



A concept of management system in a Museum

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Abstract

Museum management is an action of ensuing the running of the museum's administration and all activities which are directly attached to the field of museum work. The purpose of this study is to identify the proper management of museum, functions importance, the extent to which they meet the needs and services of museum. It is the fact that technology is becoming not only a tool for staff to control and manage the museum but to make museum's collections available to museum users.

Key Words: Management, Museum, system collection, functions

Introduction

The term 'museum management' was used to define various museum activity. In this way museum management encompasses tasks relating to financial and legal responsibilities and staff management as well as general planning of museum activities. The rise of professionalism in museums sector can be explained by development in the wider management and business sector. Museum is a nonprofit making institution, so museums have to adopt professional management practices from the business sector and also museums need to consider marketing strategies that will play an effective role in the twenty first century environment. The sector has had to market them as a profit making professional management organization like business sector.

It is very difficult to give a precise definition of the term management. Different scholars have different interpretations about management. An economist considers management as a resource



like land, labour, capital and organization. The bureaucrats consider management as a system of authority to achieve business goals. A sociologist considers managers as a part of the class elite in the society. Lastly a museologist considers that management is an important function of a museum. In a museum every work depends on the management system. An institution can be viewed as a system, and management can also be defined as human action, including design to facilitate the production of useful outcomes from the system.

The verb manage comes from the Italian maneggiare (to handle especially tools) which has been derived from the two Latin words manus (hand) and agree (to act). The French word for management has influenced the development of meaning of the English word management in the 17th & 18th centuries.

Management is the process of reaching organizational goals by working with and through people & other organizational resources. Four basic management functions that make up the management process are described in the following sections (Barlett, Ghoshal, 1994):

- 1) Planning - It involves choosing tasks that must be performed to attain organizational goals, outlining how the tasks must be performed, and indicating when they should be performed.
- 2) Organizing - It is to create a mechanism to put plans into action. People within the organization are given work assignments that contribute to the company's goals.
- 3) Influencing - It is referred to as motivating, leading or directing.
- 4) Controlling - It is an ongoing process. First to collect information and compare present performance to pre-established performance norms and also determine the next action plan. Thus action is controlled by the manager.

If we keep in mind the role of the museum today we realize that decision making is a basic factor for bringing to fruition the final goals, the aims and the 'mission. This is so because in contemporary societies the museum is not just the building which houses collections. It is a complex cultural organization which securely conserves and preserves material and cultural objects. As contemporary museology shows, museum management should fulfill five roles. (Edison, 2004)

- 1) The museum's mission should be inspired.
- 2) It should specify the limits of its jurisdiction that is its institutional brief.
- 3) It should lead towards the museum's final goals.
- 4) It should supervise the achievement of the museum's aims.
- 5) It should evaluate the realization of the museum's functions.



The overall plan must be comprehensible to the museum's public, to its supporters, local communities and state bodies. Only in this way mutual trust and understanding between all those involved with the museum will be achieved.

Very often the state, which is responsible for the series of museums within its territory, establishes a Museum Council, which gives its opinion on issues introduced for discussion. It is made up of directors of state and other museums, academics, artists and administrator and so on. The final and essential decision, however always rests with the responsible government minister.

A key role of museum management is assisting the organization, regardless of its size or complexity, in achieving consistent results so the institutional mission can be articulated and fulfilled. One of the most important aspects is to create a cohesive and effective team. This type of team requires leadership, vision and a commitment to the value of team effort. The most powerful function of a manager is that of inspiring others to be a part of the team. Effective museum management is a responsibility that embraces all the recourses and activities of the museum, and involves all the staff. Without proper management a museum cannot provide the appropriate care and use for collection, nor can it maintain and support an effective exhibition and educational program.

The modern museum must be an informative, professional, systematic, enjoyable, and socially active institution, and arguably traditional methods and practices of management are becoming increasingly obsolete. Key aspects of good management are ((Edison, 2004) :

- 1) Selecting the right personnel for the job,
- 2) Determining the work to be done,
- 3) Deciding the way the work is to be accomplished,
- 4) Managing the relationship between the persons doing the work and the other elements of the museum.

These activities may be accomplished either directly or indirectly, depending on the size & scope of the museum, but they are however, fundamental to the management process.

The management process for a museum is often challenging but always rewarding for those persons committed to serving the interests of the public, protecting the common wealth of the people, and promoting goodwill and understanding. Good management is about institutional sustainability, professional ethics, respect, loyalty, honesty and dedication. Museum directors and all other professional and administrative staff with managerial responsibilities must perform



their duties with integrity and in accordance with the most stringent ethical principles as well as the highest standards of objectivity.

An important matter for management is to document the structure under which the museum is authorized, governed, and supported. Most museums have a management structure that includes at least three components - administration, creation and operations. All elements of the museum may be the responsibilities of one person, or they may accommodate many people. Administration is the process of managing non profit organization so that it remains stable and continues to grow. (Konstantion, 2005). In general, administration refers to the broader management function including the associated finance and personnel. Administration broadly speaking engages in a common set of functions to meet the organization goals. Management structure of a museum needs to promote a spirit of team work, open internal communication and a generally accepted sense of purpose.

There are a number of ethical issues that relate to the museum's policy, management and particularly its use of money and other resources, last but not the least is its collection. Every museum should have a financial management policy that among other things defines who has the authority to expend institutional funds, the nature of materials or objects that can be purchased and the method of budgetary oversight. A museum's public responsibility revolves about the ethical correctness of its activities including the care and use of collections as well as proper institutional management.

Among whole management system collection management also plays a vital role to develop a museum. Collection management is the term applied to the various legal, ethical, technical and practical methods by which museum collections, are assembled, organized researched, interpreted and preserved collection management focuses on the care of collections with concern for their long term physical well being and safety. The term collection management is also used to describe the specific activities undertaken in the management process.

Collection management involves the development, storage and preservation of collection and cultural heritage. Cultural heritage collections require a great deal of care and protection in order to ensure their safety from external loss or damage but they also require in depth documentation to assist in tracking the life of the object within the holding institution. (Konstantios, Konstatios, Tsombanoglou, 2005)



Collection management systems are software programs designed to aid in the archiving and cataloging of objects in a collection. There are several factors to consider in selecting a collection management system including the size of the collection, its anticipated growth over time and the availability of IT resources and staffing. Every collection management system is unique; there are several features that are considered like - cataloging, acquisitions, de-accessions, loans, condition and conservation reports, security, copyright, multimedia. The primary focus of collection management is to document the standards and practices necessary to develop, care for and make available for use, the collection object within a collector or institution's care.

Museum management is merely making bureaucratic demands on the time of museum professionals who could be providing the collection or the public with valuable services instead of attending another meeting, filling out a form or writing another report. Too often, management work becomes stereotype without inspiration or leadership. An absence of leadership in turn affects both staff & public, if exhibitions lack creativity, education is unfocused or the collection is presented without vision.

The purpose of management in museums is to facilitate decisions that lead to the achievement of the museum's mission, the fulfillment of its mandate and the realization of its goals and objectives for all of its functions.

In order to facilitate the achievement of mission mandate, goals and objectives, museum management must play not just one but five roles (Narayan, Nath, 1993) -

- 1) To inspire with a sense of the museum's mission;
- 2) To communicate the museums mandate;
- 3) To lead toward the museum's goals;
- 4) To control the attainment of objectives;
- 5) To evaluate the fulfillment of museum functions in outcomes.

Museums have developed marketing strategies as a response to the dynamic challenge of increasing competition. They have entered the field paying attention to the growing emphasis on quality, value, customer satisfaction & retention, acting locally to a more global way of thinking. (Johnson, 2004) The management of a museum's marketing focuses on identifying its potential markets as well as in communicating with them.

Thus every museum can be identified as an organization which has to design and implement its strategy, in order to achieve its final goals. It is the museum personnel who carries out the



museum's functions and activities in all sectors, the ultimate goal being the application of all the museum's aims. Basically we have the administration of two essential sectors. The sector is associated with the collections and the public programmes.

In the past management was not considered as an important part of development. In 19th century museum management became a separate field of study. Trends in management system thus refer to coordination of management functions in a particular direction. (Sandell, Janes, 2007)

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