



Managing the Manager

One of the roles of a Committee of Management is to employ and manage the highest-level staff member of the organisation usually a Manager, CEO or Coordinator. Although different committees have different rules, under the model of Governance advocated by ACE(Vic), this person then employs and manages everybody else underneath them.

The Committee should not be involved in the day-to-day management of any staff other than the Manager. Rather, the manager is entrusted to manage day-to-day human resources operations and to regularly report on general HR policies and practices to the committee.

Management by committee is different to management within an organisation. The Manager works with a high level of autonomy and independence but is guided by three factors:

- The policies of the organisation
- KPI's determined through the Performance Appraisal Process
- The organisation's strategic, and operational plans (sometimes called business plans)

The Committee's primary responsibility is to make sure that these three areas are developed and monitored and that the manager is held accountable to them. The Manager should, in turn, prepare a report against these areas to be presented at Committee Meetings.

Committees should think of these three areas as three legs on a three-legged stool. Which one is most important? The one that's missing!

Policies

There should be two sets of policies within the organisation. The first are those, which determine the operations and practices of the committee. The second are the policies, which determine the operations and practices of the organisation. Committees should develop Committee policies independently with minimal input from paid staff. At a minimum these should include:

- Rules of the organisation (usually based on the model rules of the Associations Incorporation Act)
- Grievance Procedure
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Employment of Manager / CEO / Coordinator Policy

If you don't have all of the above policies, start developing them NOW! They are your guidebook and safety net and need to be in place should any crises emerge on the committee. Example policies can be found at www.ourcommunity.com

The second group of policies will vary enormously according to the particular operations of the organisation. The Manager would have a major role in the development of these

policies. However, these should all be read and ratified off by the Committee of Management.

The Committee of Management needs to think carefully when they are presented with a policy, about all the various situations that would be covered by the policy. It needs to be rigorous enough to give the Manager guidance in a range of situations but broad enough to allow the Manager to manage.

KPI's

ACEVic has developed a guide to Performance Appraisals available by emailing office@acevic.org.au The Performance Appraisal process is usually conducted by the Chair or nominee on behalf of the Committee of Management. Throughout the year, the Manager should report their progress against the KPI's to the Committee of Management.

Strategic and Operational Plans

Without a Strategic Plan your organisation is “flying blind”. Without a Strategic Plan, your committee might find itself returning again and again to basic questions such as “what is our core business?”, “what are we aiming for”, “should we be growing or maintaining our size?”, “should we diversify our business?” The Strategic Plan is the way that the committee articulates its vision for the future of the organisation so that everyone including its customers, partners, and key stakeholders understands where it is going. Most importantly, the Strategic Plan is the way that the Manager knows where he or she is taking the organisation. The Committee should develop the Strategic Plan themselves with the Manager as a participant, but not a leader.

The Operational (or Business) Plan is an extension of the Strategic Plan. This is the how, what, where and how much of the next operating period (usually a year). It is the steps for that period that will allow you to meet the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan. The Manager should be heavily involved in the development of the Operational Plan. The Committee of Management need to ensure that it is aligned with the Strategic Plan. The Manager should report against the goals of the plan at each Committee of Management meeting.

The Operational Plan should include financial goals. The Manager should supply the Treasurer of the Committee with financial statements, which indicate how the organisation is performing against the financial goals. The Treasurer should ensure that these are presented to the Committee in a format that they can understand. In larger organisations, the manager may delegate this role to another staff member, such as finance officer or administrator.

Being Strategic

Committees of Management are made up of volunteers who lead other busy lives. Although the above processes may seem time consuming they are actually far less time consuming in the long term as they allow the Manager to manage, allow the Committee to influence at the strategic level, increase clarity and reduce conflict.

For more information about planning, governance or industrial relations, contact the ACE(Vic) office.