



A Guide to Smooth and Effective Operations

By Brendon Buthello

Handling company operations is not a trivial task; it's a complicated one. It's not about marketing widgets or increasing sales but selling ideas to your own staff as an operations manager. Operational tactics should be convincing, to say the least, and fairly practical. Forming theories about what has to be done is always the easier part. Putting theories into practice requires faith in one's plans and exercising authority. This article explores some ideal operational tactics that can be put into practice for smoother operations.



Noted American author and philosopher Henry David Thoreau said more than a century ago, "Things do not change, we do." The underlying meaning of this sentence clearly reflects the solution to smoother operations within an organization. I would like

to present some ideas which might prove helpful to operations managers and directors tasked with handling company operations smoothly and effectively:

- Identifying oneself as an authority is very important to a top operations executive. The ideas put forth by you may not always be the best ones, but your contributions and opinions play an important role in reaching the best solution. Dozens and dozens of potential solutions must be considered before arriving at a plan. Being creative and outgoing is more important than supplying the best idea every time.
 - To think of better strategies, allocate some time to think about operational problems amidst your busy schedule. Allocating time to think about certain topics results in innovative strategies and inventive tactics.
 - Persuasion drives leadership. Successful operations managers and COOs have to convince their staffs of the benefits of their points of view in order to get things done.
 - Make your operations staff feel important by asking for their support and delegating important tasks to relevant professionals in the group.
 - Most of the time, "fear-of-failure syndrome" is vastly exaggerated. Operations managers sometimes feel that the risk involved in a particular project is too great given the potential rewards. A "risk-versus-reward" mindset can prove to be detrimental to company ambitions. Instead, focus should be diverted to the process rather than the result for smooth functioning of a venture.
- Risks usually are imaginable, and they can be managed by using the "untying-the-rope" approach: loosening the strands by diving right in and observing how the problem will permeate the company. By getting to the crux of a risk, one can solve any problem effectively. Rather than worrying about the worst, start expecting the worst, and then plan steps to nullify the potential impact.
 - Always be enthusiastic. As a leader, take the initiative to pep things up if the work is bogging everyone down.
 - If certain company operations are preventing the company from focusing on its objectives, it may be wise to outsource the non-core sections of the company to independent companies that specialize in outsourcing activities. It is cost-effective and saves substantial money to divert to fulfilling more useful tasks.
 - It has rightly been said that when cooperation is at work, communities prosper. Patricia Cumbie, a writer and consultant for Cooperative Development Services (CDS), claims that for 90% of the problems in today's businesses, poor operations are responsible. The best indicator of successful operational tactics is employee and customer satisfaction. Cumbie also quotes Mel Braverman, another consultant and team leader at CDS, who says "operations are like a jigsaw puzzle for your organization. You don't put it together all at once, and there are logical steps to follow by looking at labor, margin, and expenses."
 - Promote a culture of accountability in the company, with you as an operations manager setting an example by taking the blame for anything that goes wrong. This will help others to be more proactive and responsible.



Operations Career Feature

Conclusion

- According to experts, company operations should be managed like a ship — always balance the cargo on board equally on all sides so that the ship does not tilt on one side. Operations managers can handle

company operations effectively and smoothly if they are willing to cooperate, be receptive to suggestions, and put the company's interests above their own interests.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.