

Introduction

Management can be defined as all the activities and tasks undertaken by one or more persons for the purpose of planning and controlling the activities of others in order to achieve an objective or complete an activity that could not be achieved by the others acting independently to meet the goals of the managed unit.

Management theory provides a simple conceptual framework for organizing knowledge and for providing a blueprint for action to help guide organizations toward their objectives. Contributions from past industrialists have molded the organizational system and culture, and managers can benefit from awareness of these contributions.

As such, theory of management can be seen as the starting point from where the managerial aspect of organizations are systematically being analyzed and improved for practical application in the day to day running of organizations

Traditional way to view the aim of all managers is that they must be productive. **Effectiveness** is the achievement of their objectives. Contemporary the managers are expected to be efficient. **Efficiency** is the achievement of the last instant. That means that managed enterprise is productive, is effectively managed and is staying competitive thou meeting the necessary conditions of corporate ethics.

Achieving a competitive advantage position and enhancing firm performance relative to their competitors are the main objectives that business organizations in particular should strive to attain. Competitive advantage is a concept that remains as a major research area as theory of management is concerned. Moreover, as far as global and local businesses are concerned, in order to compete and sustain successfully, locally and globally, businesses must not only excel in their area but also persevere in the long run. Achieving such a “sustainable competitive advantage” status is not an easy task. Appropriate strategy is necessary as well as long list of contributing factors. Such factors include operational efficiencies, mergers, acquisitions, levels of diversification, types of diversification, organizational structures, top management team composition and style, human resource management, conformity to various interpretations of socially responsible behaviors, international or cross-cultural activities of expansion and adaptation, and various other organizational and/or industry level phenomena. Some of the above listed factors are being analyzed in detail in the subsequent chapters of presented book. They may indicate some contemporary directions towards efficiency. Within the management theories we also identify systemic perspective which adopts the view that an organization is a system, or an entity of interrelated parts this methodology closes the presented book.

It is easily observed that after more that twenty years of social and economic transformation in Poland the important rise in managerial skills within Polish companies has been observed. Capital direct investment, as well as acquisitions, the access to European Union and open economy had made that process even more dynamic. Majority of foreign investment which came to Poland originate from either North America or Western Europe that means from the leading highly developed market economies have become important new sources of international managerial experience up to recent years.

But we still face an unique record of achievements and tasks yet to be accomplished in the area of management, and though the directions may have changed, the debate over how to improve management to bring the efficiency effect for the company is lively as ever. This book is an attempt to present an impact to the process.

The book is divided into four main parts covering four subjects:

Part I deals with improving inter - corporate management and specially discussing some aspects of the influence of the quality of human capital in management. It also contains the synthetic information the concept of “lean management” in enterprise, presenting premises of the appearance and reinforcement of lean management conception, as well as its rules, tools and its development areas and application aims.

Part II attempts to answer the question how to solve two main problems of innovating activities: that means the legal and institutional problems concerning the transfer of knowledge (property rights) and how to introduce innovation and presents the way of solving one of the eternal problem: how to finance the innovation activities?

Part III discusses corporate culture and social responsibility. The most interesting is that foreign authors present the problem of their own country's picture of that subject. Chinese and Ukrainian experience is new and unknown widely to the European Union member countries managers and researches although there is a lot of business exchange.

Part IV presents possibilities of using the basic postulates of systemic holistic approach in governance of current problems of human civilization.

The book contains a wealth of information not available elsewhere. For this reason, it should prove useful to researchers and academics, as well as to those directly involved in the practical side of management.