



OFFICE ADMINISTRATION: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY IN AMRITAPURI

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Abstract

In today's world of thriving educational institutions, office administration of these institutions stays averted. Office administration is a substructure of any educational institution. This study is engrossed in the roles and responsibilities of the administrative staff of various sections of a university in Amritapuri. The main intention of this study is to understand the efforts of administrative staff in bringing up an educational institution to the peak of success. The research is qualitative and casual. This research tries to highlight the significance of efforts and hard work put forth by administrative staff in each section of this university to make the institution conspicuous. Throughout the study, we tried to understand the routine work management of administrative staff and how they manage the difficulties faced while discharging duties. The study also embodies the roles and responsibilities of the individual administrative staff of this institution. To understand extensively the roles and responsibilities of office administrative staffs the workloads of these staff were scrutinized, and worksheets prepared for the study were disseminated. The collated data was used to complete the study and bring fruition. The result of the research will hence enlighten young growing institutions to give importance to office administration and will serve as guidance to emphasis in the field of office administration.

Keywords: Office Administration, Work Management, Workload.

Introduction

The office is described as the nerve center of any organization. It is a place where clerical and administrative functions are carried out to coordinate and control activities in the organization. The present-day office activities have expanded to a wider extent to keep pace with competitive organizations. An organization works under the direction of executive leadership which is managed by the office administrators. Further, office by itself has become an indispensable part of an organization. According to the old concept, "Office Work" is mostly concerned with the records of an organization and making, preserving the records for further usage, hence office merely means clerical work. In this modern era office is not only meant for clerical work but is also responsible for the administration of the organization. Office is the administrative center of any educational organization and administration is the determining function upon which an institution functions to bring growth. The main purpose of an office is providing communication and record, it also takes care of the procedures and dealt with all kinds of data (paper works, letters, correspondence, files, records, etc). It is a central place where all sorts of clerical and administrative work are done to co-ordinate and control the affairs of the whole organization. Such an office provides professional services and apt data to the organization. Office work is concerned with maintaining records and statistics along with practicable planning and structuring for a smooth flow of administrative work. Management of an organization can be successful only if the administration functions efficiently and competently. The entire research emphasis on the key features and working of administration of an educational institute. The educational institute taken for the case study has a strong office administration which makes the institute efficacious.

Functioning of Administrative Office

The administrative office is one of the major offices in the college, it manages the overall administrative work in the college. This office is responsible for all the pre and posts administrative works of the college students. The administrative staff in this office reports to the Senior Administrative Manager. The Senior Manager is a staff expert and is experienced in office policy-making matters. He also supports the top officials in the management by supporting and implementing policies framed by the management in the organization. Along with these responsibilities he identifies, reports and rectifies problems related to office administration and reports to top



authority in the management. The Senior administrative Manager is very good at organizing. He has organized the office services in such a way that no work is interrupted and is performed smoothly, efficiently and effectively. His dynamic leadership quality motivates and builds confidence in the minds of the office staff. This confidence helps the Administrative staff to perform their job effectively and efficiently for achieving the common goals of the college. At this point, it was understood that having an innovative attitude and capability to think creatively helps to develop better methods and brings regularity in work. The administrative office Manager experiments new innovative methods and techniques for doing office work in order to increase the efficiency and quality of the work. It was also seen that the allocation of work is done according to the capabilities of the administrative staff in the office. Balanced workloads ensure accountability among staffs and indirectly upswing their principles. Due to deep-rooted administrative experience, the administrative manager is capable to forecast any problems which would arise in the future, he also keeps a backup strategy that can be implemented if any interventions arise in administrative works. Keeping track of progress in the work of administrative staff and directing them to improve makes a flexible environment for office administration. The administrative manager is very honest and a person with strong principles. He has a gentle and polite attitude and has a diplomatic approach while dealing with situations. This makes people from outside and inside the organization satisfied while executing administrative procedures in the college. These qualities were analyzed about the Administrative Office manager, which has made the administrative office strong in functioning.

On further inquiry about the enforcement of rules in administrative offices, the Senior Manager shared some of the etiquettes recommended by him which should be enforced in all the administrative offices of any organization to bring the best outcome. According to the Senior Manager, administrative staff should not engage themselves in gossip or talk in a loud tone while communicating with others in the office also reading of newspapers, magazines or other books during office hours must be strictly prohibited. Using a Mobile phone should be avoided during office time. To ensure this respective administrative officer heading the sections must see that all the administrative staffs in the office are engaged with enough work and if the administrative staffs are idling without work, he should investigate into the matter, report it to the higher authorities and ensure that the work is equitably distributed. The administrative staff should do nothing inconsistent with the dignity of the office or their position. Without prior permission, the office staff should not leave the section during office hours. It should be the responsibility of the Administrative Officer to ensure that no person working under them is absent from his/her seat for any length of time without specific permission. All the office administration staff should maintain strict secrecy about the working of administration in office and they must be precluded from divulging to outsiders or to other members of the establishment any information, confidential or non-confidential which they come to possess in their official capacity. Every communication received in the office, registers and papers, notes and correspondence or disposal showing the action taken must be kept confidential as far as the public is concerned. Apart from these enforcements, the administrative office staff must be given a manual which consists set of detailed directions to be followed by each staff in office administration, to understand the organization's working.

Department Administration

The college taken for the case study had ten departments of various streams, in which each department has a department secretary or office assistant. The secretary manages all the departmental related administrative works as well as assists students who approach the department office for any administrative support. The office assistant makes sure that all the work related to the office is accomplished within a given period. The office administrator keeps timely information on all aspects of the institution to assist the administration in however way possible. On briefing about the department office administration, it was discerned that the office assistants act according to a set of basic office policies like responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, etc. to complete any administrative work assigned to them. They are fully aware of the aims and objectives of the administrative roles, hence office activities are never disrupted. It is seen that suitable secretaries/office assistants are appointed so that administrative work is always well organized. All the necessities are provided to the administrative staffs and all of them know how to use these means in the best manner. Leading to greater efficiency and effectiveness in the work. The routine works of department administrative staffs include - processing Incoming and outgoing mails, maintaining of records (Filing and Indexing), establishing standard in office work, maintenance of



furniture, machines, appliances, etc. and safeguarding the assets, preparation of statements, reports, memorandums etc., maintaining of financial records and details of purchase committee meetings. He also acts as a receptionist and handles telephone calls and inquiries, prepares and updates information and keeping prompt and accurate handling of all circulars, departmental communications, etc.

Analysis and Interpretation

The primary function of office administration in the colleges is receiving and collecting administrative information. Information is generally collected both from internal sources such as letters, memos, circulars, notices, etc. issued by different departments or sections and from external sources which are forwarded to respective department offices. The received data or information cannot be used as it is in most cases. The department or administrative office converts the received information in the form of notes, reports, documents, graphs, etc., depending upon the nature of information for easy access and understanding. For the Systematization of statistics, all the departments have a filing system that enables ease of access for any information. The collected documents are stored for future reference in a suitable form, depending on the source. Since these recorded documents are used for preparing action plans in the future or for any referral purposes for managing department works. Based on the importance of data, department administrative staffs store them in a separate file. So that it can be produced whenever any fluster arises. The most critical procedure of providing information is done by the Administrative office, it provides apt information at the right time to different offices in the college to support their workflow and to outside bodies who are related in some way or the other for prompt information and proper guidance.

Observations

An administrative office is an important unit of the whole organization. It is essential for the office to perform several administrative functions for achieving the objectives put forth by the educational organization. After analyzing and scrutinizing certain critical functions of the office administration in the university it was found that the administrative office serves as an information center. It collects information from sources like letters, circulars, notices, meeting minutes, etc. and protects important information in a safe manner and provides storage facilities in the form of files and devices based on their importance for future reference. These administrative offices act as an information hub also, which has all major and important past data safely conserved. Such an efficient office administration is prof for the existence and survival of effective administration of a top-ranked university. It also coordinates the administrative functions of different departments of the college. An educational organization is divided into various departments and subunits for bringing simplicity in the operation. The central office of administration will work as a coordinator to maintain the relationship between departments. It develops effectual tie up to achieve common goals of an organization. It provides clerical services like mailing, filing, typing, printing supplying resources, etc., to all office administration staff working in different departments of the institution. Apart from this, it provides strong administrative support to anyone approaching the office. The administrative staffs and secretaries of various departments maintain a performance standard. They compare actions with performance factors so that any corrective action for deviations can be taken immediately and the flow of work does not get interrupted. The central administrative office helps in controlling the activities of different people and departments of an organization. Through such control office managers, staff, secretaries ensure that the administrative activities of the institution are performed with much accuracy.

The university is established with the objective of attaining a certain result. To achieve this result top-level managers, formulate administrative plans and policies. These plans and policies are communicated to the office staff for managing the administrative works. Hence office administration is a center for the formulation and communication of plans and policies. It also acts as a channel of communication between outside people, students, colleges, firms, etc. The staff in the administrative office work at various levels of managerial hierarchy and the central point of communication will be the administrative office. It is very clear that people tend to generalize about the reputation of the college only with the help of the regular functioning of an office.



Conclusions

The researchers believe that the time taken by the administrative section to transmit data to its destination with at most accuracy in any situation is very rapid and no delay is observed in this regard. To avoid any fluster, communication medium to transmit data is given importance. If the data consists of figures or statistics it is communicated as written orders or circulars to avoid any miscommunication. Majority of the data is recorded as documents and proper filing system is maintained such that it will be readily available when needed. Apart from this secrecy of important documents is also given special concern. All the administrative works of office and various departments have unity and uniformity in the policies. The duties, roles, and responsibilities of every office administration staff are clearly defined, any assignments given to them are per the ability of the staff. The Administrative manager lays down objectives and the total work needed to complete them is divided among different groups. The workload of each person is given symmetrically, the assigned work is briefed to the administrative staff by the respective reporting authority. This will ultimately help in achieving the objectives successfully. Hence the smooth flow of office administration depends on three major factors-

- 1) Systems: Pre-planned approach to the routine work to achieve the desired objective.
- 2) Procedures: Sequence in which activities should be performed to achieve the target.
- 3) Administrative manuals: Standard method and policies for the effective performance of work

Such an Office Administration has helped to make the university most competent among various other educational institutions.

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Suggestions

We feel that like financial audits, internal administrative audits to monitor and evaluate the administrative functioning should be conducted yearly. This will help to find out any drawback of the administrative system and the audit team will suggest necessary actions to enrich the office administration if needed. This will also evaluate the performance of administrative staff in the Office rather than making a self-appraisal system for evaluating. This would be strong evidence also during inspections.

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