

Porter’s Five Functions of Management: Directing and Controlling

SUBMITTED BY: Knowledge@Wharton Summer Educator

SUBJECT(S): Management

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ OVERVIEW:

In this lesson, the teacher will address the Directing and Controlling functions listed in the “Five Functions of Management” as they are applied in the business context at the local level. Students will first read the Knowledge@Wharton article: “Is This Madness? How Losing by Just a Little Can Help a Team – or Company – Win.” Then they will play a competitive game and analyze how motivational strategies can translate into small business directing. The directing and controlling functions are the fourth and fifth functions of the “Five Functions of Management” (see definition from standards below).

≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Management, I. Management Functions

The Five Functions of Management:

- **Planning** – Managers are responsible for setting the course of actions that will best fulfill the company’s goals. Planning involves knowing what to do, when to do it and how to do it. Managers are responsible for consulting with different departments of the company in order to set the appropriate path for allocating capital in the right directions.
- **Management Decision-Making & Strategy** – Managers must identify the activities to be completed, assign duties, create and authorize responsibility and coordinate the

different levels of operations.

- **Staffing** – Keeping individuals in the proper departments and finding talent to employ are also among the functions of management. Staffing includes recruitment, performance appraisal, promotions and transferring employees to the proper departments.
- **Directing** – Managers must supervise, motivate, lead and maintain communications with their employees.
- **Controlling** – Managers must control their departmental employees and operations to ensure that organizational goals are achieved.

Common Core Standard(s):

- *Reading Standards for Informational Text:* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support the analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- *Speaking & Listening:* Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10–11–12 topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Objectives/Purposes: The purpose of this lesson is for students to comprehend elements of directing and controlling a business/organization, as a function of business management, at the local level. Students will be able to make connections at scale, and understand the organizational dynamics of a small business operation.

Knowledge@Wharton Article: [“Is This Madness? How Losing by Just a Little Can Help a Team – or Company – Win”](#)

Other Resources/Materials:

Internet access and projector

Trivial Pursuit cards

Activity:

1. *Introduction: Class discussion opener (5 mins)*

Students will be analyzing local business dynamics in the context of the **directing** and **controlling** functions of business management. Discuss with them that managers direct by supervising, motivating, leading and maintaining communication with their employees. Managers control their departmental employees and operations to ensure that organizational goals are achieved.

Have student groups think of examples of how a local restaurant near their homes, or one of their family members who has his/her own business, ensure that organizational goals are achieved. Share and discuss.

Note: The teacher may call on various students to articulate examples of operations across business contexts, and may write the students responses on the board to keep a running list that may be referred to from time to time as the students understanding of the topic evolves.

2. Guided Reading: (10 mins)

Now, have students read the Knowledge@Wharton article: “Is This Madness? How Losing by Just a Little Can Help a Team – or Company – Win.”

3. Class Discussion: (5 mins)

1. What strategy should a manager use while setting goals for his/her employees?
2. How can goal setting be a motivational tool?
3. What happens when goals are set too high/too low?
4. What role does self-esteem play in goal setting?
5. Brainstorm some ways managers can help boost the self-esteem of employees?

4. Exploration Activity: Local Business Domain (5 mins)

- Create groups of three to four students.
- Let the groups create team names.
- Put a scoreboard with the team names on the board.
- Have student groups answer Trivial Pursuit questions.
- As students play the game, try to ensure that the groups compete with each other (i.e., control the questions you are asking or offer an enticing price for the winner).

5. Group Reports/Discussion: (10 mins)

Facilitate a discussion based on the game.

1. How did the competition motivate your team?
2. How did the motivation differ in your team if your team was far behind, far ahead, close behind, just barely ahead?
3. How did your team motivate each other?
4. How could a small business use these strategies to motivate their employees to meet a goal? (For example: Pretend you are a local bakery and a competitor opens a store three blocks away from your store. The competitor is taking away some of your business. How would you use goal setting as a motivational tool for your employees?) Write the ideas that the students come up with on the board.

6. Closing: (5 mins)

Use this time to answer questions and clarify points of confusion. Remind students that motivation plays a major role in directing employees. As the adage goes, people are the most important factor in a business being successful.

Tying It All Together: Directing and controlling are the fourth and fifth functions in the listing of the “Five Functions of Management.” The other four functions are: planning, staffing and management decision-making and strategy. In terms of an overall strategic view, now that students understand the directing and controlling functions, the teacher may wish to contextualize this function vis-à-vis the other four remaining functions.

This lesson plan can be a standalone or the teacher may wish to visit other Wharton Global Youth Program lesson plans that highlight the other “Functions of Management.” Bear in mind that each function represents a unique element of business management and when the five are taken together, they collectively articulate the role of the business manager as a leader/steward of the organization.

The “Five Functions of Management” are subsumed within the greater umbrella of business management including but not limited to:

- Theories of Management
- Business Organization
- Personal Management Skills
- Business Ethics and Social Responsibility
- Human Resource Management

- Technology and Information Management
- Financial Decision Making
- Operations Management

Practice Outside of the Classroom: Students may be encouraged to observe how coaches motivate their players and think about how a manager could use those tools to motivate employees. Students may also reflect on how they are motivated to succeed.

What Worked and What I Would Do Differently: The students absolutely loved the trivia part of this exercise, and consequently asked for more trivia games during the program. I did not have access to a Trivial Pursuit game, so I made up my own questions. Rather than beginning with the introductory activities cited above, I started the class with the trivia game first (after doing a quick introduction of the directing and controlling functions of management). Then I had the students talk about their experience of competing with each other. After that, we read the article and I had the students interpret their trivia experience with this new information in mind. I should also mention that the trivia game took longer than five minutes. Plan on 10-12 minutes.

The article itself is a very interesting read, and the trivia game is a nice experiential way to demonstrate how people feel when they are winning or losing. Many of the students in the class were athletes, so they completely connected with the references on sports. In general, this lesson generated a lot of active participation.

For another group, I simply played the interview clip rather than having the students read the article. If you do this, you definitely need to set the stage for what will be talked about in the clip, otherwise the information will seem to be coming out of nowhere. Once you read the article yourself, you will be able to provide a productive introduction to the topic of motivating employees, which is largely what the article is all about (one specific area of directing employees).