SETTING OBJECTIVES

Setting objectives is the process of identifying specific goals that an organization wants to achieve within a particular period. Objectives provide clear direction to managers and employees and help them plan their activities effectively.

Objectives are the foundation of management because planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling are performed to achieve organizational objectives.

Importance of Setting Objectives

1. Provides Direction

Objectives provide clear direction to managers and employees. They help employees understand what they need to achieve and guide their efforts towards organizational goals.

2. Improves Planning

Objectives help managers prepare suitable plans and strategies. When objectives are clearly defined, managers can decide what activities must be performed and how resources should be allocated.

3. Motivates Employees

Clearly defined objectives motivate employees to work efficiently. Employees feel encouraged when they understand their targets and know what is expected of them.

4. Helps in Coordination

Objectives help coordinate the activities of different departments. All departments work towards common organizational goals, reducing confusion and duplication of work.

5. Facilitates Control

Objectives provide standards for measuring actual performance. Managers can compare actual results with planned objectives and take corrective action when necessary.

6. Improves Efficiency

Objectives help organizations use available resources such as money, materials, time and manpower effectively. This reduces wastage and improves productivity.

7. Supports Decision-Making

Objectives help managers make appropriate decisions. They can select the best alternatives based on organizational goals and priorities.

8. Helps Measure Performance

Objectives provide a basis for evaluating employee and organizational performance. Managers can identify whether targets have been achieved and determine areas that require improvement.

Characteristics of Good Objectives

1. Specific: Objectives should be clearly defined and easy to understand.

2. Measurable: Objectives should be expressed in measurable terms so that progress can be evaluated.

3. Achievable: Objectives should be attainable with the available resources and capabilities.

4. Realistic: Objectives should be practical and suitable for the organization's situation.

5. Time-bound: Objectives should have a specific deadline for completion.

6. Clear: Objectives should avoid confusion and communicate the expected results effectively.

7. Consistent: Objectives of different departments should support the overall goals of the organization.

Example of Setting Objectives

A college may set an objective to improve the pass percentage of students from 85% to 95% during the academic year.

To achieve this objective, the management may conduct special coaching classes, monitor student attendance, conduct regular assessments and provide additional support to slow learners.

This example shows how setting objectives helps an organization plan activities and measure its performance.