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Aspects of Public Administration in Iraq

Current Problems and Reform Proposals

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Al-Bayan Center Publications Series



About

Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies is an independent, nonprofit think tank based in Baghdad, Iraq. Its primary mission is to offer an authentic perspective on public policy issues related to Iraq and the neighboring region. Al-Bayan pursues its vision by conducting autonomous analysis, as well as proposing workable solutions for complex issues that concern academia and policymakers.

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Introduction

In order to adjust with changes that occur at the local, regional and global level, there is a need for fundamental changes in management within government institutions and studying means to offer these in benefit toward services and goods. This requires the adoption of a modern concept of administrative reform that suits the changes experienced by the public administration in Iraq, as the traditional conception of management is no longer able to cope with modern developments.

The past years have been characterised by many developments and challenges that have had a direct impact on public administration, and most important among these challenges is creating the role of the state, environmental and political changes and developments in the information and communication technologies. Thus, in order to enable the public sector to cope with the economic, technological and environmental changes recent advances in the management and the experiences of other countries in how to deal with such changes and developments should be taken into account and analysis.

This study aims to shed light on the difficulties in public administration in Iraq, the existing difficulties experienced and proposed reforms all in accordance with the concept of modern public administration, with an emphasis on aspects of reform of the administrative system according to the modern concept of public administration, and administrative reform programs that have adopted the traditional model and neglected aspects of it. This research emphasizes on the administrative reform process in accordance with the modern concept of public administration by aspects of monitoring and control in financial costs, transparency, administrative decentralisation, customer satisfaction, focusing on shopping mechanism, and finding specific performance standards, supporting enthusiasts of modern public administration as a framework for administrative reform debating the opinion that the public administration sector has become more inflated, less effective and productive efficiency, quality and accountability can be upgraded and improved in public sector institutions.

The main focus of this study is attentive on the argument that the current administrative reform efforts that are according to the traditional concept for the management of the public sector, does not suit the changes experienced by the Iraqi public administration sector. The study sheds light to the importance

of the principles of modern management and its role in the prosperity of any organization, with the presence of neglect that affected public administration in the land of Mesopotamia.

Al-Bayan Centre worked to emphasise the necessity for reform by essentially preparing an appropriate strategy for every government organisation plan, which takes into account the preparation of systems and working methods and policies with a focus on the goals set, taking into account adjustment according to emerging developments and crystallise foundations of manager selection, their training for the purpose of completing their work to the fullest potential. Measuring the capabilities of managers is by comparing the outputs with the inputs, which effectively measures the achieved performance; output in terms of quantity and quality in the framework of the objectives, policies and systems in place, while inputs include all resources within government institution activities.

The study also addresses the necessary qualifications to fill all the jobs with the suggestion that management reform of the state apparatus in Iraq occurs gradually beginning in small government department; similarly to what you take into account with the results of an experiment slowly for the purpose of modifying the program depending on the circumstances and necessities, with an emphasis on the importance of supporting these reforms by the highest political level, and that these reforms placed on a practical scale to measure the results during the process for the purpose of assessing the success of the program at each stage.

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Aspects of Public Administration in Iraq Current Problems and Reform Proposals

Dr. Kadom Jawad Shubber*

Abstract

This paper looks initially at the current significance of the principles and notions of modern management, emphasising their critical role in attaining excellence in any firm or organisation – indeed they represent a definite feature characterizing modern organizations within advanced nations today. Once that point is made, the paper looks at the neglect that plagued this field of knowledge in Iraq, especially on the practical level, encompassing both state institutions and private ones.

As a consequence, a reform plan is needed urgently, starting with spelling out an appropriate strategy for each ministry/organisation, along with determining the objectives that flow from that strategy. The clarity and suitability of objectives occupy a critical role in management theory and practice, as these objectives should be formulated for all organisational levels, and they must be well co-ordinated horizontally and vertically.

Other requirements include the design of modern organisation-structures, or their re-design whenever necessary. Two inter-connected aspects come to the fore in this regard, i.e. putting together the organisation chart in each case, and determining the role of each unit or department, as well as the responsibilities and authority of each position.

There is further the question of drawing up the overall system, policies and operating methods for every unit/department. Two major considerations should be noted here, namely consideration of relevant conditions/resources inside the organisation and outside, as well as the necessity to adapt to new events and developments.

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In addition, the paper focuses on evolving the bases and procedures for the selection of competent managers, as well as the provision of professional training, so that they might adequately perform their duties in planning and organising, in addition to those pertaining directly to their subordinates including selection, direction, motivation and monitoring/controlling. The cardinal issue here is the standard of performance attained, which essentially compares the output (both qualitative and quantitative) with the inputs deployed by the organisation. Essentially, managers are charged with the task of maximising output in relation to the inputs utilised within the same time-span.

The paper emphasises the requirement for state-of-art job descriptions and job specifications, so that managers and other employees can be chosen correctly within organisations, while objective and periodic monitoring of all is an absolute must. Other modern techniques which should be seriously considered include job evaluation, and time-and-motion study for those occupations at the lower levels of the organisation chart.

Adequate and continual training must be viewed as a necessary ingredient of good management, and proper steps must be taken to ensure this. Also, much effort is required to safeguard and upgrade the morale of government employees, as this requires multi-faceted policies and corresponding actions.

Managerial reform must be piecemeal, starting with small relatively well-managed organisations, and then moving gradually to larger ones. The results of the reform programme need to be watched very closely, and adjustments on it made wherever this is thought advisable. In the case of Iraq, particularly, such a management-reform programme is likely to face opposition and complications; hence strong support from the highest authority in the land is seen to be of a paramount importance.

Chapter One

Basic Principles

This chapter is devoted to the elucidation of certain primary principles, in order to lay the requisite foundations for discussing this subject-area in an objective and serious fashion, as well as covering its various facets. Also, any strategy for administrative development will need to start from a proper understanding of the current state of affairs, taking into account the historical background which has led to the status-quo.

The current chapter looks at the role played by competent management in building and developing modern societies. Also, there is a need to consider the angle through which Iraqi society views the science and area of management. That perspective - or the limited attention given to this subject - has resulted in perpetuating the rather backward state of management in both public and private sectors, so much so that it has become difficult to lay hands on the appropriate starting point for salvaging the prevailing set-up and reforming the current situation.

A relevant and recent American report makes the point that post-2003 Iraqi governments have not been supportive to efforts aiming to re-configure and ameliorate the procedures and general framework of public appointments in the country. The report was prepared by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), which focused on aspects associated with the implementation of an ambitious project for administrative reform in Iraq. A prime objective of the project was to re-structure the system of public appointments in order to adopt criteria of efficiency and professionalism. Other objectives included preparing draft legislation for a modern system of public appointments to be presented to the legislative assembly, in addition to setting up specialist bodies to cater for public service, so as to serve the various governates (provinces) as well as the federal government, with accompanying programmes for training government employees¹.

1. Office of the Inspector General, Audit of USAID/Iraq's Administrative Reform Project, December 2013, Cairo, Page 5

It is noteworthy that the budgeted cost of this project was put at \$157 million, while the report goes to stress that official organs of the Iraqi State were reluctant to underpin another objective of the project, namely the drive to delegate authority to lower echelons, so as to attain higher degrees of decentralisation through modernising administrative systems and developing available resources (particularly human resources), especially on the level of the provinces².

The report points out that currently-applied methods for procurement and contract-promulgation do not conform to procedures and templates developed by project experts. These procedures and templates have not been adopted by top officials, with the exception of only two provinces which had moved towards such adoption.

The report adds that the project did not succeed in assisting five federal ministries to modernise their methods and procedures to discharge their functions, as was originally envisaged by the project. None of these ministries took the initiative to improve activities or up-grade their systems. Nor did any of these ministries develop their methods for budget-preparation or budget implementation. However, two ministries attempted to re-engineer their main activities, while only one took steps to standardise procedures in accordance with sound principles³.

1-1 Role and Importance of Modern Management

It is well recognised that good management is the prime determinant of success in any organisation - whatever its nature of activity or size. A serious and professional management will take cognisance of all factors related to that organisation, whether those factors were internal or external in orientation. A successful manager will consider all available resources (human and otherwise), as such resources must be utilised optimally as far as possible, in order to attain pre-set objectives.

In this regard, an expert notes that the essence of management refers to the “tasks undertaken by one person (or a group) to co-ordinate the activities of others so as to accomplish aims that would otherwise be unachievable by one

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid

person if worked alone”⁴.

It is noteworthy that objectives do vary in accordance with the nature of the organisation, as these objectives will be derived from the overall mission and the place of the organisation in society. Hence, a commercial enterprise might regard ‘profitability’ as its number-one objective, and may select appropriate profitability targets for the short, medium and long terms.

Yet, profitability yardsticks (e.g. ratio of net profits to sales-value, or ratio of net profits to total investment) might not be the only objective, or even the first objective. There might be other business objectives, such as the company’s share of the market, or the degree of customer satisfaction with the firm’s products/services. It is also possible that top management might place higher priorities on these objectives or give them weight equal to the profitability objective.

In the case of organs of the State, there might not be an emphasis on profitability, although the issue of costs is bound to arise as a central problem for management. Among possible objectives for State organs are the maximisation of the number of transactions executed for ordinary citizens, or attaining high levels of satisfaction from ordinary people for services rendered, or minimising the average cost of serving on customer, or cutting the volume of errors in services provided to the public.

What is important to note is that the clarity of objective(s) is an essential ingredient in managing any organisation, whatever might be its type of activity or its size. Also, it is advisable to specify the objectives for various organisational levels, and these objectives should be determined for different time-ranges, primarily for the short, medium and long ranges. The degree to which the management team is capable in attaining pre-set objectives will determine the quality of organisational performance as well as its image, indeed the performance of the whole government machines.

A good manager is one who overcomes all types of difficulties. One brief definition of good management is that ‘it is the capability to find practical solutions to problems faced within the work environment’. However, finding solutions to practical problems does not mean waiting for problems to surface and become

4. J H Donnelly, J L Gibson, J M Ivancevich (9th edition)(1995):“Fundamentals of Management”, Irwin, Page 4.

aggravated, so as to start thinking over suitable solutions. A good manager will have to anticipate likely hurdles and difficulties on the horizon, putting together appropriate plans and taking necessary steps so that those problems do not happen in practice. If for example, we expect a shortage of staff in a year's time, we should initiate suitable measures and make relevant contingencies, such as adjusting working methods or employing new people, so much so that we prevent the on-set of the problem.

As a result, we might define 'good management' as the function that involves "all arrangements/activities aimed to deploy all available resources (human and otherwise) in a rational manner for the purpose of accomplishing the objectives of the organisation". We thus note that the setting of clear objectives occupies a pivotal place within the overall managerial play for any organisation or company or ministry.

In addition, top objectives are necessarily deigned in accordance with the overall strategy of the organisation. This strategy must be derived from the organisation's vision which explains its role in society and the kind of advantage/benefit it renders. If we look at a major manufacturing organisation making electronics products, we may view its mission in society as 'the endeavour to push forward the wheels of technological progress in the world'. If, on the other hand, we consider a State-run organ issuing personal documents to ordinary citizens, we might view its mission (i.e. role in society) as 'the documentation of personal details to the general population and facilitation of their individual transactions'.

1-2 Historical Background

It is not far-fetched to say that the standards of management and attention to management quality have not received much by way of serious consideration in Iraq. Nor have any significant amount of resources been earmarked for this purpose - whether in the past or currently. We can even assert that the last few decades have probably witnessed a notable deterioration in this regard, with certain limited exceptions. This applies both to the Saddam-dominated epoch or the years since the downfall of Saddam in 2003.

We can even add that the science-cum-art of management has been looked upon from an angle that is unhelpful, unpractical and unprofessional. This

perspective regards 'management' as a personal effort and an art not deserving of serious study or deep consideration. This view adds that the selection of the manager might be based on individual wishes and considerations of propriety as deemed by top echelons (or some authoritative body or individual), without due account taken of any scientific methods in the discharge of the manager's functions or objective techniques in managerial selection.

In fact, there was a major deficiency at the outset when plans for socio-economic development began to be drawn. At that time, the focus was placed quite forcefully on selecting productive and infrastructure projects that were feasible, without much thought given to relevant consequences and possible future developments. A prominent Iraqi economist (Professor Abbas AL-Nasrawi) comments on this while writing on the period when economic planning in Iraq began to emerge in the early 1950's, whereby the Commission for Construction & Development was formed. AL-Nasrawi makes the point that most development programmes, as well as relevant projects approved at the time (industrial, agricultural, infrastructure), were formulated and designed from a specialist or economic angle, without undertaking comprehensive studies or looking adequately to the future⁵. As a result, certain critical issues did not receive the consideration they deserved, such as soundness of the environment, demographic planning, and aspects pertaining to manpower (including the quality of management).

1-3 Current State of Public Administration in Iraq

All this has meant that the current state of public administration leaves much to be desired. In general, we note that managers are not suitably qualified to perform their jobs. The activities or tasks practised by Iraqi managers do not, on the whole, rise to the level 'of being professional' as defined and recognised in this field.

As a result, we notice the prevalence of certain unhealthy phenomena, which reflect badly on the performance of the government and its image in the eyes of

5. Abbas Al-Nasrawi (1995): "Iraqi Economy" Dar Al-Kunouz Al-Adabiya, Beirut, Page 32. Cited in Ali Hanoush (2000): «Iraq: Current Problems and Option for the Future" Dar Al-Kunouz A-Adabiya, Beirut, Page 125. Source in Arabic.

most Iraqis. These phenomena include over-employment of staff and resulting disguised unemployment, in addition to inflated expenses and slow pace of task-fulfilment, ambiguity of employees' tasks (authorities and responsibilities), low approval ratings among ordinary people, and unclarity of objectives and strategies as well as plans for the future.

One erroneous concept which the former Saddamite regime helped to foster and institutionalise was the responsibility of the State to provide jobs for people, including new graduates. To this can be added the endeavour of politicians to gain loyalty from the public (especially those closest to them) through over-employment of staff in government departments. All this has inflated the armies of government employees, especially in view of the prevailing preference among ordinary Iraqis for public service (as compared to working in the private sector), due to the permanent nature of a government job and its perceived advantages, such as a retirement pension and the low level of productivity that is expected of government employees.

An Iraqi researcher notes in this connection that public employment suffers from two major problems, namely 'the huge number of staff (disguised unemployment) and low efficiency. As a result, we find that two-thirds of the public budget is devoted to the payment of salaries and other sundry expenses while productivity is glaringly low'⁶.

This researcher adds that latest Ministry of Planning figures put the population of Iraq at just over 35 million, of whom some 20 million are classified as adults capable of working, while the actual size of the working population hovers around the 8.5 million mark⁷. Nashmi points out that some 3.5 million people occupy civil post in the public sector, while another one million do contractual work on a temporary basis, in addition to around 1.5 million who work in the armed forces and internal security, giving a total figure of 6 million in public employment out of a total manpower of 8.5 million⁸. All this indicates that public employment forms a ratio of 70 per cent out of total Iraqi manpower.

6. Sajad Nashmi (2015): "Employment Crisis in Iraq" Series of Articles of Al-Bayan Centre for Planning & Studies, No 1, May 2015, Page 41. Source in Arabic.

7. Ibid

8. Ibid, Pages 41-42.

Current circumstances and problems faced by the Iraqi nation make it an imperative that this perverse notion, viewing the State as a normal resort for employment, will have to be abandoned. The State is no longer capable of adhering to this commitment, while a concept such as this will damage national interests and retard any opportunities for progress.

Clearly, therefore, it has become of a paramount importance to support and activate non-public sectors, including the private, mixed and co-operative ones. This goes for various fields and economic activities in industry, agriculture, commerce, tourism, and services. Yet, the State will need to continue its role as an overseer and promoter of economic activities, so as to prevent abuse and malpractice, including monopolistic behaviour, fraud, and unfairness to consumers.

We see, therefore, that the adoption of policies to re-activate non-governmental sectors has now become urgent, with the resulting need to transfer any surplus workforce to these sectors. Among relevant policies in this connection, it is possible to mention advancing financial facilities, rendering of building space on easy terms, provision of consultancy services, in addition to re-training of public employees who are willing to move to the private sector.

1-4 Linkages with Other Aspects

Plainly, the quality of management does intertwine with other major aspects of public activities. When good management is the hallmark of government departments, an aura of efficiency and effectiveness will predominate, giving the State a better image, thereby positively influencing all relevant parties, including neighbouring and friendly States, thus facilitating dealings and negotiations with these nations, as well as procuring to maximum what is in the national interest.

It is also clear that all official organs of the State require able managers, so as to attain objectives and move towards pre-set aspirations. Astute management of the national economy will bring about satisfactory rates of growth of GDP (gross domestic product) and average income per capita, plus reducing the incidence of poverty, deprivation and disease. Proper management of the economy will lead also to lessening the dependence on the oil and gas sector, while investing the country's resources in areas of comparative advantage and ensuring that the national currency is strengthened and become internationally respectable.

Good management of the economy will mean augmenting the country's assets of gold and foreign currency, while the private sector is expanded and incentivised under the auspices of State organs, so as to limit/prevent any wrong-doing, while at the same time attracting foreign investments to underpin the economic/industrial areas requiring such investments, as well as procuring technologies necessary for oiling the wheels of socio-economic -industrial advancement.

A prominent Iraqi economist remarks that the success of economic development depends on the 'availability of planners and good managers in a manner that is almost complete'⁹. Zainy goes on to say that 'paucity of experienced and capable planning structures will have strong negative repercussions on the whole economic planning process. Such a shortage will be reflected in the (poor) preparation of development plans and the fixation of targets that are not in tune with the country's needs and/or hardly related to the nation's (quantitative or qualitative) resources. This paucity or shortage will also show up in various other ways, including improper selection of new projects, unwise timing of their implementation, and rather weak feasibility studies of the technical-cum-economic aspects of many proposed projects'¹⁰.

This writer goes on to assert that 'professional management is absolutely necessary for the implementation of projects, so as to abide by set time-schedules with minimum expenses. Also, such management is essential for the day-to-day running of new projects in an efficient fashion, once they are completed. The task of the manager entails overall knowledge of the production process, as well as aspects related to finance, marketing, and the social environment surrounding the business/corporation'¹¹.

Zainy adds that developing nations (including Iraq) 'often confuse technical excellence with managerial ability; we frequently see that industrial project/corporate management in the public sector is entrusted to those who possess technical expertise - such as engineering prowess - rather than administrative

9. M A Zainy (2010): "Iraqi Economy: Past, Present, and Options for the Future" (4th edition), Dar Al-Malak for Arts and Literature, Baghdad, Page 88. Source in Arabic.

10. Ibid, Page 89.

11. Ibid.

capabilities, thereby resulting in sub-standard performance, low return on capital, and an actual capacity that below expectations¹².

What is said regarding the benefits of capable management in the area of the national economy applies with equal force to other fields and activities, including energy, irrigation, manufacturing, tourism, mining, hydrocarbons and others. Management is the backbone of modern life: if it is poor the country will remain underdeveloped and down-trodden, if it is professional, successful and astute, the whole society will progress, attaining one target after another without looking back.

A case in point is the accomplishments of some emerging nations, who until recently were viewed in the context of third-world countries, including Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and Malaysia. The achievements would have been impossible without the adoption of the principles and methods of modern management. What is more, these attainments came about despite the fact that those emerging countries possessed only limited amounts of natural resources, in marked contrast to Iraq's situation where both actual and potential riches are plentiful. Good management has the capability to overcome shortages, deficits and difficulties of all sorts and types, as it will not ignore relevant needs and factors or be oblivious to them, but will monitor issues, formulate forecasts and take initiatives whenever necessary.

As associated fact that has been proven time and time again is that deficient management might bring about the squandering of human and non human resources, or could misallocate them, as they may be put to improper uses. Consequently, it is erroneous to think that the mere availability of resources will guarantee progress and prosperity. In fact, it is able and professional managers whose policies and actions result in the achievements sought after, while the existence of appropriate resources will facilitate and augment such fruitful consequences.

Chapter Two

General Framework for Administrative Reform

12. Ibid

It is the aim of this chapter to dwell in some detail upon the process of administrative reform, in order to elucidate its major and interlinked aspects. A start will be made by considering the need to evolve proper strategies and objectives, moving thereafter to the drawing up of reform plans and design of organisational structures. Then, there is the matter of developing systems and work-procedures, in addition to the selection and training of executives.

2-1 Development of Strategies and Objectives

It is vital to recognise at the onset that Iraq's administrative problems have been compounded and became multi-various; hence the reform we are seeking will not come easily. Yet, this does not mean that the situation is hopeless, only that the path will be fraught with hurdles, requiring perseverance and patience. Other nations had successfully followed this route, a fact that indicates that such a marathon achievement is at once both possible and a great challenge.

The first requirement is to have a proper strategy and clear objectives for every ministry or organisation/department - indeed for the whole government machine. Such a strategy must spring from the nature of the role to be fulfilled by that ministry/organisation/department, in a fashion that is integrated and co-ordinated with parallel ministries/organisations/establishments.

Objectives will be derived from the strategies, while noting in particular the relevant environment, both internal and external, as well as pertinent capabilities whether human or otherwise. Looking at a ministry such as that of higher education, the overall strategy might encompass meeting society's requirements of graduates of various specialisms, in order to push forward the wheels of socio-economic development. On this basis, we would be able to derive the suitable objectives of this corner of the government apparatus, which can include the provision in sufficient numbers of graduates of the requisite quality, who would be recognised as such by professional bodies and on an international level. The quality standards of graduates would need to be corroborated and documented by using appropriate methods that are seen as objective and credible.

If we now look at the ministry of foreign affairs, the strategy may focus on polishing Iraq's image in the world, while also developing links with governments, multi-lateral organisations and non-governmental agencies. All this should

improve the country's international standing and make it more respectable, so that Iraq would become effective in all types of world gatherings and pursuits. From a strategy of this kind, short, medium-range and long-term objectives can be deduced with quantitative targets that are easily measured.

It is noteworthy that the science of management devotes cardinal importance to the matter of 'objectives' and views this as a central issue for the competent manager's activities and efforts. Five points can be put forward in this connection:

First, it is advisable to clarify the objectives for each main section/department within the organisation, as these will flow from the organisation's overall objectives.

Second, whenever a main division is split into departments, and these further sub-divided into units, it becomes imperative that objectives are set for these as well. Indeed, each one of the individual employees in these departments/units should have their objectives determined and clearly set.

Third, it is essential to devote sufficient amount of time-cum-effort in order to evolve these objectives in a way that is realistic and rational, involving serious dialogue among relevant people, so as to arrive at objectives that are acceptable and practical. Also, all objectives need to be written.

Fourth, there is a need to ensure that all objectives are coordinated vertically, which means that lower-echelon objectives must contribute towards the fulfilment of those at higher levels. Also, individual objectives of those working within each unit must help to implement those of the unit to which they belong.

Fifth, it is vital to secure horizontal co-ordination of objectives, so that objectives of the main sections underpin one another, while those of smaller units/departments within the same section should not cross or contradict one another - indeed they ought to be mutually supportive.

It is possible that some who are alien to this field of knowledge may find all this as pure theoretical detail - this is a grave error! We note in practice that the best performing organisations in the world devote special attention to the correct determination of objectives. Corporations that are singularly successful make strenuous efforts to clarify objectives succinctly, while also endeavour strongly to abide by these objectives and monitor any deviations from them.

2-2 Preparation of Reform Plans

Taking cognisance of what has been said so far, it is appropriate to note that any reform will have to be gradual. Prior to embarking on any actual reforms, concepts and plans will need to be evolved, as any reforming activity or effort must be preceded by serious and objective thinking, in order to spell out the requisite insight, first on the governmental level in general, then for each sector or ministry.

It is also critical to note that the first primary stage is to understand the current set-up and situation. As put by a specialist commentator, ‘it is possible to adjust an erroneous solution to a correctly analysed problem, but might be difficult to find an appropriate answer to a wrongly- identified problem’¹³. This writer goes on to assert that the first step has to be knowing truthfully what the problem is, while ‘the solution will be a natural consequence of studying the nature of the problem itself’¹⁴.

Clearly, therefore, it is essential to put together a separate administrative reform plan for each ministry, and it will be necessary to identify a comprehensive vision for each. This vision will make it possible to draw a relevant strategy and objectives. In addition, planners must focus on controlling costs and eliminating disguised unemployment, as well as re-training the staff and getting rid of administrative-cum-financial corruption.

It is glaringly obvious that over-staffing in the majority of government departments may hamper normal working, while also inflating costs and over burdening the official budget. As a result, when we embark on a rational programme to describe public jobs, it will be imperative to perform this task in ways that make reasonable use of employees’ available time during a day’s hours of work, with proper allowances made for permissible delays, and this will inevitably lead to the reduction of the workforce in each organisation.

If we assume that an official department currently employs some 1000 people, this number might be curtailed to 600 in the aftermath of applying a

13. Salah Shubber (2013):“My Diary at the Ministry of Health”, Jawad Press, Beirut, Page 94. Source in Arabic.

14. Ibid.

comprehensive programme of job description and working-method modernisation. This will entail extra effort exerted by the remaining staff, i.e. the 600 who continue in employment. All this will raise three pressing issues:

First, there is the problem of pay. It would be fair to carry out a rational re-evaluation of the salaries of those whose workload will increase. This course of action is equitable, and has actually been the norm in situation of this kind. Such a re-evaluation of salaries has to be done objectively and in accord with some basic rules.

Second, it would probably be imperative to re-train the remaining employees, so that they would understand fully their roles, in terms of their authorities and responsibilities under the new set-up, in order for them to be ready to properly deal with issues and apply the new system in a successful fashion.

Third, there is the problem of the superfluous employees, i.e. the 400 people in our example. In this regard, various organisations had adopted several possible routes to tackle this crucial problem, among which are the following three:

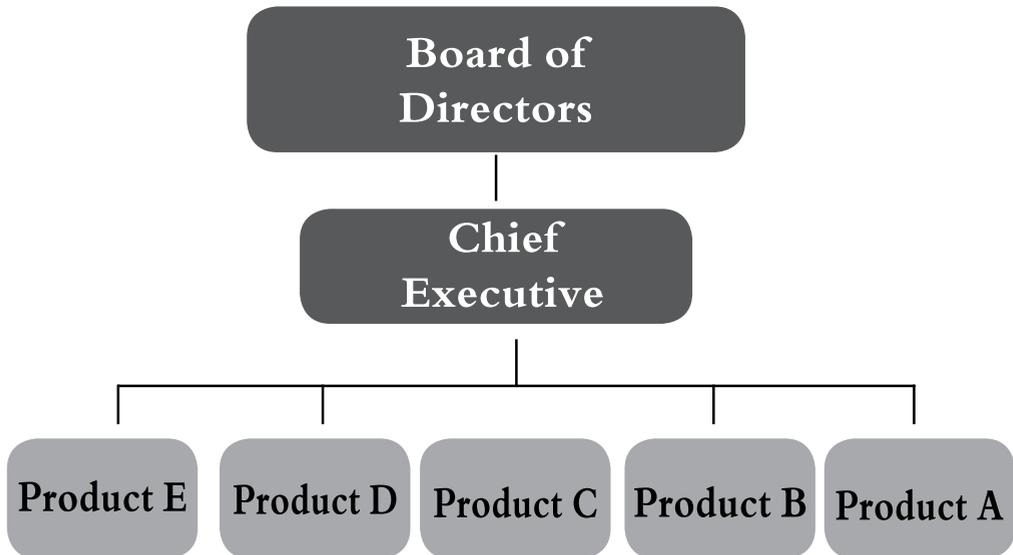
- a) Encouraging the older members of staff to seek retirement.
- b) Transferring some to other occupations within the same ministry/organisation, or to other ministries/organisations, whenever the jobs are similar in description and/or specifications, and after procuring the consent of those concerned.
- c) Re-training the superfluous employees in order to enable them to take on other jobs, whether within the public sector, or outside in the private, mixed or co-operative sectors.

2-3 Design of Organisational Structures

It is customary to draw organisation charts, in order to make clear official links among the various positions. Hence, a ministry's organisation chart will show the various organisational levels, clarifying official relationships among departments, sections and units.

It is also essential that the specific role of each unit, department, section is spelled out, thereby detailing the tasks and/or obligations of each, endeavouring in the process to avoid any duplication or ambiguity.

Figure 1 Departmentalisation on the Basis of Product/Service Category



Any organisation can be split or departmentalised on several possible bases, such as the type of product produced or service rendered. When a corporation produces four categories of automobiles, each major department may specialise in one of these, as shown in Figure 1. This implies that each department will undertake all the activities related to that type of cars, including the appointment of personnel, monitoring and control, financing, marketing, public relations and any others.

Yet, there are other bases for departmentalisation, five of which are the following¹⁵:

First, functional basis, where each department will focus a specific function, such as finance, or production/operation, or personnel, or marketing, or public relations (Figure 2).

Second, there is the division according to the type of operation, especially on the

15. J H Donnelly et. al., Op. Cit, Pages 218-225

shop-floor, such as welding, cutting, assembly etc.

Third, we can have customer-based departmentalisation, such as age-related units or complaint-type units.

Fourth, there is geographical grouping, which is linked to the area, town or region.

Figure 2 Departmentalisation on Functional Basis

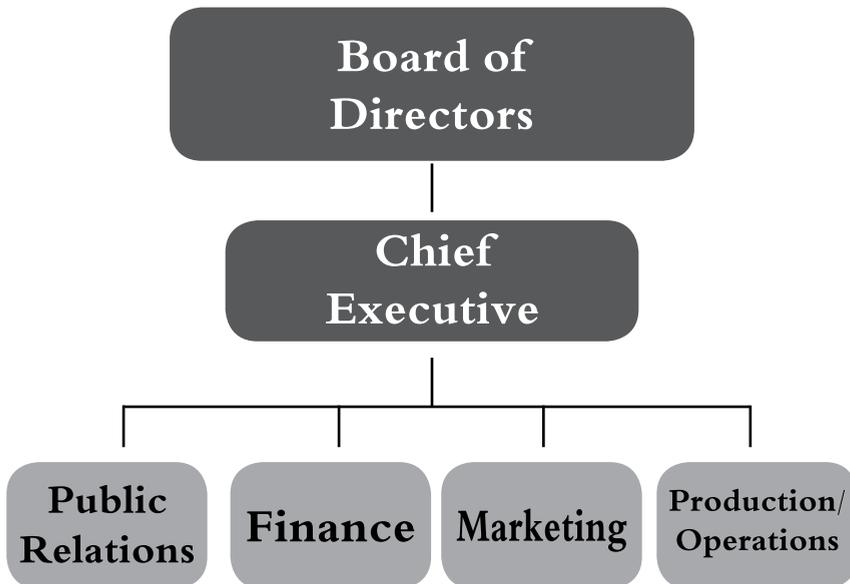
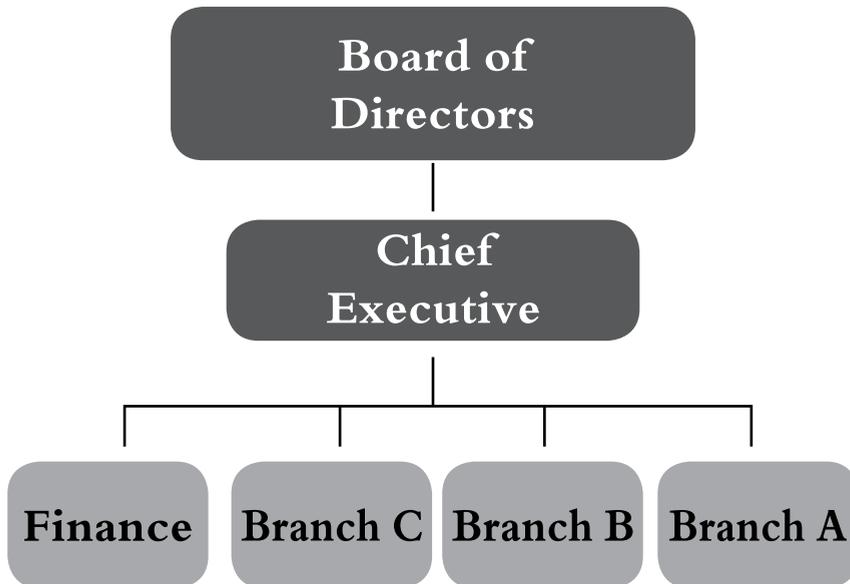


Figure 3 Mixed Grouping (Geographic-Functional)



Fifth, it is possible to have a mixed basis for departmentalisation, indicating that more than one basis is used on the same organisational level. As an example, we might apply the product-type basis, while at the same time the finance function is separated and given to a specific department independent of the others (Figure 3).

It is noteworthy that the basis used for grouping activities can vary from one organisational level to another. Thus, we might adopt the type of good/service on the first level, while the functional basis is used on the second organisational level, or vice-versa. It is also possible that the various major divisions within the same organisation might use differing bases for splitting their internal activities. The production/operations division may be divided on the basis of the type of operations, while the finance division could group its internal activities according to the type of customers.

The question arises, therefore, as to the appropriate criterion that should be used for grouping in each individual circumstance. The proper principle to adopt should be that of relative importance. When the type of customer is the critical factor influencing the generation of problems and/or complications, as well as influencing the process of decision-making, this should be adopted for grouping activities. Once again, when the type of product/service is crucial and requires

focusing from managers/employees, this should be the determining factor for departmentalisation at the relevant organisation level.

It is important to note that putting together an organisational structure for any agency/body/corporation represents only part of the organizational function. What is more important is to determine the tasks/roles of each department or unit, and indeed this needs to be done for the holder of every position. In this regard, it is necessary to spell out the exact role to be fulfilled by each group within the organisation - whether large or small - while also deciding on the number of employees within that group, in addition to describing each job-position inside every group.

Furthermore, it must be stressed that the organisation manual - including the structure and job descriptions - must be viewed as a dynamic piece, in that continually circumstances might require appropriate changes. The number of groups, their sizes and prime functions, and their titles might alter as the organisation adjusts to the outside world, number of employees increases or decreases, while authorities/responsibilities could be amended when technologies are modernised or working methods updated.

2-4 Improvements of Systems and Working Methods

There is, moreover, the requirement to design a working system that is both practical and modern. Such a system must spell out working methods/techniques, as well as clear channels for adjusting and revising these methods.

What are the stages to be followed by the ministry of planning in putting together the national development plan? And what are the steps in preparing the annual budget, by say the ministry of industry? And what is the sequence of tasks, discussions and forecasts in deciding whether to set up a new university within the framework of the ministry of higher education?

‘System analysis’ is one of the definite specialisms within the overall science of management. This field focuses on designing the optimal cycle of steps, from the point where a need/requirement is felt for a unit of product or service to the point when its actually delivered. This cycle ought to be as short as possible, with minimum cost and proper quality assurance. Care will need to

be taken to avoid confusion or needless effort, whether to customers/citizens or to employees.

It is of a paramount importance that the cycle employs appropriate techniques, tools and layouts, while managers are able to continue their monitoring role and secure the design specifications for that product/service. These matters are technical and rather settle, differing in detail among organisations and agencies, while adjustments may need to be carried out from time to time, such as raising the degree of automation or changing the sequence or locations of activities, or transferring employees among positions/tasks.

As an example, a bank will have to decide clearly on the series of steps from the point that a customer presents a cheque to the cashier until they get their money. Bank managers will also have to decide on the practical steps and procedure when a customer requests a loan until a decision is taken on their application. Regarding the appointment of new people, it is incumbent on each organisation to determine the phases and procedures from advertising a vacant position up to the final decision appointing a new recruit within the organisation.

Frequently, management experts refer to the imperative of setting policies in this field, regarding this as a major duty of higher-level managers in particular. These policies have to be drawn for the variety of activities practised within the organisation, including those relating to employees' affairs, dealing with customers, design of products/services, pricing and so on. As an example, there might be a policy setting the criteria for promotion of employees; another for investigating customer complains; a third for dealing with objections received over products/services delivered; yet another for pricing of goods and/or services rendered.

It would be fair to add in this context that an organisation's success will be shaped by the quality of these policies, and the extent to which they absorb and embody relevant factors, both internal to the organisation and external to it. In addition, the quality of these policies will materially affect the image of the organisation, quite apart from the influence on the morale of employees and their rate of turnover, the latter referring to the pace at which employees leave the organisation and get replaced by others.

2-5 Selection and Training of Managers

In this context, the issue of selecting and training managers comes to the fore. This is a central element in any reform plan. Any reform plan will only draw up the overall framework, while the effective responsibility for sensible implementation will be shouldered by managers, with the accompanying need to tackle wisely and professionally any difficulties that might arise.

All this indicates the significance of selecting competent managers for the various positions. The nature of each managerial position will need to be outlined in some detail, in order to lay down the requisite specifications for the occupier of the position. Once this is done, the position should be advertised in the media, and the proper procedure followed in order to make the final selection-cum-appointment.

It would not be wrong to emphasise that perhaps the biggest risk to any reform programme is to ask incompetent managers, or those who are not serious enough, to carry it out. Therefore, the professionalism and devotion of managers is pivotal in this regard. The scientific-cum-professional approach is for each position to be described accurately and in detail, so as to determine the specifications of that position, along with associated details concerning authority and responsibility. Job specifications must include academic/professional qualifications, any mandatory/likely experience, and personal qualities (if any). Such an approach allows clear and effective advertising, short-listing of candidates, and ultimate choice on a professional and objective basis.

Yet, it is not sufficient to appoint suitable managers. Appointment must be followed by training, both skill-related and organisation-focused. The appointment decision - if done professionally - means that person X is suitable to fill the position and to discharge its relevant duties. The prime aim of on-the-job training is to maximise the outcome, in terms of the quality and quantity rendered by the new appointee, so as to benefit the organisation and help in the attainment of its objectives.

Two categories of training can be remarked on here. The organisation-based type should acquaint the individual with the nature of the organisation, its role and functions, the organisation structure and the challenges it faces. Also, the role and significance of the individual's position within the organisation should be clarified. The other type of training is professional or technical, concentrating on how to perform the job as well as possible, as when teachers/lecturers are

instructed over the best teaching methods, or when engineers are directed on making the most practical and useful product designs.

A final note should be added here on the need for continual training, i.e. additional training from time to time. Today's world is changing fast, so much so that technologies keep developing in all fields, while fierce competition among nations and organisations has become a fact of life. Consequently, those who take the initiative, adopt new thinking, and modernise fast will surely stand above the rest.

2-6 Input-Output Ratio

Looking seriously at management endeavour, we can say emphatically that the aim is to maximise output (both qualitative and quantitative) in relation to input. If, for example, we look at the number of units produced annually of a given product (e.g. cars, men's suits, pens etc.) we may compare this with the inputs used over the year, including the number of labour hours, materials used and energy consumed. As these inputs differ in kind, it is customary to consider their total monetary value, so as to compare this with the size of output. Again, output can be measured in physical units, or we may take its monetary value.

This line of thinking applies in equal measure to service organisations whatever might be their nature, such as those involved in banking, air transport, health-care or those issuing personal documentation to ordinary citizens. Here again, we may set the final outcome over a given period (taking quality and quantity) against the inputs entered into operation, including manpower, energy, building space, equipment, materials etc.

Whenever managers are able to maximise the output against the inputs utilised, their efficiency is viewed to be higher and capability of a higher grade. What is required from management in this regard is pretty clear, and includes several aspects: proper selection of employees plus adequate training, direction and monitoring, in addition to ensuring the availability of materials and other requirements at the correct times. Then, there are the higher-level managerial activities such as planning and organising, quite apart from looking after the morale of all employees.

A simple and primary measure of efficiency can be put as follows:

Labour Efficiency Measure:

Average number of units produced per month

Average number of labour hours expended per month

The above measure can be used when we need to consider the efficiency of employees by comparing their output with the number of hours they put in.

However, we can use a more general measure by considering all inputs, including the total value of labour hours expended, the cost of materials and energy utilised, rentals paid for buildings, plus costs of other inputs. In this case, we will have the following measure:

General Measure of Efficiency:

Average number of units produced per month

Value of all inputs utilised (monthly average)

Before leaving this subject, it is pertinent to mention two points. Firstly, the measurement of efficiency is not confined to organisations or agencies offering tangible products, such as cars, bicycles, rice, tomatoes or soft drinks. It is quite possible to gauge the productivity and efficiency of a bank, university, census office, or a petroleum-filling station.

The second point is that computing the efficiency figure is not in itself very informative. What is required is to compare and contrast this figure with parallel ones, so as to be able to arrive at useful information. Three types of comparison can be noted here:

First, there is historical comparison, as when we compare this year's figure with last year's, or those of the previous three years.

Second, there is comparison with corresponding organisations/firms within the same sector or industry. We can also make comparisons among units/departments/sections/branches within the same firm or organisations.

Third, comparison with a pre-set target, as when this target had been decided upon in a given budget or a plan. We may have decided on a standard time for a patient waiting to see a doctor, or an average time to cash a cheque at a bank, or a recommend time to prepare the financial figures of a given department.

Chapter Three

Implementation of Overall Plan for Administrative Reform

It is the task of this chapter to explore how an overall programme for managerial reform might be put into practice in Iraq, with a focus on official bodies, ministries and agencies. There is first the need to evolve visions, strategies, and organization structures for each ministry, agency and major organization. Once that is done, job descriptions and specifications come next.

Job positions will have to be performed in an objective and professional manner, while the requirement to periodically appraise employees must follow. Then there is the basic matter of motivation, incentives and promotions. In order for such a programme to be realistic, execution will have to be gradual, beginning with a pilot scheme intended to set the tone and thrash out any likely obstacles or challenges on the arduous and lengthy road to reform.

3-1 Job Descriptions

Management science emphasises the necessity of describing all jobs in a clear and precise fashion, starting from the apex of the organisation pyramid, down to middle levels, ending with menial occupations. Well-managed organisations take great care to ensure that this is done. In fact, modern corporations and organs usually contain a unit/department specially set-up for employee affairs, whereby ensuring proper and accurate job descriptions is regarded as one of their chief duties.

In essence, the description spells out the various tasks demanded from the occupier of the position and the authority entrusted to him/her. What are the duties associated with a design engineer, or account auditor, or sales assistant or safety official? The authorities and responsibilities of each position must be clear and unambiguous.

‘Authorities’ are what the position-holder can take initiative on, normally without the need to consult the line-manager or anyone else. Can the manager spend money on purchasing certain items, and what is the maximum limit? Or

can they appoint new personnel or enter into a contract with another entity for the purpose of procurement? If so, what are the limits on such authorities?

Quite often, we notice that authorities are conditional, as when the position-holder is required to consult with others prior to making the final decision. Conditions of this kind are often present when personnel are appointed, or when new contracts are promulgated, or when sales promotions are made. In actual fact, an astute manager may take the initiative in consulting with other relevant individuals (or perhaps experts) even where such conditions are not stipulated, the aim being to enrich and rationalise the decision taken.

A basic and well-established axiom in management is that any position's authority must be commensurate with the holder's responsibility. While no-one objects to this fundamental principle, difficulties do often arise when we attempt to put it in practice. What the principle means is that the holder of any position must have sufficient authority in order to discharge his/her responsibilities as competently as possible.

A manager in a census documentation office might be responsible for issuing around 100 personal documents per day, and may have 50 employees as subordinates. It would be expected that this manager has the power to draw sufficient stationery from the warehouse, be able to monitor employees' time-keeping, and request suitable training for new recruits to his/her office.

However, it is probably false to assert that this correspondence between authority and responsibility is easy to achieve. Not infrequently, a manager demands wider authority than what is warranted in actual fact, in order to extend his/her power and raise the profile. Yet, top and middle managers have to keep matters in perspective, not allowing too much authority, nor too little. Thus, rational objective decisions are required.

It also occasionally happens that a manager does not utilise all the authority granted to that position, due to certain factors, such as expected conflicts or unwelcome consequences. At other times, the reverse situation might occur, i.e. the manager going beyond their correct authority. Higher-level managers need to be alert to both types of situation, not allowing either case to continue, and acting through proper direction and/or re-training.

As we can see, therefore, the existence of at least one expert in this field (i.e.

job description) within the department of employee affair is highly recommended, particularly in the case of a large or medium-sized organisation/agency. This aspect is strongly linked to a significant and specialist field in management science, namely motion-and-time study, which is an expertise particularly related to jobs and occupations that are routine and repetitive in nature, often found on lower levels of organisations.

Experts in motion-and-time study monitor the performance of a given job several times, with the aim of making adjustments in order to arrive at the best method to carry out the elements of the job. This might involve changing the sequence of the various elements, changing the equipment/tools utilised, and altering the layout of the work station. The final objective is to devise a new method that reduces the standard time (to produce one unit) to minimum, limits costs, and/or eases the task of the worker/employee, without any compromise to quality standards.

We can thus see that the description of any job will need to be related to the type of work done, and the expected productivity level. It is on this basis that job specifications can be determined, clarifying the qualifications and competences that the position-holder must possess, whether these are academic by nature or experience-related or resulting from short training courses and such like.

3-2 Periodic Appraisal of Employees

There is another ingredient of good management, which is no less vital than proper and accurate job descriptions, namely the periodic and objective evaluation of employees. Any successful company or organisation that demands respect from its environment, as well as its own workforce, must institute such a system and have it function effectively. Employees must be appraised at least once a year, while many corporations/agencies do it more frequently, e.g. every six months or every three months.

Employee appraisal must be given prime attention and be taken very seriously, otherwise it is not worth the effort, and will not gain respect from the most important quarter - the workforce! An initial requirement is to design a form that is comprehensive and appropriate for this purpose, which may differ somewhat from one section/department to another, according to the nature of the activity. The line manager must perform the appraisal for each employee during

a meeting attended by both, i.e. the line-manager and the subordinate.

Part of the form is usually devoted to the comments and impressions of the employee, also spelling out the latter's aspirations and plans for the future. This part of the form (Part A) is completed by the employee prior to the meeting. The employee would also set out his/her achievements during the relevant period, his/her future plans, difficulties encountered at work, suggestions for improvements, and any other pertinent issues.

Figure (4) presents a general model of the nature of this form, which needs to be especially designed for each organisation/agency, and probably for each department or unit. In essence, the aim is to glean objective, practical and precise information to the highest possible degree, so as to furnish a solid basis for fair and sound decisions.

At the appraisal meeting, all views and comments will be thoroughly looked at, in order to enable the line-manager to make a truly appropriate appraisal and decide over the employee's future. In the final analysis, the manager might recommend moving the individual to another job, or to be promoted, or to receive a penalty, or any other course of action - whether positive or negative.

When employees realise the importance and seriousness of this evaluation, they usually grant it the attention it deserves. If this appraisal system is seen to be operating effectively, it becomes a sharp tool of motivation, prompting the workforce towards high performance. Well-managed and successful organisations exert strenuous efforts to train their managers to be effective appraisers, including such elements as how to tackle subordinates during the appraisal meeting, sound preparation for the meeting, and how to design the appraisal form.

Figure (4) Form for Periodic Appraisal of Employees

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Part A | |
| Basic Information | Department/unit |
| | Employee's name |
| | Line-manager's name |

| | |
|--|---|
| | Date of appraisal |
| | Relevant period From..... To |
| <u>Part B</u> | |
| To be completed by the employee | Job title |
| | Main tasks done during period |
| | Difficulties faced by employee |
| | Employee's proposals |
| | Other remarks /points (add another sheet if necessary) |
| | Signature |
| <u>Part C</u> | |
| To be completed by the line-manager after the appraisal meeting | (1) General evaluation of the employee's performance a) Excellent b) Good c) Medium d) Below average e) Poor |
| | (2) Comments on (1) |

| | |
|---|--|
| | (3) Proposals concerning the employee a) Promotion (work type) b) Transfer (unit) c) Laying off d) Other proposals (add another sheet if needed) |
| | Signature |
| <u>Part D</u> | |
| To be completed by the higher manager after consulting with the line manager | Overall appraisal of the employee and proposals |
| | Signature |

3-3 Pay, Incentives, Promotions

It is generally agreed that financial compensation plays a critical role in selecting staff, who are essential for any organisation/agency, quite apart from the impact of pay in incentivising employees to carry out their jobs. There are also incentives that are not generally regarded as financial in a direct way, such as letters of appreciation, promotions, training opportunities and scholarships.

In all this, the need for management to be seen as fair and objective is absolutely paramount. Indeed, it is vital to lay down proper bases and systems for pay and incentives, in addition to the need for effective and even-handed implementation of such systems, so that all can see that justice is being applied.

All managers bear a constant responsibility to direct subordinates to be fair-minded and level-headed, abiding by systems and guidelines mandated by higher management. Also, there is the modern principles of ‘continual improvement’ adhered to by forward-looking institutions, agencies and corporations - whatever might be the nature of their activities or their size. This principle requires all

employees to be trained and periodically re-trained, so as to keep them abreast with new polices, system changes/improvements, and technological advances. All policies, systems, and procedures must be based on clear facts and relevant analysis, so that everyone gets what they deserve, while everyone else can note that the path to job progress and solid promotion goes via good effort, honesty, and professional endeavour.

As regards determination of pay, there is a specialised field in management science that deals with this issue, namely the field of 'job evaluation' which rests essentially on the job's description and the specifications associated with the holder. The normal procedure is for this evaluation to be done through a point-system, whereby a number of points are given to each of the requisite elements of the specifications, such university degree, training courses attended, number of years in service, and so on. The number of points allotted can vary among the various specialisms (engineering, accounting, law, etc.), as well as the level/advancement of the qualification (first degree, diploma, masters etc). Also, the number of points can vary in accordance with the type of work required from the position-holder and the responsibilities being borne. Once all points have been allocated under the various categories, the total is computed, and this is converted into a financial amount, on the basis of a pre-determined scale prepared for this purpose.

3-4 Initial Reform Experiment

When we contemplate the problem of administrative reform in Iraq, we note very quickly the enormity of the endeavour, and how complex it is. Hence, it is advisable to proceed in a gradual fashion, going one step at a time, so as to confront practical impediments and gradually learn from the experience.

Consequently, it might be wise to start with a small organisation/agency to make it a pilot experiment. And it would be good for this organisation to be relatively well-managed, in order to ease the burden, as the programme is just beginning. It is vital to explain the nature of the experiment to the managers in this organisation, and to gain their understanding and co-operation.

To begin with, the vision for this organisation, as well as the general strategy, will have to be discussed and finalised. Then, the organisation might require re-

structuring, as well as spelling out the job descriptions for the various positions, so as to clarify authorities and responsibilities, in addition to improving working methods and procedures.

After all this is done, job evaluations will have to be carried out in the light of relevant job specifications, while it may become imperative that some personnel will have to be laid off. Here, a question will arise regarding the best way forward. Some superfluous employees might be approaching retirement, others could be transferred to other jobs within the State network or in the private sector.

It is also possible that the reformed organisation structure will require additional personnel, and perhaps new specialisms. The new staff might replace those laid off, or be additions to the current workforce. These situations can become sensitive, as human-relations issues can arise, thereby affecting morale and staff performance.

3-5 Gradual Implementation of Reform Programme

Progress on the path of comprehensive reform should be made on a firm footing, in the light of experience and comments gleaned from the pilot experiment. It would be wise to take agencies/organisations one by one, taking cognisance of the following three points.

First, the starting point should be small agencies/offices/organisations, then moving to medium-sized and larger ones. Experience indicates that administrative reform becomes more and more complex as the organisation size gets larger. Hence, it is advisable to leave large organisations to the final stages, whereupon sufficient experience would have accumulated and the fruits of reform should become tangible to all.

Second, the relatively better managed bodies/agencies should be reformed first. Reforming these will involve fewer hurdles, raising the probability of success and providing a model to be followed, furnishing in the process a psychological boost to the reform campaign.

Third, the presence of competent managers who believe in reform and are

ready to assist in it will be crucial. Such individuals will help greatly, ensuring the requisite co-operation at the higher echelons, helping to surmount difficulties and tackle objections and problems.

Taking all the above remarks into account, we find organisations moving towards reform are normally keen to ensure the co-operation of their employees from the very early stages. Here lies the role of leadership qualities of managers, in that they have to clarify the nature of the mission and procure the understanding of the workforce, so as to assist the experts via provision of information and offering timely and honest advice.

It is vital to make all employees aware that administrative reform will serve the interests of all, and that top management puts their future at the heart of its concerns, without sacrificing their interest. It is natural that employees might consider their interest - even their livelihood - to be threatened when a reform programme of this kind gets under way. They might dread the possibility of being transferred to other positions, or even losing their jobs.

Therefore, it is advisable that the workforce are properly assured - right from the start. Top managers must give assurances that nothing will be imposed on the staff against their will. The point must be driven home that in the final analysis the changes will produce palatable results to the advantage of all, with some of these benefits being tangible and obvious, while others will be intangible. All this may be viewed through the perspective of human relations, attention to which constitutes a major pillar within the overall activity and endeavour of every caring and astute manager.

Chapter Four

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is the task of this chapter to summarise the previous three, so as to present the chief issues that have been put forward in this paper. At the start, the focus was on the significance of modern management, providing a historical background of the state of management in Iraq and current - rather dire - situation. The need to evolve the strategies and objectives for each agency/organisation was emphasised, along with a clear organisation structure and exposition of the role of every unit, department, section - indeed for each member of staff.

After that, the question of working methods and the overall operating system were considered, with the overriding aim of simplifying and rationalising matters, purporting to attain fairness for all, lowering costs, ensuring transparency and attaining pre-set targets. At this juncture, the issue of selecting competent managers comes to the fore, with a special role for well-focused training, as well as proper monitoring and periodic appraisal for all members of the workforce.

It is not possible to ignore morale as a central issue. It is well-documented that morale has a deep impact on the state of human-relations among employees, quite apart from the proven link to productivity - both qualitative and quantitative. The many researches done in this area have shown several factors to influence the state of morale, including working conditions (lighting, air-conditioning, ventilation, work-station layout, etc.), in addition to financial compensation (salaries, allowances, increments etc.) and other non-financial rewards. Add to all this the suitability of the manager and his/her emotional and practical abilities, including the readiness to hear subordinates' views/comments and the methods utilised to direct, train and motivate members of staff.

4-1 First Priority

There is no doubt that comprehensive administrative reform in Iraq is a complex and marathon project - by whatever yardstick we deploy. This project will intertwine, connect and dovetail with major political, economic, social,