegate the job and work to his staff according to the abilities of the workers.
9. He must be calm and confident in all situations. He should have self-control. He should not be irritable.
10. He must be constantly in touch with the new facts and methods to increase the efficiency.

### **ROLE OR FUNCTIONS OF AN OFFICE MANAGER:**

1. **Staffing:** An office manager is requested to recruit and select the office staff by the top management. For this purpose, he determines the number of staff required, their qualification and experience if any, decide the sources of recruitment, receiving applications, conduct the interviews and tests and finally select the right personnel.
2. **Leadership:** He has complete control over the work done in an office. An office manager is necessary for smooth, efficient and performance of office work economically in an organization. Being a leader of office, he is in charge of public relations and helps other departments to achieve their goals set forth.
3. **Training:** The need of training has been decided by office manager. Besides, the training programmes are also devised and imparted to the new recruits as well as existing staff. Orientation training programme has been provided to new staff and refresher course programme is provided to existing staff.

**4. Coordination:** The various activities of office staff are coordinate by the office manager. He has to bring coordination between the top management and the workers. He must please both the parties.

**5. Work Measurement:** An office manager devices methods of work measurement in terms of the output of the staff. It is a difficult task. The reason is that the office work cannot be measured in physical terms. Hence, it is the duty of office manager to decide the accepted norms of work measurement.

**6. Motivation:** The efficiency of staff is increased by providing proper motivation. The type of motivation can be decided by the office manager. The right type of motivation ensures effective and economical performance of work and lead to the promotion of the staff.

**7. Discipline:** The implementation of rules and regulation of office is in the hands of office manager. There should not be personal bias while implementing rules and regulations. He also attends to the grievances of office staff. In this way discipline is maintained.

**8. Accounting:** He has thorough knowledge on accounting. Every figure should be kept in finger tips.

**9. Stationery Control:** Office manager has to exercise proper control on stationery purchase and issue. For this purpose, he has to frame clear cut procedure for the purchase, for the issue and storage of office stationery.

**10. Secretarial Services:** All the accounts books are kept under the custody of office manager. An officer manager is responsible to conduct meetings, drafts reports and minutes etc. on behalf of secretary. In this way, he does the functions of secretary.

**11. Costing:** In small organization, an office manager is responsible to maintain costing records and do the costing work.

**12. Organizer:** The office work has been assessed and assigned to office staff according to their knowledge, ability, experience, qualification and the like by the office manager.

**13. Supervisor:** An office manager is head of office. Hence, it is the duty of office manager to supervise the office correspondences, procedures, policy implementation, record maintenance, filing, indexing and the like.

There is no hard and fast rule for determining the functions of office manager. Generally, the type and size of an organization are the deciding factors of functions of office manager. The functions of office manager vary from time to time and from office to office. The office manager is expected to perform his functions within the limit of authority and responsibility entrusted to him by the employer.

## OFFICE FORMS

When a student seeks admission to a college, or a university or borrows a book from a library or applies for a bus concession ticket, a form has to be filled in. What are office forms? According to leafing well, "forms are printed sheets of paper or card-board used to collect and transmit information". In the words of Denyer, "A form is a printed piece of paper or card on which entries are usually made against marked headings." In other words, a form is a standardised record used to accumulate and transmit information for reference purposes.

### IMPORTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS

(1). Clerical work becomes easy.



- (2) Output can be increased.
- (3) Unnecessary information means waste of time. This can be avoided by adopting printed form, with necessary queries.
- (4) Collection and compilation of statistical data become easier to study from the information form than from a letter.
- (5) In a printed form, the writer has to fill in all the columns, so as to furnish information without suppression.
- (6) The writer or the typist can be at ease in filling the forms in the appropriate place, by writing a few words.
- (7) Understanding and transmission of information from the forms are quick and clear.
- (8) They help to identify records and facilitate easy filing for future reference.
- (9) Data entry, processing and reference becomes easy.
- (10) They facilitate rapid processing of data since information appears in a standard form and at fixed places.

### **FORMS DESIGNING**

The designing of forms is an important function of office management. Since forms are the basic of office systems and routine, it is necessary that they should be well designed and complete in all respects. J.C. Denyer lists the following disadvantages of a badly designed form over a well signed form:

- a. Badly designed forms inherit mistakes in clerical work. Sometimes a single error may cost the company many times more than the cost of printing and forms put together.
- b. A badly designed form is bound to increase the manual labour required to process it and impair efficiency.
- c. A badly designed form may also have an adverse impact on the goodwill and reputation which the organisation enjoys.
- d. A badly designed form may have a psychological effect on people using it. It may lead to frustration among people using it.
- e. Office forms are related to systems of the organisation. A well designed system may be ruined by badly designed forms.

### **PRINCIPLES OF FORM DESIGNING:**

### **(1) Principles of purpose:**

A form should be brought into existence only if there is a purposeful need for the use of that form. The basic purpose of a form is to make clerical work easier, speedy and accurate. Where a plain sheet of paper can serve the purpose, there is no need to introduce a form. The form designer should consider the answers to the following questions, before introducing a new form :

- (a) What is the purpose of the form?
- (b) If the form has more than one purpose, which is the most important?
- (c) Is the purpose justifiable?
- (d) Will the purpose of the form be fully accomplished by its use?
- (e) Is there any another form, for the same, or a similar purpose, now in use elsewhere in the office?

### **A form should be used:**

- (i) If something is to be recorded as a matter of necessity.
- (ii) When certain data are to be recorded repeatedly. These data can be pre-printed on every copy of the form in order to save time in forms preparation.
- (iii) If it is necessary to have all information recorded in the same place on each copy of the form. This arrangement helps to serve as a check on the completeness of the record,
- (iv) Where it is desirable to fix responsibility for the work done by providing spaces for signatures of persons who did the work.

### **(2) Principles of Standardisation:**

In order to reduce costs and avoid confusion it is necessary that all forms should be standardized. Standardization affects mainly their physical arrangement like size, colour, quality of paper used and printing style. No form should be larger in size than is necessary. While determining the size, it should be ensured that the form is capable of being properly handled.

### **(3) Principles of Centralized Control:**

The process of designing, use, replacement, and elimination etc. of the forms should be centrally controlled. This will help to achieve proper coordination and efficiency in forms

management. In some organisations new forms get added while old outdated forms may remain in existence. This problem may be solved by having centralised control of the forms under one office manager, who is responsible for designing.

#### **(4) Principle of Economy:**

The size of the form, the quantity of paper used, the number of copies printed and the method of producing forms should be so chosen that there is economy in procurement of forms. Forms should be so designed that their handling costs are also minimum.

### **FORMS CONTROL**

“Forms control is a means of exercising management control over the costs of producing and processing forms.” In the words of J.C. Denyer, "Forms are important in any organisation, therefore, there should be proper management control of them to ensure that they are efficient and economical in design as well as in use."

In a concern, there may be many forms in use. Therefore all specimens of the form must be held centrally alone place. Forms are the basic tools for an office work, office systems and procedures. If there are many forms, the importance and advantages are lost. Therefore, it has become essential to have control over the forms in order to have effectiveness in use. There may be a committee or a form supervisor, who has specialized knowledge in forms. He is vested with the authority of design, printing.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF FORM CONTROL:**

The following are the objects of form control, in brief:

- (1) To ensure regular supply of various forms.
- (2) To economical use of forms for the firm
- (3) To reduce the clerical work
- (4) To minimize the use of number of forms
- (5) To make necessary changes in the existing forms if they are not satisfactory
- (6) To make reviews, whenever needed;
- (7) To introduce new forms which are really necessary;

- (8) To retain and use only those forms that are necessary for office systems;
- (9) To study whether the introduction of new forms or revision of old forms, is essential;
- (10) To evaluate forms design on the basis of time required to use them;
- (11) To review periodically all forms in use to find out their current utility;
- (12) To eliminate obsolete and irrelevant forms, to consolidate different forms doing the same thing and to introduce only such forms that are really necessary.

After obtaining proper approval of the officer concerned, the approval will be pasted on the form, in the Form book, marked as "dead", if possible along with date.

### **STEPS IN FORMS CONTROL:**

Forms control implies a proper designing, printing, economical use and supply of forms so that office work may be efficiently and effectively performed. The following steps may be suggested a proper forms control:

#### **1. Establishment of Centralised Authority:**

The first step in forms control is to set up a centralized authority for it. In big organizations, forms Control Department may be set up and headed by a Forms Control Supervisor. Alternatively, a committee of individuals possessing adequate knowledge of forms may be constituted. The important functions of Forms Control Department or Committee are:

- (1) Introduction of new forms
- (2) Modification of existing forms
- (3) Elimination of unnecessary forms
- (4) Combination of two or more forms
- (5) Deciding and contents of forms
- (6) Designing and production of forms
- (7) Storing and issue of forms.

**2. Preparation of Forms Register:** The centralized forms control authority should collect at least two copies of each and every office form in use and paste them into a Forms Register or Forms Book. A separate list or index of all the forms in the Forms Book should also be made.

#### **3. Listing of Office Routine:**

The designing and use of forms are closely linked with office procedure and routine. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare a list of all office procedures which may need the use of forms. The relevant forms may be then be classified, marked and numbered according to the procedure or department using them.

#### **4. Analysis of Forms:**

All forms should be analyzed periodically to determine whether any of them can be eliminated, combined with other forms or improved. At this stage, requisitions for new forms or redesigning of existing forms, along with suggestions, may also be obtained from departments.

#### **5. Design and Production:**

Since office forms are the basic tools of all office work, they should be so designed that they result in economy and efficiency of operations. After designing, the decision shall be taken regarding the number of copies of each form which can be produced economically. The Forms Control Supervisor will determine the method of reproduction of forms with the help of a duplicator or to get it printed from outside agency.

#### **6. Disposal of Obsolete Forms:**

Before disposing of any form, the head of the department using such form should be asked to give in writing that the form is 'dead'. Then the form should be submitted to the office manager, who will also recommend and sign with date. Thus, the form no longer required, should be disposed of. After obtaining proper approval of the officer concerned, the approval will be pasted on the form, in the Form Book, marked as 'dead', if possible along with date.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence means conveying information in writing from one person to another or between institutions on matters of common interest. Communication again is one of the fundamental functions of the office. The prime responsibility of the office manager is the maintenance of communication service. Communication service is the part of parcel of the office organization.

#### **TYPES OF CORRESPONDENCE:**

**1. Internal correspondence:**

It means the correspondence between the departments of the company, between branches and head office of the same organization.

**2. External correspondence:**

It is that between the organization and the outsiders (other firms, company, organizations) that is to say, all the letters received from and sent out to other firms come under external correspondence.

**CONTROL OR ORGANISING OF CORRESPONDENCE:**

**I - Centralised Mailing Service**

If the 'mailing service' is centralised, a separate mailing department will have to be created. This department is headed by a supervisor and the work is performed by well-trained personnel. The mailing service is generally centralised in big offices, where the volume of mail is very substantial. In a small office, where few letters are sent out and received, a single person may handle the mail. In some offices, the inward mail is centralised but the outward mail is handled by individual departments. The primary object of the centralization of the mailing service is to promote efficiency through specialisation. A centralised mailing service offers the following **advantages:**

- 1.The responsibility of handling mail (inward, outward and inter-departmental) is entrusted to the mailing department. All the other departments are relieved of this work. The duplication of effort is avoided.
- 2.Specialisation of the mailing activity ensures accuracy and speed.
- 3.Mailing operations can be systematized. Proper systems and routines can be evolved and combined with mailing operations, which would make for savings in time and money.
- 4.*Trained and well-qualified* staff can be employed, which would step up the efficiency of the mailing operations.
- 5.A well-trained and expert supervisor may be appointed to head the mailing department. *Better supervision and coordination* would ensure a smooth and speedy performance of mailing operations.
- 6.The *mechanisation* of the central mailing department is possible. Various time- saving devices (machines) — letter openers, folding and sealing machines, franking machines, etc.,

— can be put to the best possible use.

7. Centralisation ensures a better *control over the use of postage stamps* and their proper accounting. Over stamping, under stamping or non-stamping are avoided.

(8) Centralisation saves time:

(i) By a prompt distribution of inward mail;

(ii) By a prompt recording of inward and outward mail;

(iii) By a prompt and careful opening and scrutiny of the envelopes and their enclosures of the inward mail and careful folding, inserting into envelopes and despatch of outward mail;

(iv) By making time schedule arrangements for the collection and despatch of the outward mail of various departments;

(v) By routing unopened mail of a confidential nature to the proper addressee;

(vi) By making special delivery and other arrangements with the post office;

(vi) By training junior employees in office routine procedures and systems.

### **DECENTRALIZED CORRESPONDENCE:**

In the case of decentralized correspondence, the work is carried out by the clerks of the functional departments.

#### **Advantages:**

- Smooth flow of work
- Takes care of the technical needs
- Based on firsthand information
- Improved quality of work

#### **Disadvantages:**

- No specialization
- Unequal quality of work
- Incorrect policy projection

## **HANDLING INWARD AND OUTWARD MAILS**

The correspondence department, nowadays, is the key to a successful firm. In the department, the whole correspondence is carried on. Therefore, the correspondence department deserves careful attention of the management. The arrangement of handling the correspondence depends upon the volume of business.

**Business mail can be classified as:**

1. Inward Mail (incoming correspondence)
2. Outward Mail (Outgoing correspondence)
3. Inter-departmental correspondence (within the organization)

**PROCEDURE OF INWARD MAILS:**

Once it has been decided whether incoming or inward mail is to be centralised or departmentalised, it is essential to lay down an efficient procedure for its handling. The following routine is suggested for this purpose:

**1.Receiving the mail:** The inward mail is received through persons, post etc. A particular clerk is entrusted with the job of receiving letters reaching him through local people by issuing receipts against the letters received.

**2. Sorting the mail:**

If there is a post box, then a open will be sent to the post office to collect the letters. He collects and hands them over to the officer concerned. In small concerns, the office head will open them. When a separate department is set up labour saving device ,say , letter opener operated by hand or electric power is adopted. The man to whom the duties are assigned, will sort out the letters.

**3. Opening the mails:**

All the incoming letters are placed on the table at the left hand side and the letter – opened at the center. The clerk takes out a letter from the left hand side and places it in the letter opened and does the operation. The machine letter opener has a revolving knife edge , which will slice a very thin part from on edge of the envelope.

**4. Scrutiny of contents:**



After the letters are opened either the same man or another clerk will empty all the covers by taking out the contents. While taking out the contents a proper security will be done to verify whether all the contents from the cover have been taken out. They must be verified to find if they are in order or not. It will be more safe to attach a slip to the letter, with cheques, drafts, postal orders etc.

### **5. Stamping the mail:**

All the incoming letters are to be rubber-stamped showing the date of receipt. Along with the date stamp, the name of the company is also affixed. The date, month and year in the seal can be adjusted.

### **6. Recording the mail:**

All the incoming letters have to be entered in the register called letter received back, letter received register, or receipt Register, Specimen proof is given below,

- Date of receipt
- Name and address of the firm
- Name of correspondence
- Subject matter
- Encl. if any
- Section to which sent
- Date of reply
- Initials of officers
- Remarks

### **7. Distribution:**

All the letters received are placed before the departmental head who in turn, distributes them to the various clerks, who have to deal with such letters. In the evening hours, the departmental head has to make enquiries or verify whether replies have been sent to all the letters received.

## **II. OUTGOING OR OUTWARDS MAIL**

Every organization sends out mail of different departments everyday. It is desirable to handle outwards mail efficiently due to the following reasons:

- i. Improper handling of outwards mail creates a bad impression in the minds of the outsiders who deal with the organization.
- ii. Delays in sending replies slacken the pace of office activity resulting in losses.
- iii. Improper handling also affects the organization funds adversely, for example a telegram may have to be sent due to delay where only an inland letter might have sufficed.

### **PROCEDURE OF HANDLING OUTWARDS MAIL:**

The following routine is suggested for the handling of outgoing mail:

#### **1. Production:**

The outwards mail is to be produced for dispatch. This involves drafting dictating and transcription etc.

#### **2. Signaturing and controlling:**

Every letter and other mail leaving the office must be signed. For this purpose the authority must be well defined. Usually would be alright if ordinary, routine or form letters are signed by the correspondence clerk or a junior executive while important letters are to be signed by the departmental heads and in some cases by the chief executive .

#### **3. Referencing:**

It is an important part of the records management. Letters documents, etc. mailed out must be referenced every letter has a symbol or a code for easy reference in future. The adders of the letter are also requested to quote this reference number for easy location of documents and quick disposal of enquiries.

**UNIT – III Completed**

**UNIT – IV**

Stationery – Importance – control of stationery cost – Purchasing – stationery supplies – Filing – Importance – Functions – Characteristics of good filing system – Indexing – Meaning, Importance and kinds.

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Office work is related to information and records. All effects use a variety of stationery ranging from paper to pin. Paper, paper pads. Books of different kinds, envelopes files, stencils, stencil sheets, carbon papers for writing /typewriting duplicating ink, paper knives, clips of a variety, staplers, whiteners, cello tapes and so on. Modern automated offices may not need such a variety but they will need computer stationery, floppy disc, CD's, cartridges for computer printers. The easiest way to identify the requirements will be classifying them under various heads such as papers, books writing and erasing requirements, tagging and filing requirements, typewriter requirements.

## **IMPORTANCE OF STATIONARY:**

1. The responsibility for the correct utilization of the issue should lie with those who make the requisition. If a department head requests five dozen color pencils, he is responsible for them and their correct utility.
2. The cost of the stationery and office supplies used by a department should be reckoned along, with the cost of running that departments.
3. Supply of all materials should be suitably packed in envelopes of boxes and have marking.

## **NEED TO CONTROL OFFICE STATIONERY AND SUPPLIES:**

Since office supplies and stationery are important for the effective and efficient performance of office operations, a proper managerial control should be exercised over them. This is particularly important because of two main reasons; one, because office workers should be provided with the best tools if they are to produce the best work; and two, because every additional piece of paper means increased cost in handling it. It is necessary to control office stationery and office supplies effectively for a variety of reasons. These are:

**1.Avoidance of Losses:** The loss of office stationery and supplies may originate in a number of ways:

- (a) Careless handling of stationery articles;
- (b) Overstocking of articles;

- (c) Defective storekeeping and careless use;
- (d) Deterioration in stationery items;
- (e) Defective purchase and supply of substandard materials.

Wastage generally results from bad buying and overstocking, and as a result of poor systems of control over issues; and bad control may lead to expensive difficulties — for example, an office may run out of stock. Further, the chances of stationery going out of the office to the houses of the employees are not very remote. All these factors increase the loss of stationery in an office.

**2. Cost:** Stationery and supplies are a costly item; they cost a lot in terms of purchase price, proper storage and proper issue. The cost of office supplies not only comprises the cost of these items but also the following:

- (f) The cost of space occupied, including the cost of lighting, ventilation and heating;
- (g) Depreciation of storage equipment and handling equipment; *e.g.*, cabinets, trolleys and ladders;
- (h) Interest on the capital tied up in stationery stocks; and
- (i) Labour cost of keeping and issuing stationery stocks;

The cost of ordering, issuing and storing of stationery in an average office may be reduced by up to 25 per cent by exercising a proper control.

**3. Right Type:** The right type of stationery and supplies should be bought. Poor quality paper, carbons or envelopes of an improper size result in a lot of wastage and create a poor impression on those who receive them. Proper care should, therefore, be exercised in selecting the various items of stationery for office use. This necessitates control over stationery and supplies.

**4. Availability:** Stationery and supplies should be available in an adequate quantity and at all times. If they are purchased in abundance:

- (j) Bigger capital will be blocked with no returns;
- (k) Extra storage space will be required; and
- (l) There will be the risk of obsolescence.

On the other hand, a short supply of such items will create an out-of-stock position leading to numerous difficulties.

There is therefore, a strong case for the management of stationery and office supplies. Managing and controlling office supplies refers to the various aspects of office supplies. For example:

- (i) Setting standard;
- (ii) Purchasing;
- (iii) Storing;
- (iv) Issuing; and
- (v) Controlling the supplies.

### **Control Of Stationary Cost/ Suggestions For Minimizing The Cost Of Stationery**

The essential requirements to keep stationery cost at a minimum may be stated as follows:

#### **1. Minimum stocks:**

Stationery stocks should be kept to the minimum so that not much capital is blocked in them. At the same time however, it should be remembered that stationery inventories should be adequate so that office work may go on smoothly and without a hitch.

#### **2. Efficient storage:**

Stationery should be stored in such a way as to save space, time and energy, to avoid deterioration, loss or possible destruction while in stock. It deteriorates quickly by the action of sunlight, wind or dust, heat or exposure, water, humidity or moisture. Correct storekeeping methods should be employed to avoid such losses.

#### **3. Control of issue system:**

The issuing system should be devised in such manner as to save time, energy and material. A frequent issue of materials involves a great deal of paper work. It is better to issue stationery items to departments at regular intervals.

#### **4. Efficient purchasing:**

The procedure for the purchase of stationery should be such that timely purchases can be made, for then the cost of purchase is reduced. It should be adopted, keeping in view the size and complexity of the organization.

#### **5. Devising proper forms:**

Proper forms should be devised and introduced so that the smallest quantity of printed stationery is kept in stock.

### **KINDS OF STATIONERY:**

#### **1. Roll stationery:**

Paper comes in a roll with or without perforation. If there is no perforation, the paper is easily torn or cut at any point because near the output point there is a paper cutting edge made of metal or other sharp material.

## 2. **Interfold stationery:**

Here, paper is perforated and folded with interleaved carbon papers. The inter leaf carbon paper be refused. It is also called flat back.

## 3. **Fanfold stationery:**

Continuous stationery requires at least some limited equipment. A decollating machine will separate the papers at perforation and also removes the inter leaving carbon sheets. A manifold machine can move the interfold stationery once the papers have been used and bring the next to be filed up.

# PURCHASING

## METHODS OF PURCHASING:

The methods of buying may be divided into four main categories, although there may be a combination of them:

**1. Tender:** Very large firms and local authorities use the system of purchasing by tender. Here, the purchasing authority decides on the items of stationery, determines the quantity required for, say, a year, and then invites stationery manufacturers or dealers to tender prices for the different lots. The delivery of goods may then be taken at one time, or in instalments,

as required throughout the year. In this system, the time spent on price negotiations is saved; and once the contract has been given, the actual act of purchase becomes very simple, for the desired quantities can be easily requisitioned. However, the following disadvantages flow from this system:

- (a) The lowest tender is not always the best or the most economical; and
- (b) A contract for a period of time may mean that higher prices would be paid if the market prices should fall during the contract period.

**2. Quotation System:** Under this system, every time a large quantity of anything is ordered, the different suppliers are asked to submit quotations, perhaps with samples. This system has the advantage of getting supplies from many stationery firms, whose quotations have been accepted. It also ensures that the best market prices are obtained every time goods are ordered.

**3. Buying from Same Suppliers:** It is always advantageous to purchase from the same

suppliers; whose quantity and service have been found satisfactory over a period of time. However, when this has been done over a period of years, it may come as quite a shock to the buyer when he obtains a lower quotation from a competitor instead of placing a *blind order*.

**4. Spot Purchasing:** Under this method, stationery supplies are purchased through various sales representatives who may call on the firm. They sometimes bring samples, and invariably seek to increase the quantities ordered. But this definitely is not a recommended way of buying.

#### **ISSUE PROCEDURE:**

When stores are centralised, and more particularly in large offices, the following procedure for the issue of stationery and other supplies may be adopted:

**1. Written Requisition:** A stationery stock should be issued only upon a written requisition which should be signed only by specified persons; otherwise it should not be honoured. In no circumstances should supplies be issued at personal requests.

**2. Time of Issues:** The issue of stock should take place only at specified times and on specified days — for example; weekly. If supplies are issued at any time a request is made for them, the labour involved in handling them will be excessive. In large organisations which have a number of branches, divisions or departments, separate days may be allotted to the respective branches, etc., for their requisitions. However, emergency requirements should be honoured as and when they arise.

**3. Place of Delivery:** Stocks should preferably be delivered to the person making the requisition rather than requesting him to call for them. This should reduce the loss of working time. The storekeeper should have his own arrangements for delivery at the place of work.

**4. Unit of Issue:** Issues ought to be made in specified unit, *e.g.*, a dozen pencils, six refills, 100 sheets of paper, etc. The items should be kept in unit packs so that prompt counting, handling and issue may be facilitated.

**5. Record of Issue:** The issues should be properly recorded in the Stationery and Supplies Register and in the Issue Register. Different pages should be allotted to different items so that the stock position of each may be easily determined. When items

are issued against an authorized requisition, the data of the requisition, particulars of quantity, the description of the item, the name of requisitioned or department, etc., should be entered in the Register.

**6. Preparing Purchase Requisitions:** Whenever the balance stock of any item reaches a predetermined level (also known as the reorder level), the storekeeper should prepare a purchase requisition and forward it to the appropriate authority. If so authorised, he may also prepare a purchase order.

### **STATIONERY SUPPLIES:**

Following are the various stationery supplies commonly used in an office.

#### **1. Paper:**

Probably more paper is used in an office than any other single item of stationery. Whatever it is used for producing a printed form or is used in the office on a typewriter or for reproduction machines, the office buyer should become familiar with all kinds and qualities of paper and get to know the most economical order quantities.

#### **2. Carbon paper:**

The office buyer should determine the correct carbon to use for the many specific jobs which are performed in the office. A good quality carbon paper would yield better quality copies and in the long run, costs no more than a cheaper one.

#### **3. Typewriter ribbon;**

The general principles relating to carbon paper apply to the selection of the typewriter ribbons as well. A ribbon should be selected for the job and tests should be made to find out which one would be best for a particular job. One way to cut down on the cost of the purchase of carbon paper and ribbons is to buy from one reliable source and contract with this source for a quantity that will be used in a period of one year.

#### **4. Staplers:**

Stapling machines and staples are also used in considerable quantity in offices. Staples prevent the loss of papers and stapling of related papers together saves reference and filing time. Staplers are available different models.

#### **5. Pencils, pens & ball pens:**

There are many varieties of pencil and pens, each having its own function and each performing its function better than the others. The different types of pencils include HB, sketch pens, sign pens etc., It is always desirable to look at the quality aspects so that the fullest use of these items may be made.

#### **6. Other items:**



The use of other items- ink, glue, paste, rubber, rubber bands, pins, paper clips, tags, sealing wax, etc., should be standardized.

## **FILING**

### **Meaning;**

Filing is a form of record keeping. Documents are filed in order that they may be available for use at some future date that is the precise purpose of making records. Filing provides a means of preserving records of business transactions.

### **DEFINITION:**

According to Leffingwell “Filing is the process of so arranging and sorting original records, or copies of them, that they can be readily located when required”

The most comprehensive definition of the term filing is provided by Zene K. Quible. He says that filing is “one of the activities in the records management programme which involves systematically classifying, coding, arranging and placing of records in storage.”

Filing therefore, has the following major objects:

- (i) Proper arrangement of records;
- (ii) Proper sorting of records; and
- (iii) Easy availability of records.

### **RECORD-KEEPING VERSUS FILING:**

Record-keeping in an office mainly consists of:

- (i) Maintenance of the books of accounts;
- (ii) Maintenance of statistical books; and
- (iii) Filing and indexing documents and written records.

Thus, record-keeping is a broader and more comprehensive term and filing is merely one of its processes. Filing is only a form of record-keeping. Modern Records Management really involves not only filing; but also indexing, central filing, records retention and follow-up action.

### **IMPORTANCE OF FILING:**

The importance of filing in an organisation arises from the fact that large number of papers and documents cannot be preserved and handled without proper arrangement. All

future planning is done by the executives on the basis of past performance and records.

Certain records are maintained under the provisions of various statutes. In business correspondence, a reference is made to the previous letters, documents, etc. In purchasing, an order may have to be followed up or a repeat order may have to be placed in which case a reference is made to the old records. In the event of a dispute, records provide documentary evidence. It is rightly said that nothing causes more chaos in an office than unsystematic records management. A systematic preservation of various types of information for various purposes is made possible only by a good filing system.

### **FUNCTIONS OF FILING SYSTEM:**

- 1. Library Function:** by sorting and arranging the records for future reference
- 2. Administrative Function:** by maintain records of previous decision and thereby helping the executive in framing business policies.
- 3. Information Function:** by maintaining protecting and supplying the various types of information for various uses and purposes.
- 4. Historical Function;** by preserving in a systematic manner the important records bearing on the progress of the organization.

Leffingwell and Robinson list only three essentials (requirements) of a filing system.

According to them “filing provides a means of preserving records of business transactions. To accomplish this purpose, filing requires:

- (i) Educated and trained supervision;
- (ii) Thoroughly standardised methods; and
- (iii) Good training of the filing force.

“These three requirements constitute the main factors in all office management, but they are of particular application in filing because of the extreme difficulty of correcting errors and the serious consequences that may ensue if the filing work is not accurately and expeditiously handled.”

### **ADVANTAGES OF FILING:**

An efficient filing system provides the following advantages to the organisation:

- 1. Increased Efficiency:** A good filing system enables the staff to handle correspondence properly and without delay. It saves time & brings efficiency to the office operations. As consequence, it enhances the reputation of the organizations among outsiders.
- 2. Ready Reference:** Many a time, customers repeat their past orders. Follow-up measures may also have to be taken when a letter has been sent or an order placed. Filing in such cases serves the purpose of ready reference.
- 3. Protection:** a good filing system protects the documents against possible loss or damage.
- 4. Planning:** Past records provide valuable information for the formulation of business decision at the proper time.
- 5. Quick decision:** Filing of records enables the executives to take correct & quick business decisions at the proper time.
- 6. Better Control:** The process of control is greatly facilitated by filing. A check is kept on incoming and outgoing letters, and letters requiring immediate attention are disposed of quickly.
- 7. Legal Compliance:** Filing fulfils legal obligations by keeping those documents and records which are required to be preserved under the provisions of the law.
- 8. Evidence:** Old records are useful as evidence in a law suit or in proving titles to assets and even to the existence of the organization itself.

### **ESSENTIALS / CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD FILING SYSTEM:**

The maintenance of an efficient filing system is one of the complex problems in an office. There is no one ideal filing system, and no one ideal type of filing equipment which will meet the requirements of every record in every office. However, a good filing system should have the following characteristics:

- 1. Simplicity:** The system should be simple and free from complications. Any person should be in a position to understand the system easily.
- 2. Suitability:** The system should be one which is suitable for the particular business in which it is introduced.
- 3. Economy:** The cost incurred for maintaining the filing system should be appropriate to the benefits derived.
- 4. Safety:** The system should be safe and the papers and files should be free from damage caused by water, fire, etc.,

5. **Accessibility:** Anything that is filed should be easily accessible and that, too, in the shortest possible time.
6. **Adaptability:** The system should be adaptable to any change that may occur in the business. If the business expands, the filing system should be capable of meeting such expansion.
7. **Classification:** The filing should be based on a proper classification facilitates the insertion of documents in proper files and also locating them without delay in case of need.
8. **Compactness:** The filing system should be compact and such types of equipment should be used which occupies less space.

### **GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE FILING SYSTEM:**

Importance of an effective filing system can never be overestimated. Here are a few guidelines that can help in providing an effective filing system:

1. A filing system can be arranged chronologically, that is by years; or by subject ; or alphabetically: ideally one should have a combination of all three.
2. Before starting, discard the clutter, all the junk mail, old coupons and corporate literature which may have accumulated.
3. Use sturdy folders that can withstand repeated use.
4. When maintaining files in a chronological order, six folders; one each for each day of the week may be used and marked accordingly; and a seventh folder may be marked for 'Next week'.
5. The chronological system of filing works well when there is a time bound workload to attend to and queries like: 'What was the reply to Thursday's letter?' are frequently asked.
6. A separate 'financial file' may be maintained to put all the paid monthly, quarterly bills. This file may be further classified into 'utility bills', 'maintenance bills', 'Telephone/ Electricity Bills,' 'Repairs bills', and so on depending upon the number of bills in each category.
7. Subject file, if arranged alphabetically, are easier to handle, subjects may be prioritized like 'very important', 'general' or 'routine'; however such practice is not recommended.
8. Alphabetical files are recommended when office is getting a lot of mail from different sources and it is required to retrieve it very quickly.
9. For a filing system to be effective and meaningful, it must be intelligible to anyone who works on it . Because speedy information retrieval is what makes a filing system effective.

## **CENTRALIZED AND DECENTRALIZED FILING**

### **I.CENTRALIZED FILING:**

Under the centralized filing system, the records of all departments of the organization are preserved at one place and are centralized by a common index plan.

#### **Advantages:**

1. It helps in eliminating the duplication of filing equipment
2. If the filing is centralized there will be no need of keeping the same records in all the departments
3. Fewer cabinets & other equipments will be required if the filing is centralized because these will be used to the maximum capacity.
4. It helps in bringing about uniformity and standardization of the filing equipment & operations.
5. It facilitates in exercising greater control over retrieval retention and transfer of records.

#### **Disadvantages:**

1. It becomes difficult to maintain secrecy of certain important matters of various departments
2. Filing clerks may not be aware of the specialized work of certain departments and because of this, chances of wrong filing are more.
3. The system is not suitable where some departments are located in different geographical areas.
4. All records are stored in one place and hence, the risk of loss due to theft, fire,etc.,
5. Under this system, there is no duplication of records.

### **II-DECENTRALIZATION OF FILING:**

In the case of decentralized or departmental system of filing, files relating to every department are kept in that department itself. The work of filing is entrusted to some employee in the department who may be required to do the filing work along with other duties.

#### **Advantages:**

1. The system is good for big & autonomous departments dealing with information of confident nature.
2. This system suits very well if the departments are located in different geographical areas.
3. As the papers are kept in the concerned department, valuable time is not wasted on transporting papers to and from the central filing department when they are needed by the departments.

**Disadvantages:**

1. There will be duplication of effort, equipment and space and cost of filing operation will be high
2. Filing methods may differ from one department to another department and hence, there will be no uniformity in the procedure of filing
3. As one person has to perform all the filing operations, the advantages of specialization available under the centralized system of filing cannot be gained.

**BASIS CLASSIFICATION OF FILING**

- 1. Alphabetical Classification:** In this system, letters and folders containing letters from various parties are sorted and arranged in an alphabetical order in which the name or the surname of the party begins with “a”, “B”, and so on.
- 2. Numerical Classification:** In this system, each correspondent is given a number and that number appears on the folders in which all; the correspondence concerning a particular party is arranged.
- 3. Alphabetical Numerical Classification:** This system is an improvement over the above two systems. In this system, correspondents or subject folders may be arranged in alphabetical groups and within each group, folders may be arranged in a numerical order.
- 4. Geographical classification:** In this system, folders are classified according to territories and arranged in alphabetical order. For example, the arrangements may be in the order of Amritsar, Mumbai, and Delhi and so on.
- 5. Subject-wise classification:** This method is adopted when subject is more important than the name of the correspondent. In this system, letters are sorted on the basis of their subject matter and arranged alphabetically, eg., accounts, bills, commission, dearness allowance, etc.,

## INDEXING

### MEANING:

Indexing means the systematic arrangements of all documents and papers so as to facilitate the tracing of any document or paper at a moments' notice. A good system of indexing is indispensable in an organization which has to any paper large number of documents and papers. By facilitating the tracing of any paper without loss of time, this system ensures the speedy disposal of urgent matters.

### OBJECTIVES OF INDEXING:

This important object of indexing is to assist in locating the fillies quickly and without any difficulty, whenever they are required for reference. Indexing thus adds to the efficiency of the filing method.

The object of indexing is best achieved only if the right type of indexing is selected. If the fillies are arranged in a geographical-cum-alphabetical or only alphabetical order, an index is not required. However in other systems of classification, there is need to provide an index for easy locating of files. Index is also required for different kinds of registers and ledgers. For example, business houses may pledger folies, credit limits, etc., Similarly, clubs and associations may prepare indicates of their members, containing their names, occupations, etc.,

### IMPORTANCE OF INDEXING:

- ❖ The type and extent of information needed.
- ❖ Whether the information is to be added and deleted frequency
- ❖ The purpose of keeping the index
- ❖ Requirements of the filing system
- ❖ Whether the card is to be taken out for recording information.
- ❖ Requirements of space for each system.
- ❖ Cost of equipment in each system.
- ❖ Cost of labour and stationery and supplies necessary for each system.

## **ESSENTIALS OF A GOOD INDEXING SYSTEM:**

- 1. Simplicity:** It should be simple to understand and operate. It should not be complex in operation.
- 2. Economy:** It should be economical in terms of money, space and effort. Heavy investment has to be made for purchasing the indexing equipment.
- 3. Flexibility:** It should be flexible. It should have scope for expansion, in case the files of the firm increase.
- 4. Efficiency:** It should ensure speed in operation and should take minimum time for operation.
- 5. Safety:** I should ensure safety of records. It should protect index cards or registers from damage or destruction by dust, white ants, rats, fire, etc.,

## **TYPES OF INDEX:**

The various types of indexes are also known as the methods or systems of indexing.

Several types of indexes are used in various offices as aids to the filing system. Some of them are rather crude and rigid, while others are highly sophisticated and expensive. The choice of any system of indexing depends upon the nature and volume of the records to be indexed.

Some of the important types of indexes are described below:

### **1. Page Index**

“An ordinary page index consists of a page for each letter of the alphabet. Fitted with a tab showing the letter, and on each page are written the names beginning with that letter and quoting the relevant page numbers.” This is the type of index most in use for minutes, and is comparable to the index given at the end of a book. This type of indexing may take the following forms:

( i) **Bound Book Index:** It is in the form of a bound book or register divided into alphabetical section in which the names of persons or documents are entered. Each section has the leaves cutaway at the right hand side so that the initial letters of all the sections are visible at a glance. All entries relating to a particular letter of the alphabet are arranged in the same section or page reserved for the same letter of the alphabet in a strict alphabetical order. The book index is very cheap and is good for maintaining a record for a long period. The pages cannot be lost or disarranged because they are bound. But an alterations in the index is difficult; and it accommodates a comparatively less number of entries. It is therefore an inflexible method.



( i i ) **Loose Leaf Index**: A loose leaf index is one in which pages are not fixed permanently but are held by a device which makes it possible for one to take out some pages or insert additional pages. The sheets of pages are fitted on to metal hinges and screwed. When a leaf is inserted or removed, the book is unscrewed and the relevant sheet is inserted or removed from it. This method, therefore, has the advantage of being flexible and adaptable. It offers ample scope for expansion. The main drawback is that the sheets may be manipulated, lost or damaged because of the tearing of punched holes.

( i i i ) **Vowel Index**: This is an extension of the bound book index. In big organisations, where the list of correspondents is very large, too much time is wasted in locating the name under reference. Therefore, to facilitate quick reference, the book is maintained on the basis of a vowel classification. Under this method, the sections of the index book reserved for each letter of the alphabet are divided into six sections which are reserved for the five vowels (a,e,i,o,u) and y. The names of the correspondents or the headings of the files are recorded on the page allotted to the letter of the alphabet and the vowel subsection in that order. For example, the name of Mr. Ramesh will appear on the page allotted to 'R' and subsection 'a' for 'a' is the first vowel in the name of Ramesh. Like book indexing, vowel indexing, too, is less flexible and has a very limited use.

**Advantages:** Page indexing has the following advantages:

- (i) It is very simple method of indexing and can be understood by everyone.
- (ii) It is an inexpensive method.
- (iii) Very little equipment is needed to put this method into operation.

**Disadvantages:** The following drawbacks should also be noted.

- (i) It is an inflexible method of indexing.
- (ii) Names not in use have to be deleted from the index. As a result, the appearance of the index book or register becomes very shabby.
- (iii) Names are entered in a chronological order in the book (the order in which they come).
- (iv) Strictly alphabetical arrangement of names may not be possible.

## **2. Loose or Vertical Card Index**

A loose card index is used to overcome the difficulties (drawbacks) of an ordinary page index. It consists of a number of cards of small size (12 cms × 7 cms), each concerned with one item of the index. The reference heading is written along the top edge of a card, and the remaining space is devoted to indicating the place where the corresponding record may be found. Cards are arranged in an alphabetical or numerical order and are placed in drawers or boxes of suitable dimensions. Each drawer may have a rod running from one end of it to the other to hold the cards in position. These drawers are divided into alphabetical section by means of guide cards. To facilitate the location of an individual card, tabbed guide cards may be inserted at intervals.

*Uses:* Card indexing has numerous uses, some of which are:

- (i) To keep particulars of employees;
- (ii) To keep accounts of stock items;
- (iii) To keep records of investments and assets;
- (iv) To keep the names and addresses of customers, dealers, shareholders, creditors and debtors;
- (v) To keep records of different assets;
- (vi) To keep records of instalment sales or sales on hire-purchase basis;
- (vii) To keep the specimen signatures of accountholders (in a bank);
- (viii) To keep a catalogue of books (in a library).

*Advantages:* The card indexing offer the following advantages:

- (i) The cards can be *arranged in any order* — alphabetical, numerical, geographical, etc., and the order can be changed to suit the changing needs of the business.
- (ii) The system is quite *cheap* to instal and operate. The equipment required includes cards and drawers of the desired size.
- (iii) The cards provide a *complete list* of the names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc., of the persons or firms with whom the dealing take place.
- (iv) The system is highly *elastic*. New cards can be inserted or dead cards removed at any time without disturbing the sequence.
- (v) The system is *flexible*. The number of cards can be increased or decreased from any group without disturbing the order of the cards.
- (vi) Each card may be *ruled* according to the particulars or information required.

(vii) The system is *simple to understand* and operate. Every person in the organisation can operate the system with great ease and without requiring any training.

(viii) *Cross-reference* is facilitated.

(ix) *Cards can be put to many uses*. For instance, in a library two cards per book may be prepared, one for the author and the other for the title of the book.

(x) The cards wanted for reference can be taken out without in any way holding up the work of recording of information as other cards are left behind.

(xi) In a *big business house, card indexing is cheaper* than ordinary indexing. Expenses of having a bound book and its occasional renewal, with addition, to existing correspondence are saved or avoided.

(xii) For *special purposes, coloured cards* can be used to facilitate easy classification of customer or subgroups.

(xiii) *Guide cards* to tabs may be used to highlight certain information, *e.g.*, overdue accounts, stock items in short supply, etc.

(xiv) The *card index* may be used by *several persons* at the same time.

(xv) *Any information can be obtained or recorded quickly* and without difficulty.

**Drawbacks:** The disadvantages of a vertical card index are:

(i) The card index is *blind, i.e.*, a large number of cards cannot be seen at a glance. It therefore takes a longer time to locate a particular card.

(ii) There is a danger of separate cards being *lost, mutilated or destroyed*.

(iii) *Supervision* or checking may be difficult if system provides for a free removal of the cards.

(iv) Cards get *torn* or spoiled through constant handling and therefore have to be replaced.

(v) The system is comparatively more costly than ordinary page-indexing.

### **3. Visible Card Index**

Under this system, the cards are laid flat in transparent covers in a shallow tray or in a metal frame. Each card is fitted into a metal hinge so that it overlaps the one before it in such a way that a narrow strip at the bottom, containing the name or title, remains visible. "The principle underlying the visible card index is that the cards overlap, so that one line of entry on each card projects and is visible, thus forming a one-line index."

The Cards Tray may contain 50 cards and is fitted horizontally into cabinets or attached vertically to the metal stands. The trays are fitted with hinges which enable the operator (the filing clerk) to write on each card without removing it from its place. This saves time because a speedy reference to cards and the posting of cards become possible. The catchy advertisement slogan for the visible card index is: "Look at the record; not for it".

Some important variations of the visible card index are given below:

(i) **Automatic Card Index:** Under this system, trays of cards are suspended from a revolving mechanism under push button control, by means of which a clerk can obtain quick access to more than one lakh cards.

(ii) **Visible Books:** Overlapping visible index records can also be kept in a book form. A visible book consists of a loose leaf binder in which pages are arranged like the cards in the visible card index.

(iii) **Staggered Card Index:** This system has been developed to give easier reference to the headings. Cards are arranged in groups and overlap so that the reference headings on the cutaway corners of a whole group can be seen at once. This system of indexing is sometimes applied to ledger cards to facilitate the extraction of accounting for posting.

**Advantages:** The visible card indexing offers the following advantages:

(i) It occupies less space and provides instant reference.

(ii) Though visible indexing costs more, the saving in time and labour is so much that it offsets the additional cost. Studies have shown that it saves 75 per cent of the time required to look up card under the non-visible system.

(iii) Additional information can be easily written on the cards without even disturbing the order in which they have been kept.

(iv) Speedy reference is possible as the names of the customers or subject are all visible.

(v) Posting of the cards is very speedy, which saves time.

(vi) It helps listing of customers or subjects as a photograph of the tray can provide a ready list with minimum effort and expense.

(vii) It aids the management in controlling purchases, inventories, sales, production and other functions of a business.

**Drawbacks:** The disadvantages of a visible card index are:

- (i) The requisite type of equipment is more costly than the equipment required for a non visible indexing system.
- (ii) The training of the staff is necessary for the operation of the visible card indexing system.

Because of the advantages offered by this system, it is now used by all the modern offices.

#### **4. Strip Index**

In every office, whatever the organisation, a list of the names, addresses and telephone numbers, etc., of the correspondents has to be maintained. The strip index is especially designed for this purpose. It consists of a frame into which strips of stiff papers can be fitted in any required order. Each strip is devoted to one item. Frames containing these strips may be either fixed on wall, or arranged on a rotary stand which can be turned round so that one can look at any part of the index. The strips can be protected from exposure or damage with removable transparent celluloid or plastic window sheets.

#### **5. Wheel Index**

This is a modern method of visible indexing, popularly known for its providing instant reference. The method is a variation of the visible card index discussed earlier. Under this system, cards are arranged about the circumference of a wheel which may be portable or set in a cabinet or desk. A single wheel can hold as many as 5,000 cards and as many as six wheels can be set up within easy reach of a clerk sitting at his desk. The capacity can be further increased when wheels of a bigger diameter are arranged horizontally. In this system, cards can be withdrawn and inserted without disturbing the other cards and entries can be made *on* the cards without removing them from the wheel.

**Advantages:** The wheel index offers the following advantages:

- (i) It makes reference very easy and very quick, and saves time and effort.
- (ii) Wheel indexing makes for economy in space because it accommodates thousands of cards in a small space.
- (iii) It is flexible, for a card can be easily withdrawn or inserted without disturbing the order of the cards.
- (iv) It offers scope for expansion.

## UNIT – IV COMPLETED

### UNIT- V

Office furniture – Types of furniture – Office machine and equipments – Object of mechanization – Types of office machine – Computers and it's in office – Criteria for selection.

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After Deciding the layout of office accommodation and its decoration, it is natural decide on the furniture that is to be installed in it. Office work is mostly indoor work. Suitable furniture should be provided for the personnel to perform office work swiftly and efficiently. Office furniture is the basic facility the employee identifies himself. It is the duty of the office manager to provide the right type of furniture for the office. At the same time, furniture should be viewed as long term investment and heavy cost involved in it.

Amongst the usual furniture found in any modern office are desks, chairs, tables, racks, cabinets, cupboards, lockers, safe, trays etc. the number of pieces and the kinds of furniture to be purchased for any office depends on various factors;

- ❖ The number of departments and employees
- ❖ The nature and volume of work to be performed.
- ❖ The office space available for accommodating the furniture.

**J.C.Denyer in his book Office Management, has given the following factors which should be considered before acquiring new furniture:**

1. **Design:** It is related to the size of the top, height, number of drawers etc.
2. **Capital Outlay:** An obvious factor when buying equipment.
3. **Durability:** Metal furniture will probably last longer than ordinary wooden furniture.
4. **Saving in Space:** Some furniture is specially designed to save office space.
5. **Fire Risk:** Again metal furniture is a better fir risk than wooden.
6. **Weight:** If furniture has to be moved around, as it often the case in a large office, than light weight is preferable.
7. **Hygiene:** How easy it is to lean the furniture and the floor underneath it.
8. **Appearance:** Furniture which not only is pleasing to the eye but appears workman like is quite an important factor.
9. **Comfort of office work:** This means that more work is likely to be performed.
10. **Safety:** Plate-glass topped furniture may not be safe to use.
11. **Finish:** If there is too high a glass, it can cause glare and distraction from work.
12. **Saving the labour:** Some furniture has built-in file units which can save movement and walking about by the clerks.

13. **Supervision:** Work being done in office should not be overlooked due to structure of furniture.

### **DIFFERENT TYPES OF FURNITURE:**

**Desk:** Most office work is handled on a desk, over a desk, through a desk or across a desk. Anything that improves the handling of desk work or which enables employees to work more effectively is, therefore, worth considering. The primary function of any desk is to provide a suitable surface for writing, checking, sorting, examining and conferring. Office machines are kept on desks in a proper position. They provide storage space for supplies, stationery and the papers and files that are in use. An average desk should be 120 cms. to 150 cms. wide and 75 cms. in depth and 70 cms. in height so that the clerk may sit comfortably and the desk top may accommodate all papers and files he may need in the course of his work. Those who use machines may need the surface a few centimetres lower to bring the keyboard to a convenient level. The principal factors to be considered in choice of desks include functional aspects, prestige, aesthetic appeal, cost and possibilities for standardisation.

On the basis of their use, the following types of desks may be provided.

**1. Executive Desks:** Executive desks are made in accordance with the taste of the executive, and are valued mostly for their good looks. Their purpose is to impress visitors and bring home to them the prestige and importance of persons using them. These are, generally speaking, double pedestal desks with a width of 150 cms. to 180 cms. a depth of 85 cms. and a height of 75cms. Each desk contains 3 or 4 drawers on the side the executive sits. Sharp edges and corners are avoided. The table top is covered with linoleum, glass or leather. Some executives prefer to have the entire surface covered with glass, while others cover only the writing area. If the top-glass is used, telephone numbers, visitors cards, etc., are placed under it.

**2. Special Purpose Desks:** These are designed for special use in offices and include the typist's desks calculating machine desks, collating desks, and so on. A typist's desk is the most common and perhaps the most important of this type and may be of the following types:

- (a) Standard flat topped, single or double pedestal;
- (b) Desk with a fixed sunken well for the typewriter;

(c) Desk fitted with a collapsible well into which the typewriter is fixed;

(d) Desk with a fold-away mechanism, which enables the typist to house the typewriter in a cupboard provided in the pedestal of the desk, leaving a clear desk top for ordinary clerical work.

These desks are normally of 150 cms. width, 65 cms. in depth and 70 cms. to 75 cms. in height. Apart from these, L-shaped and Z-shaped modular desks may also be used for typing purposes. Machine desks are designed to meet the needs of different types of machines — calculating, adding, billing and invoicing machines. A well is provided at either end of the desk for the machine so that it sits lower than the standard desk height.

**3. Built-in Furniture:** Floor space can be conserved by the use of built-in or of collapsible furniture. Fitted furniture not only saves space, but economy is achieved in the material used for its construction. Permanent fixtures can be tailored to fit into wall recesses.

**4. General Clerical Desks:** There are mostly single pedestal desks of 120 cms. by 75 cms. With three or four drawers on one side. In some offices, double pedestal desks are provided for the clerical staff.

### **Tables**

In many offices, tables serve the purpose of clerical desks and are often fitted with one or two drawers. Tables are generally used for the sorting of mail, despatch, temporary housing of files and file trays, storage of papers, registers, etc. They may be used sometimes for purposes of interviews or meetings of committees, etc. A large-sized or roundtable may be provided in the conference room for the meetings of the executives.

### **Chairs**

“A chair is really the first thing you need when you don’t really need anything”... “and it is therefore a peculiarly compelling symbol of civilisation. There are probably few more powerful symbols in contemporary life.” Chairs are an important item of furniture from the workers’ viewpoint since they have to sit in them, all through the day in the office. A well-designed chair reduces fatigue and therefore improves productivity. This is particularly true of chairs for machine operators, they should be built on scientific lines to prevent fatigue which is the direct result of badly designed chairs. Standards should be set for chairs for each type of work. A very wide range of chairs is available.

Three major factors, *viz.*, adjustable height, adjustable backrest and the shape of the seat



have to be taken into account while selecting a chair. A revolving chair may be more comfortable and far less fatiguing in most cases, for many clerical operations require some twisting of the body, a movement that is accomplished with much less fatigue if the chair can revolve,

*special purpose chairs* for typists and machine operators and for other specific jobs may be used. In all such cases, the machine, the operations and other factors should determine the height, the shape of the seat and the kind of backrest that is provided.

Selection Decisions of Chairs —

Characteristic Criteria

1. The chair should be fit for individual user in every respect.
2. The selection should be based primarily on the function performed by the user.
3. The chair should support the back and encourage good posture.
4. Height of the chair should be according to the size of the user.
5. The back of the chair should be capable of moving backward and forward.
6. The seat and back should be upholstered.
7. The seat should slope back slightly and should have rounded edges.

There is no best chair. Each function affords the criteria for the selection of related furniture and equipment for proper seating arrangements. The various types of chairs include the following:

- Swivel and tilt chairs — with or without arms and adjustments for seat height.
- Posture chairs — with or without arms and adjustments for rear height, seat depth and back height.
- Side chairs — with or without arms, pedestal base, legged base, swivel and tilt mechanism.
- Stacking and folding chairs — single or multiple unit, interlocking feature and table arms.
- Stools — with or without back and adjustment for height.
- Lounge chairs — individual, sectional and modular.
- Benches — individual, sectional and modular.
- Special seating — auditorium, reception and executive.

### **Fittings and Accessories**

Office fittings include those items which are supplied for general use in the office — hat and coat stands or racks, desk lamps, wastepaper baskets, telephone stands, etc. While choosing such items, the use to which they are to be put, should first be considered. Careful

thought should be given to colour so that these items do not destroy the pleasing atmosphere of the office. Each clerk should be provided with certain accessories and fixtures for the efficient performance of his work. These include letter trays, pencil holders, memo dispensers, waste baskets, table lamps, sorting trays, fileholders, filing cabinets, boxes, index cabinets, etc.

### **Wooden and Steel Furniture**

Wood, aluminium, steel and fibre glass are the major structural materials used in the making of office furniture. When prestige is a major consideration, wood has a definite

advantage over other structural materials because of its long tradition as a quality material.

Wooden furniture offers the following advantages over steel furniture.

- (a) It can be shaped and designed in a variety of ways;
- (b) It gives a feeling of warmth both to the eye and to the touch;
- (c) With its properly polished surfaces, it is more cozy and creates a feeling of greater comfort; and
- (d) It can be repolished without much cost.

However, Steel furniture has become very popular for office use. It has the following obvious advantages over wooden furniture:

- (i) It is safe against fire;
- (ii) It is durable and not easily soiled or damaged;
- (iii) A large variety of steel furniture is light in weight and can easily be moved in case of need;
- (iii) It does not shrink or swell or warp or crack;
- (iv) Steel drawers are safe against insects, mice and rats;
- (v) Steel furniture can be made to harmonise with any surroundings.

Cost-wise there is not much difference between wooden and steel furniture. The choice depends on factors like individual tastes and needs and comparative weight. But because of its fire resisting properties, steel furniture has become standard equipment for use in large offices, banks, insurance companies and similar other organisations.

### **Modular or System Furniture**

In Western countries, modular furniture has become very popular. Modular or system furniture provides greater desk area and takes up the minimum floor space. Inter-locking desk furniture, for example, offers as much as 25 per cent more desk area, and effects a saving of up to 33 per cent in floor space.

The greatest advantage of modular furniture is that it costs less per square foot of working area. But while it undoubtedly saves floor space, it suffers from one great limitation, *viz.*, that it encourages talking among clerks or workers. But this difficulty can be overcome by erecting screens between individual desk units.

## OFFICE MACHINES AND EQUIPMENTS

### Introduction:

In recent years, various types of office machines and equipments have been introduced for running modern offices. The mechanical devices which are used in an office not only improve the efficiency of the office but also save much time. However, the purchasing of machines should be considered carefully.

“Every office executive realizes that the weight of his job is lessened by having adequate equipment in his office” - **John S. Wiltse**

### OBJECTS OF MECHANISATION:

**1. Labour Saving:** Saving labour is the main reason for the installation of many machines, but it is not necessarily the most important one. Savings on labour refer to annual savings in their wages, or an increase in the volume of work handled by the existing office. But it is no use saving labour in this way if the number of employees continues to be the same as before, for then there would be a great deal of idle time which amounts to a waste of resources.

**2. Time Saving:** Saving in time is another objective of mechanisation. Machines should be used whenever it is important to save time, e.g., when operations have to be completed in a specified period of time (such as the preparation of wage sheets or of dividend warrants). Time saved in office routine may be beneficially utilised in some other operations of the enterprise.

**3. Accuracy:** Although accuracy is always desirable, the consequences of error in terms of cost vary considerably in different situations. Office machines may be of special value in promoting accuracy, particularly in the operations of the accounting and sales departments. These machines also exercise a check on manual work, apart from locating errors and frauds.

**4. Minimization of Frauds:** Certain machines, if installed, do not save time or labour; their value lies in the fact that they reduce the chances of fraud, embezzlements, etc., by the employees. Examples of such machines are cheque writing machines, franking machines, etc.

**5. Effects on Personnel:** Many machine operations relieve manual drudgery, and reduce the monotony of work and fatigue. To that extent machines improve the morale of the

employees.

### **FACTORS IN SELECTING OFFICE MACHINES:**

**1.Ease of Operation:** Faster operation, less fatigue, and fewer errors go with the ease of operation. Here are some contributory factors; indexing the amounts, operating the motor bar or handle, operating the control keys, visibility of the printed result, recording of the answer. Simplicity of operations is an important factor in training operators efficiently and inexpensively.

**2.Flexibility:** Unless there is enough work to keep a highly specialised machine busy, it is better to select one which can be used for different types of work. In the absence of this flexibility, the purchase of the machine would not be justified at all.

**3.Durability:** A machine is used by different people under varying conditions. Unless, therefore, it is strong and durable, it would be a poor investment.

**4.Portability:** A machine is frequently moved from user-to-user or from one place to another, in the same work area. Compactness and ease of handling saves time and energy and increase the use of the machine. Modern machines have been reduced in size and weight without the sacrifice of quality.

**5.Adaptability:** If a machine can be used without disrupting an existing system, it would be better to do so than to go in for one which necessitates a considerable rearrangement of the forms and records involved, of extensive recopying of information, and of adjustments in procedures.

**6.Service:** Reliable and continuous performance demands quick repairs and proper maintenance. The machine which can be serviced promptly had advantage over one which cannot be so serviced.

**7.Operating Cost:** This includes such things as supplies, the space occupied, the special equipment and forms required, repairs, etc.

**8.Reputation of the Supplier:** Few people have the expertise to judge the mechanical qualities of a machine, one has therefore, to depend upon the integrity of the manufacturer and the dealer to furnish a good machine and to back-up claims and guarantees.

**9.Styling:** Modern offices require machines which are pleasing in design and colour. Other design functions, such as are satisfactory from the point of view of touch and sound, should also be considered. These include a convenient keyboard, simple motor bars, proper control

keys, uniform action of all the keys and levers; quiet operation, and neat, legible printing.

**10. Cost:** Cost, not necessarily the purchase price, is a major factor in buying a machine.

Frequently, a machine whose purchase price is higher than that of another is a better buy in the long run. If two machines are comparable in terms of savings in labour and time, maintenance costs, supplies and durability, the net purchase price should then be the deciding factor. The net price includes the trading allowance for present equipment and the expected residual values after depreciation.

### **ADVANTAGES OF MECHANISATION:**

- 1) To improve the quality of work done in the office.
- 2) The work will be neat, accurate and also systematic.
- 3) Office machines are labour saving devices.
- 4) The speed of work is increased considerable with the help of machines.
- 5) Machines help the managers to exercise greater control over their subordinates.
- 6) Better co-ordination of office work is possible.
- 7) Chances of errors are almost eliminated.
- 8) It helps the management to taking better decisions.
- 9) Machines can be used for different purposes and also performs a number of operations at a same time.
- 10) It helps in reducing the cost of performing office operations.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF MECHANISATION:**

Mechanisation suffers from a number of drawbacks are as follows:

1. Most of the modern office machines are costly. (a small firm cannot be apply)
2. Apart from the huge initial cost, operating costs are also very high.
3. Office workers have to be trained to operate the machines. Training may take a long time and it will be costly.
4. Employees may oppose the introduction of machines.
5. Human begins may become salves to the machines.
6. Machines may create noise and space problems in the office.
7. Compared to employees, machines are less mobile between sections and departments.
8. The machines may prove uneconomical.
9. Some machines may require trained operators in case the operators are absent, there will be accumulation of work.

## CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF OFFICE MACHINES: (OR) PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTION OF OFFICE MACHINES:

While selecting the office machines and equipments, the factors to be considered are as follows:

1. **Cost:** The cost of the machines should be considered and also the saving made possible by the machine.
2. **Quality:** Machines and equipments must be of good quality for good quality of work.
3. **Office Requirement:** An office machines should be purchased only if there is a genuine need for it.
4. **Operating Cost:** A machine with lower operating costs should be preferred.
5. **Maximum Benefits:** It is necessary that the machine to be purchased should be give maximum benefits to the organisation.
6. **Availability of Spares:** Spare parts availability of machines should be bought, in case of their non availability spares, the machines cannot be operated.
7. **Durability:** While selecting a machine, its durability must also be considered. The machines should be a long life with free from breakdown.
8. **Flexibility of Use:** A machines which can be used for the various types of process and operations in the office.
9. **Portability:** It can be moved from one place to another easily. It requires less space and also easy handling.
10. **Effect on Personnel Requirements:** Some machines may render some office employees surplus. This may be resisted by the employees.
11. **Arrangement for Training the Personnel:** Some machines require the services of skilled personnel to operate them.
12. **Fullest Use:** The amount of use of the machine in relation to its cost must be looked into before purchasing it.
13. **Adequacy:** The machines must be bought in adequate numbers taking into account the quantum of work in the office.
14. **Standardization:** Equipment and machines of the standard type should be purchased.

## TYPES OF OFFICE MACHINES

### 1. **Typewriters:**

The typewriter is one of the earliest machines to be introduced in the office. It is used for neat and legible writing and also for obtaining a limited number of copies by using carbon sheets. Types of Typewriters as follows;

- (i) Standard typewriter, (ii) Noiseless typewriters, (iii) Portable typewriters, (iv) Electric typewriters, (v) Vari-typewriters, (vi) Automatic typewriters, (vii) Electronic typewriters.
- ### 2. **Dictating Machine:**

This machine is used to record the dictation on a special record which is then send to the typist, who gets the dictation repeated to him by fixing the record on the reproduction machine. While dictating, the dictator can alter any part of his dictation if necessary.

**3. Addressing Machine:**

These machines are used in offices which have to dispatch a large number of bills, circulars, or wrappers to thousands of addresses. When communication have to be sent regularly or frequently to the same persons. These machine can also be sued for preparing dividend warrants, payroll sheets etc.

**4. Duplicating Machine:**

In modern business offices, various types of duplicating machines are used for the purpose of duplicating documents, letters, circulars, forms etc. generally, these machines are used for a large number of copies are required.

**5. Accounting Machine:**

Accounting machines include adding and calculating machines, the comptometers, billing machines, book keeping machine, punch-card tabulating machines and electronic computers.

**6. Adding and Calculating Machine:**

In modern business offices, much time is saved by using adding and calculating machines. These machines used for calculations involving money, weights, measures etc. The calculations are concerning percentages, discounts, interests etc.

**7. Billing Machine:**

Billing machine is meant for the purpose of doing two functions ie., typewriting and calculating. A maximum of 16 copies can be made on this machine at one time.

**8. Book-Keeping Machine:**

In this machine used to prepare purchase journal, sales journal, cash journal and all ledger accounts etc.

**9. Punch card Tabulating Machine:**

These machines work on the basis of numerals. Cards are punched with the numerical and alphabetical and other details. The machine in the punch card system performs four functions (i) punching (ii) verifying (iii) sorting (iv) tabulating.

**10. Electronic Computers:**

Computers are gaining popularity in large business undertaking as a managerial information device. The computer collects data from several sources and stores such data for future purpose.

**11. Photo Copying Machines:**

Modern photo copying machines help in getting exact photographic copies of original documents. It is popularly known as ‘Xerox Machine’.

**12. Stamp Affixing Machine:**

These machines are used for affixing stamps and this result in the saving of time. It is used to make a large correspondence.

**13. Coin Handling Machines:**

It performs the functions of coin separation, coin counting and coin packing etc. these machines, not only time is saved but also accuracy is guaranteed.

**14. Facsimile:**

It is otherwise called “FAX” in day to day operations have become an essential office device in business operations.

**15. Copy Printer:**

It has reduced the demand for electronic typewriters. In photocopying there are three types of devices (i) duplicator, (ii) photocopier (Xerox) (iii) copy printer.

**16. Binding Machine:**

All documents are neatly bound and presented. Binding machine has become a common office device. Two types of binding are in practice ie. (i) spiral binding and (ii) comb binding / board binding.

**17. The Comptometer:**

It is used for doing additions as well as calculations of any speedily and accurately.

**18. Other Office Machines:**

Apart from the above machines, there are so many other devices are available;

- Time recording machine.
- Gumming machine.
- Sealing machine.
- Folding machine.
- Stapling machine.
- Numbering machine.
- Punching machine.
- Letter opener machine.

## **ROLE OF COMPUTERS IN MODERN OFFICE**

### **OFFICE COMPUTERS**

Electronic computers are the latest addition to the long list of office machines. A



computer is a replica of the human brain and performs all types of clerical operations very quickly and accurately. It is used for solve business problems through the application of a variety of mathematical and logical or decision making techniques. A big computer is capable of carrying out concurrently several completely dissociated jobs or systems in accordance with predetermined priorities. In doing so, it can decide what, where and when previously prepared data are required and, if necessary, issue instructions to an operator accordingly. The basic types of computers are the analog, the digital and the digital-analog. Digital computers are commercially very popular.

They deal with figures, and their output is also in figures or numbers. Analog computers are used for research and scientific computation.

### **ROLE OF COMPUTERS IN OFFICE:**

The computers are used in used in the following ways in the modern offices.

#### **1.Business Applications:**

The first non-scientific use of computers concerned routine clerical work. Computer applications to business and commerce date from the middle of the 1950's. Today, almost large and medium scale companies are totally dependent on their computers for administrative functions. Commercial data processing accounts for 80% of all computer usage.

#### **2.Word Processor:**

At a general office level word processing systems are already changing office practice and organisation. Word processors are particularly useful for preparing reports. They provide the capability to insert or delete words, lines or paragraphs and to print out drafts and final copies at speed.

#### **3.Systems:**

It may include special purpose packages for specific applications such as merging address lists, producing a range of documents for insurance quotations and purchase orders etc.

#### **4.Payroll and Personnel Records:**

Pay-roll accounting was the first commercial area to be widely computerized. The calculation factors relate to the personal details of each employee such as gross pay, tax code and insurance deductions etc.

### **5. Stock Control and Shares:**

The processing of sales order and sales accounting, sales analysis, market research, forecasting and subsequent production planning are additional areas which the computer assist in business and commercial organisations. In all these cases the company can benefit from the immediate availability of information which the computer provides.

### **6. Banking:**

Now a day, online accounting facility and enabling them to interrogate the central system for information on such things as current balances, deposits, overdrafts, interest charges and all banking transactions are done with the help of computers.

### **Recent development:**

Today, office computers are linked to communication networks. This has given rise to powerful value added communication services. This has improved the working conditions in the modern office. The world has become close. The linking of computer to the communication networks brought out services like “Electronic mail (E.MAIL), Voice mail, Radio Paging, Video conference services etc. All these and many other services have in added the Indian offices becoming inevitable infrastructural facilities in modern offices.

**UNIT – V COMPLETED**