

The Plan ... Organise ... Lead ... Control (POLC) Model

The following business model offers opportunities for review and discussion about key aspects of management philosophy and practical application.

A familiar definition of Management is *'the process of reaching organisational goals by working with and through people and other organisational resources'*. (Management Innovations (2008). However, Gareth R. Jones, in his book *Organizational Theory* (1995), defined management, in terms of its functions and objectives, as *'the planning, organising, leading and controlling of resources to achieve goals effectively and efficiently'*.

Organisations are efficient when they manage resources to maximise their performance in the process of producing goods or services. Organisations are effective when they achieve qualitative goals or outcomes that are customer-centric, such as satisfaction.

In other words, it is not a question of how much but rather how well the organisation achieves its goals. Peter Drucker summed it up as *'Efficiency is doing things right; effectiveness is doing the right thing'*. David Johnson (1974) in a paper, *'Management: The Four Functions'* reviewed Jones' work (which I have further summarised) and stated: *'Management is a ubiquitous term that is applied to a range of human endeavour. This sometimes makes it difficult to discuss the topic given the number of potential meanings and definitions applied to the concept'*.



(Diagram and additional concepts: Mike Cameron 2010)

A decade ago, while teaching students undertaking a Diploma of Management program, where management and leadership competencies and their different skillsets were often debated, especially as we reviewed and discussed Jones' academic diagrams and explanations, it became evident that I needed to better show the practical application of this important management concept.

After giving the challenge serious review, I created a revised model which now includes four behavioural competencies: **Conceptual/Strategic** (that relate to *Thinking* and *Evaluating*), **Tactical/Operational** (that relate to *Adapting* and *Doing*) and 'Management' being divided into two key accountabilities - **Leadership** and **Supervision**.

In the model's left-hand column, **planning** and **leading** (as defined within Jones' book) require keen **conceptual** and **strategic** thinking skills/competencies, whereas, **organising** and **controlling** rely heavily upon **tactical** and **operational** thinking skills/competencies.

I contend that, regardless of a person's management position, each of the four focus points and their associated behavioural competencies will be required, at some level and at some time during their decision-making role in the business. Therefore, as a coaching/facilitating tool, this versatile model has quickly and clearly illustrated its value when coaching, from a team leader/supervisor through to a C-suite executive.

One final comment, I will explain the reason why I have added the term **Monitor** to the term **Control** used by Jones. Obviously, controlling a diverse range of activities, not just people, is a key management accountability, however, in my experience, effective leaders tend to **monitor** their people's performance, whereas less empathetic managers tend to *micro-manage* or **control** their areas of influence.

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

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