

- (b) Are they employed effectively?
- (c) Are the known objectives achieved?

Characteristics of Management in the Past

On the basis of experience it can be said that in the past, management processes have often been deficient in several respects. The objectives of government departments have been poorly defined; as a result policies have been inadequate and defective, often subjectively determined.

The process of planning has reflected the insufficiencies of definition of objectives and policies. The result of this chain of inadequacy has been unreliable manpower budgets and cost estimates, and uncertain and inadequate administration together with non-existent means of measuring performance. Communication has been poor within the government system. If a central agency or a department lacks clear-cut objectives, they are unable to communicate their objectives effectively to others. The tendency in these circumstances has been to hold authority at the centre. There has been a highly centralized management and administrative structure. Central management has been preoccupied with details and too largely responsible for detailed decision-making, much of which under proper arrangements could be better delegated to local centres of responsibility closer to the actual operation. This system has been marked by use of instinct in guiding decisions; subjective assessment of values and needs; and a lack of confidence in the ability of managers of successive lower levels to make the right decision.

A main objective of the government organization has been the avoidance of sin and wrong-doing. The control agencies — Treasury Board, Comptroller of the Treasury and Civil Service Commission — have concentrated on preventive measures. The endeavour has been to ensure that wrong things don't happen instead of ensuring that the right things do happen. There has been a network of protection to ensure that no single mistake would get through.

That the system had been too highly centralized is borne out by the fact that by 1962 the Treasury Board had come to deal with 16,000 submissions a year, and the Comptroller of the Treasury had to give approval to some 5,000,000 cheques a month for which, in accordance with the law, his staff had to verify that expenditure was in order.

Likewise, in the personnel field, the Civil Service Commission has served as a staffing agency and has concerned itself with thousands of promotions, transfers, recruitment, selection and indeed countless detailed personnel functions. Many of these functions could equally well have been performed by departments.