

THE IDENTIFICATION AND PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF DIMENSIONS OF MANAGERIAL SUCCESS FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT

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OPSOMMING

Dimensies of faktore wat met bestuursukses verband hou is uit die literatuur geïdentifiseer en 'n lys van 78 generiese dimensies is saamgestel. Hierdie dimensies se relatiewe belangrikheid vir elke bestuursvlak is deur 241 bestuurders op junior, middel en senior vlak beoordeel. 'n Hoofkomponent faktorontleding met varimax rotasie is op die data uitgevoer en nege faktore of groepe dimensies is onttrek. Die resulterende faktortellings is daarna aan 'n meervoudige analise van variansie onderwerp. Resultate dui daarop dat die belangrikheid van hierdie faktore beduidend verskil oor die verskillende bestuursvlakke. Die implikasies van die bevindinge word in beide teoretiese en praktiese terme bespreek.

ABSTRACT

Dimensions or factors related to managerial success were identified from the literature and a list of 78 generic dimensions compiled. These dimensions were rated in terms of their relative importance for every level of management by 241 managers on junior, middle and senior levels. A principal components factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the data and nine factors or clusters of dimensions were extracted. The resulting factor scores were then subjected to a multiple analysis of variance. Results indicate that the importance of these factors differ significantly across the three levels of management. The implications of the findings are discussed in both theoretical and practical terms.

Studies of leadership provide convincing empirical evidence that the leader or manager represents a major factor in an organization's success (Fiedler & House, 1988). Along the same line Bower (1977), Campbell (1977), and Kotter (1990), argue that managerial success is one of the major factors relating to criteria of organizational effectiveness. In the light of these findings it is therefore imperative that management development programmes focus on those aspects which affect present and future managerial success.

Yukl's (1989) integrating conceptual framework of leadership effectiveness demonstrates that the characteristics and behaviours of leaders or managers are two of the major sets of variables, apart from situational variables, that can influence inter alia subordinate motivation – an intervening variable – and ultimately determine the effectiveness of a leader/manager. Over the years several researchers tried to identify the characteristics and behaviours that are related to managerial success and in this process a wide variety of characteristics and behaviours were identified and called different names by different authors. For example, Katz (1974) and others refer to these variables as skills, while Mintzberg (1975) and Kotter (1982) use the term managerial roles. Camp, Blanchard and Huszczo (1986) prefer to name these variables knowledge and skills. Hofmeyer (1990), in turn, refer to them as abilities, knowledge and attitudes. On the other hand, authors like Schroder (1989), Boyatzis (1982), and Prideaux and Ford (1988) refer to them as competencies, while Magerison (1988) uses a combination of skills, abilities and drives to describe these variables.

Sims and Sauser (1985, p. 52) also refer to these factors as competency areas and define a competency as "... a characteristic of an individual that leads to behaviours that meet the job

demands within the parameters of the organizational environment and that, in turn, bring about desired results. A competency can consist of a motive, trait, skill, aspect of self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge that leads to effective performance." Boyatzis (1982) and Dulewicz (1989) define competencies along the same lines. Targeted Management (1984, p. 5), on the other hand, calls them managerial dimensions and defines dimensions as "clusters of similar skills, abilities and/or knowledges (behaviors) . . . These behaviors are specific, observable and verifiable; they can be reliably and logically classified together." In order to avoid any confusion with regard to the different terms used to describe these variables, the term *dimension* is preferred by the authors as it conforms to assessment centre terminology.

When comparing the work of authors like Katz (1974), Schroder (1989), Boyatzis (1982), Cunnington (1985) and Development Dimensions International (DDI) (Targeted Management, 1984) in terms of the dimensions as well as in terms of definitions listed by them, it becomes evident that there is a noticeable similarity between them and that, consequently, a generic list of skills or dimensions of managerial success could be compiled. Table 1 shows a comparison of such a list using the classification of Katz (1974) as a basis.

Several researchers (cf. Katz, 1974; Bower, 1977; Boyatzis, 1982; Cunnington, 1985; Bergwerk, 1988; Coetsee, 1993) have shown that the importance of these dimensions of managerial success differ in terms of their effect on or contribution to managerial success across different levels of management. The most popular theory in this regard is that of Katz (1974) which asserts that to be successful managers need technical, human, and conceptual skills, and that the degree to which they need them depends on their level of management. According to Katz, technical skills are most needed at the lower levels, conceptual skills are most needed at the executive level, and human skills are needed to about the same degree at all levels.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON BETWEEN MANAGERIAL SKILLS, COMPETENCIES AND DIMENSIONS OF MANAGERIAL SUCCESS

Katz (1974)	Schroder (1989)	Boyatzis (1982) and Cunnington (1985)	DDI (Targeted Management, 1984)
Conceptual Skills	Information search Concept formulation Conceptual flexibility Pro-active orientation	Deductive use of concepts Conceptualization Logical thinking Pro-activeness	Analytical ability Initiative
Interpersonal/ Human Skills	Interpersonal search Management of interaction Developmental orientation Impact Self-confidence Presentation ability Achievement orientation	Stamina and adaptiveness Self-control Perceptual objectivity Self-evaluation Management of group processes Concern for sound relations Development of others Positive esteem Concern for impact Use of socialized power Self-confidence Spontaneity Verbal presentations Effectiveness orientation	Individual leadership Group leadership Judgement (including firmness) Planning and organizing Management of job (including time and self) Impact Control Delegation Development of sub-ordinates Management motivation Energy Written communication Oral communication (including listening and sensitivity) Verbal presentation Stress tolerance
Technical skills	Specialist/Technical knowledge	Specialist knowledge	Technical knowledge and skills

Consequently one can conclude that developmental needs of managers at different levels of management will also differ.

A further factor that must be taken into account when dealing with differential needs is the fact that the uniqueness of the organization in question also determines which dimensions of managerial success should be concentrated on when management development programmes are developed for that particular organization.

In recent years several researchers emphasized the need to link training and development programmes to organizational strategy. More specifically, training and development programmes should support the strategic direction of the organization, and training and development objectives should be aligned with organizational goals (Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). In a recent study Blakely, Martinec and Lane (1994) for example found that organizations with growth strategies placed greater emphasis on human relations and leadership, self-awareness, problem solving and decision-making, and general management in their management development programmes, while managers in organizations with a stability strategy needed more bureaucratic skills.

The question addressed by this investigation is which dimensions of managerial success are considered being important for managers at junior, middle and senior levels for the next 10 to 15 years and how do these dimensions differ across the different levels of management?

METHOD

Objectives

The aims of the study were:

1. To identify the specific dimensions of managerial success that are considered important by managers for every level of management.
2. To determine the perceived relative importance of each of these dimensions of managerial success for the different levels of management.

3. To determine whether there are any significant differences in perceived importance between levels of management regarding dimensions of managerial success.

Questionnaire and sample

A preliminary questionnaire of dimensions of managerial success based on previous research (cf. Katz, 1974; Mintzberg, 1975 and 1980; Boyatzis, 1982; Sims and Sauser, 1985; Pate and Nielson, 1987; Dulewicz, 1989; Schroder, 1989; Handscombe and Norman, 1989; Mann and Staudenmier, 1991; Maclagan, 1992) as well as job analyses, was compiled. This questionnaire was then evaluated by a panel of behavioural scientists in order to determine the relevance and face validity of every dimension. Based on this evaluation, conceptual overlaps between dimensions were eliminated as far as possible by combining those dimensions that were considered conceptually related and eliminating those that were considered irrelevant.

The final questionnaire, resulting from the process described above, comprising 78 dimensions of managerial success were distributed to a stratified randomly selected group of managers at three different levels representing all business sectors, all functional areas, and all four provinces. The sample comprised 43 senior managers (Paterson D5 and higher), 108 middle managers (Paterson C5 to D4) and 233 junior managers (Paterson C1 to C4) permanently employed in a large South African media company with 6 000 employees. The relative importance of each of the success dimensions over the next 10 to 15 years for the three different levels of management was rated by managers on every level (senior management also did ratings for the two lower levels), using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = not important at all, and 5 = of utmost importance). To aid the managers in rating the relative importance of the 78 dimensions each questionnaire contained a supplement of definitions for every dimension.

Questionnaires were sent out to the sample of managers who each had at least 12 months tenure within his/her current post with the request to return the completed questionnaires within three weeks. Thirty one (28 males and three females) senior

managers, 86 (70 males and 16 females) middle managers and 124 (69 males and 55 females) junior managers returned completed questionnaires. This means that a total of 241 (62,8%) questionnaires were returned.

ANALYSES AND RESULTS

As a first round of analysis the mean ratings of the 20 most important dimensions for each of the three levels of management were compared. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 2.

When the 20 most important dimensions (based on mean ratings) as set out in Table 2 are compared, the results show that six are common to all three levels of management. These are team building, decision-making, integrity, conflict resolution, the management of change, and firmness. Negotiation skills, delegation and pro-activeness are dimensions which are com-

mon to both senior and middle management, while perseverance, client orientation, achievement motivation, self-development, planning and organizing, listening skills and self-management are common to both junior and middle management.

In an attempt to reduce the 78 dimensions to a smaller number of manageable dimensions (factors), the evaluations of the total sample were subjected to a principal components analysis with varimax rotation using the SPSS-X statistical package (SPSS, 1990). Nine factors, explaining 53,8% of the variance, were extracted and labelled: financial and business management (Factor 1), management of people (Factor 2), self-management (Factor 3), environmental management (Factor 4), communication (Factor 5), information management (Factor 6), managerial sensitivity (Factor 7), operations management (Factor 8) and managerial temperament (Factor 9). The rotated factor loadings are depicted in Table 3.

TABLE 2
TWENTY MOST IMPORTANT DIMENSIONS AND MEAN RATINGS PER MANAGEMENT LEVEL

Senior Management	Mean rating	Middle Management	Mean rating	Junior Management	Mean rating
Team building	4,87	Perserverance	4,59	Perseverance	4,59
Decision-making	4,81	Client orientation	4,55	Client orientation	4,55
Strategic planning	4,81	Integrity	4,52	Co-operation	4,55
Delegation	4,77	Decision-making	4,50	Verbal communication	4,51
Business attitude	4,77	Achievement motivation	4,47	Firmness	4,50
Negotiation	4,77	Team Building	4,45	Achievement motivation	4,46
Integrity	4,74	Self-development	4,44	Dicision-making	4,46
Basic business sense	4,74	Planning and organizing	4,44	Self-development	4,45
Knowledge of industry	4,74	Motivation of subordinates	4,43	Self-management	4,44
Pro-activeness	4,71	Listening	4,43	Quality focus	4,43
Judgement	4,71	Facilitating	4,42	Listening	4,42
Analytical ability	4,71	Conflict resolution	4,41	Feedback	4,42
Stress tolerance	4,68	Managerial knowledge	4,40	Change management	4,41
Budget management	4,68	Change management	4,40	Self-confidence	4,40
Conflict resolution	4,68	Negotiation	4,40	Planning and organizing	4,39
Change management	4,65	Delegation	4,40	Integrity	4,38
Group leadership	4,65	Pro-activeness	4,38	Conflict resolution	4,38
Persuasive ability	4,65	Firmness	4,38	Team building	4,36
Firmness	4,61	Adaptiveness	4,37	Temperament	4,35
Temperament	4,61	Self-management	4,37	Reactiveness	4,35

TABLE 3
VARIMAX ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS OF DIMENSIONS OF MANAGERIAL SUCCESS*

Dimensions	Fac. 1	Fac. 2	Fac. 3	Fac. 4	Fac. 5	Fac. 6	Fac. 7	Fac. 8	Fac. 9
Budget management	,755								
Basic business sense	,750								
Financial knowledge	,732								
Economic and business trends	,728								
Business attitude	,680								
Cost management	,630								
Knowledge of industry	,614					,312			
Marketing knowledge	,584			,304					
Strategic planning	,516	,366				,334			
Managerial knowledge	,454								
Motivation of sub-ordinates		,696							
Group leadership	,347	,668							
Delegation		,648							
Development of talent		,640	,316						
Team building		,602							
Individual leadership		,595							
Facilitating		,527					,308		
Control		,503							
Performance management		,444	,425						
Labor relations procedures and policy	,348	,432		,346					
Client orientation		,365					,357		
Product and service knowledge		,361				,333		,333	

Self-management										
Self-development										
Achievement motivation										
Affiliation motivation										
Management of change										
Power motivation										
Self-confidence										
Sense for news	,311									
Environmental sensitivity										
Organizational sensitivity										
Creativity										
Safety and security consciousness		,363						,327	,341	
Editorial knowledge	,390									,329
Value conformity	,365		,324							
Consistency										,360
Knowledge of legislation										
Written communication						,672				
Verbal communication						,658				,320
Co-operation						,488		,317	,321	
Networking				,361		,467				
Quality focus						,463				,322
Feedback						,446				
Impact						,425				
Organizational practises						,407				,369
Persuasive ability						,402				
Firmness						,303				
Analytical ability							,593			
Results focus	,306						,495			
Self-management		,442					,490			
Research							,469			,310
Judgement					,373		,462			,371
Planning and organizing							,458			
Synthesis of information					,406	,308	,430			
Information search						,357	,386			,353
Pro-activeness		,319					,375			
Empathy								,682		
Conflict resolution								,635		
Negotiation								,579		
Warmth					,309			,572		
Sensitivity								,503		
Reactiveness								,499		
Presentation skills								,433		
Product/technical knowledge										,602
Computer literacy										,555
Fault finding		,315								,547
General office management			,401							,495
Systems and product development		,403					,401			,424
Personnel utilization	,393				,342					,402
Temperament										,586
Adaptiveness										,566
Stress tolerance			,412							,552
Integrity						,381				,511
Decision-making		,336					,376			,469
Perseverance			,320							,438
Energy						,378				,415
Listening skills						,357	,329			,395
Eigen value	21,516	4,322	3,451	2,862	2,331	2,025	1,881	1,817	1,746	
% of variance explained	27,6	5,5	4,4	3,7	3,0	2,6	2,4	2,3	2,2	
Commulative % of variance explained	27,6	33,1	37,6	41,2	44,2	46,8	49,2	51,5	53,8	

*Only factor loadings greater than 0,30 are shown

Factor 1 (financial and business management) comprises dimensions like budget management, business attitude, cost and financial management, managerial knowledge, knowledge of the industry, knowledge of economic and business trends, ability to manage strategically, group leadership, labour relations procedures and policy, value conformity and results focus.

Factor 2 (management of people) is made up of dimensions like individual and group leadership, motivation of subordinates, development of people with potential, team building,

facilitating skills, performance management, client orientation and safety and security consciousness.

Factor 3 (self-management) covers self-development, self-confidence, self-management, development of talent, achievement motivation, affiliation motivation, power motivation, management of change and general office management.

Factor 4 (environmental management) includes dimensions like knowledge of legislation, environmental and organizational sensitivity, judgement, networking ability, creativity,

sense for news, editorial knowledge, value conformity, consistency, synthesis of information, safety and security consciousness.

Factor 5 (communication) covers both oral and written communication, co-operation, feedback, persuasion, listening skills, firmness, networking, impact, quality focus and firmness.

Factor 6 (information management) embraces things like analytical ability, focus on results, systems and product development, research, gathering and synthesizing information, judgement, planning and organizing and pro-activeness.

Factor 7 (managerial sensitivity) comprises dimensions like empathy, warmth, sensitivity, conflict resolution, negotiation skills, facilitating skills, customer orientation, reactivity and presentation skills.

Factor 8 (operations management) is made up of dimensions like knowledge of products and services, systems management, office administration, security and safety consciousness, computer literacy, quality focus, organizational practises, product/technical knowledge, fault finding and utilization of personnel.

Managerial temperament, the ninth factor, has to do with qualities like adaptiveness (flexibility), consistency, stress tolerance, integrity, decision-making, perseverance, energy, listening skills, consistency and judgement.

The nine factor scores resulting from the principal components analysis (see Table 4 and Figure 1) were then subjected to a multiple analysis of variance to determine whether any significant differences exist between the different factors across levels of management, followed by a Scheffé *post hoc* comparison test in order to determine between which levels of management there are, in fact, significant differences.

The results of the multiple analysis of variance showed significant differences [Wilks' Lambda ($F=4,874$) = 0,71646, $p < 0,001$] between mean factor scores across the three levels of management. The Scheffé *post hoc* comparisons indicated that significant differences ($p < 0,05$) between mean factor scores for only **three** factors, namely financial and business management, communication and operations management, exist across all three levels of management. These differences are depicted in Figure 1.

TABLE 4
MEAN FACTOR SCORES PER LEVEL OF MANAGEMENT

Dimension	Senior	Middle	Junior
Factor 1 : Financial and business management	0,65	0,17	-0,27
Factor 2 : Management of people	0,25	0,01	-0,07
Factor 3 : Self-management	-0,25	0,00	0,06
Factor 4 : Environmental management	0,34	-0,03	-0,05
Factor 5 : Communication	-0,35	-0,14	0,18
Factor 6 : Information management	0,12	0,07	-0,08
Factor 7 : Managerial sensitivity	0,24	-0,09	0,01
Factor 8 : Operations management	-0,72	-0,07	0,21
Factor 9 : Managerial temperament	0,40	-0,05	-0,05

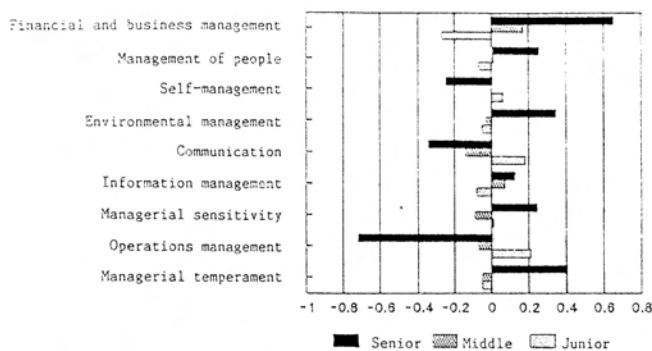


Figure 1: Mean factor scores per level of management

More specifically, it was found that financial and business management is significantly ($p < 0,05$) more important (in terms of mean factor scores) for senior (0,65) and middle (0,17) management than for junior management (-0,27) and that operations management is significantly ($p < 0,05$) less important for senior management (-0,72) than for middle management (-0,07) and junior management (0,21) and also less important for middle management than for junior management. The Scheffé test failed to show any significant differences in the case of communication.

CONCLUSIONS

Keeping in mind the relatively small range of mean ratings as well as the relative complexity of the nine factors extracted, the results indicate that although there are dimensions which are more important for certain levels of management than for others and therefore lead to a certain degree of uniqueness regarding the needs for each level, there are also a number of dimensions that are common to two or more levels. This finding is consistent with the findings of other researchers (e.g. Boyatzis, 1982; Bergwerk, 1988; Shroder, 1989) who did similar research in different organizational settings. The finding with regard to financial and business management, a dimension with a substantial conceptual component, is as expected and confirms the earlier findings of authors like Kotter (1982; 1990), Steiner (1983) and Bennis (1990). In the case of operations management, a dimension which is of a more technical nature, the results are also a confirmation of the arguments of Katz (1974) and Cunningham (1985), who are of the opinion that technical skills are relatively more important at junior and middle management levels than at senior management level. The finding in the case of communication is also in line with what was found by earlier researchers (e.g. Katz, 1974 and Cunningham, 1985). The unique needs of a particular organization, in this case a company in the media sector, regarding the differences in dimensions of managerial success at different levels of management are also demonstrated.

Furthermore, it was found that there are basically nine clusters of dimensions (factors) of managerial success which are of importance within this particular company, and that specific dimensions are more relevant for certain levels of management than for others. Systems, strategies and programs for each level

of management could consequently be developed for the purposes of recruitment, selection, management development, performance evaluation and succession planning within the particular company.

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