

if possible, all have a chance to contribute. From the start, it should become their system. When you have identified your needs and if it is worth automating, you can then determine your software requirements. Choosing the correct software package for a personal computer for example requires a knowledge of Departmental standards, local needs, the size of the data base, the size of the program sorts, and the software available. It is a complicated subject and you should obtain advice from MFS - Office Automation. Purchase of equipment is the final decision, not the first. In doing your needs analysis it is important to keep standardization in mind. Does headquarters have special standards on this subject? Do central agencies have special formats or dictionaries that must be adhered to? Is special permission required before equipment can be purchased? This thoroughness in doing a needs analysis is just as essential if you are changing an existing system or building a new one. If for example you are putting in a new computer in a post, it is as important to do a proper needs analysis for all systems going on the machine as for the main system. When considering putting secondary systems on a computer at posts, it is essential to have a valid means of comparing the relative worth of different proposals. Often there are more ideas than capacity to carry them out. There are two critical factors in deciding which proposals to implement. The first is the suitability of the proposal for automation. The systems analysts can decide if a proposal is suitable. The second criteria is its priority to the post and post management should decide that. The best way of being able to make the appropriate decisions is to ensure that the people drafting the proposals have some understanding of needs analysis and present their proposals in a suitable format.

Once there is agreement on the needs analysis, you must be prepared to test the product and run a manual back up system until all the bugs are out.

4. Organizational Factor

There are two organizational factors that can enhance the success of a system. The first is organizational support in the form of resource commitment. The second factor is organizational design. When you install a computer of any kind or size you impact upon what employees' jobs are, how they do their jobs, and very often how they communicate with one another. It is not only the people who sit at the computer terminals, but also the people around them who