

## IFE GRAD PAPER

### MAIN SUBJECT AREAS AND WHAT THEY COVER.

#### 1 PLANNING, CONTROL AND REVIEW.

**Health and Safety.** It's important that staff are kept safe within the workplace, especially if it's a place where there are many dangers, such as having to fight fires.

**Leadership.** It's the role of leaders to make things happen so that things run smoothly.

Think about whether or not the people who are your bosses do this and how they do it.

**Leadership Styles.** Different situations sometimes need different ways of doing things, but using the wrong style can affect motivation.

**Planning.** In any organisation things don't just happen, there has to be some sort of plan. The better the plan, the better the organisation. Think about the sorts of plans that you work to. Team Leaders will often be working to organisational plans which mean they have responsibilities to customers and suppliers of goods, services and work colleagues who are often described as internal customers and suppliers.

**Team Leadership.** In most organisations people work in some sort of team and the way in which the team is led can have a major effect on how well the team operates. Think about the way in which your team works.

#### 2 INTRODUCTION TO QUALITY MANAGEMENT.

**Budgetary Control.** All organisations have to work to some sort of budget because no one has an endless supply of money. So there has to be a record of how much money is available in the first place and how it is being spent and who is responsible for spending it. The role of managers and team leaders often involves making sure that they do not overspend their budget

**Effective Recording Systems.** The purpose of recording systems is to show what is happening in an organisation so that managers can tell if things are on track, to identify problems that might be happening and to take action to prevent problems now or in the future. A budget is a form of record system, but there are others such as targets that need to be met, numbers of staff employed, repairs that need to be carried out, training that has taken place, accidents which have happened. Think about the records you keep and why you keep them.

**Employee Training and Development.** For most organisations people are their main resource so it's important that everyone has the right skills they need to do the job. Over time people often have to develop new skills as the demands on an organisation change. Think about new skills you might have had to develop.

**Quality Assurance.** Many organisations have formal quality assurance schemes in place to try and ensure that things run smoothly, the idea being that people do the

right things the first time and every time, so that staff time, money and equipment are not wasted due to mistakes.

**Team Leadership** .Very often the role of a team leader will involve working to a budget, keeping accurate records, making sure staff have the right skills, making sure that staff do a good job and making sure that correct procedures are followed.

### **3 USE AND CONTROL OF RESOURCES.**

**Communication Systems.** All organisations need ways of letting staff know about rules and procedures that they have to follow, things going on within the organisation so that they feel part of things and ways of letting staff put forward ideas to improve things. Sometimes information has to be put across in meetings or in reports.

**Delegation.** Managers and team leaders usually don't have time to do everything they are responsible for themselves, so they have to delegate some work to others and with most things there are good ways and poor ways to delegate.

**Motivation.** Having staff who feel interested in their work and who want to do a good job is important for all organisations. The way staff are treated by managers and team leaders can have an important effect on them. People usually respond best when they are treated with respect and when they feel that their manager is interested in them as a person.

**Resource Management.** Managers and Team Leaders are often responsible for using a range of different things to get a job done. These can include, money, staff, information, equipment, buildings, Think about all the different things which are used if you have to fight a fire.

**Team Leadership.** Leading a team very often involves making sure that the resources mentioned above are used properly.

**Communication Systems.** Team leaders very often have to make staff aware of the resources that are available for getting a job done and have to ensure that they clearly provide information and ensure that staff know what is expected of them and what deadlines they are working to.

### **4 MANAGEMENT AND SELF DEVELOPMENT.**

**Communication Systems.** Part of being a good manager or team leader is to be good at communicating, to let people know what is needed of them and also to make them feel able to put forward ideas.

**Confidentiality.** Staff need to know that private information about them is not shared with others. Being able to trust a manager is very important.

**CPD.** It's important for anyone who sees him or herself as being professional to carry out CPD, so that they always keep abreast of things and that any advice they give is good advice.

**Grievance Procedures.** In practically all organisations things happen which can lead to staff feeling upset about something and grievance procedures provide a way of dealing with such situations so that they can be solved and so that things can get back to normal. In general an aggrieved employee is an unhappy and less productive employee.

**Handling Conflict.** On occasions conflict and upset can happen in most organisations and the way that it is handled by managers and team leaders can have an important effect. If it's handled well then the problem is solved, if it's handled badly, it can have an effect on working relationships for a long time. Think about any situations you have come across and how they were handled.

**Information Management.** All organisations depend on information to operate effectively, so they need to identify just what information is important. Do they have ways of collecting the information? Do they have ways of ensuring that facts and figures collected are correct? If the facts and figures are not correct, you get GIGO—garbage in garbage out. Do they have ways of looking at the information on a regular basis and ways of using it if it is showing up problems? Nowadays most organisations collect, store and analyse information using

**Information Technology.** Think about the information that you collect and how it is used. The idea is to turn data into information, information into knowledge and knowledge into wisdom.

**Leadership.** It's important for leaders to demonstrate that they are committed to CPD to help retain the respect of staff and colleagues.

**Planning.** Development activities need to be planned and the IFE CPD process is one way of doing this and is the approach taken by most professional associations and institutions.

**Supervision.** Supervision skills can be developed by reading about different approaches and different theories and reflecting on situations and how these were handled.

**Team Leadership.** Team leadership is an important skill and can be developed over time. A new team leader is unlikely to know everything on their first day in the job, but they can set out a development programme for themselves by identifying the skills needed and areas where they need to improve.

**Time Management.** Most people have more work than time available in which to do it, so it is important to manage time effectively, by such things as delegation, prioritising, using information and having procedures in place.

## **5 RECRUITMENT.**

**Planning.** Both managers and team leaders need to be aware of the numbers and types of staff they need to get work done. Over time these can change as new requirements are placed on an organisation. Consideration: Is security now more important at your airport because of potential terrorist threats?

**Job Descriptions.** These are used as a way of letting people know what is expected of them if they are going to apply for a job; they are also used as part of staff appraisal.

**Employee Specifications.** These are used to identify what knowledge; abilities and competences are needed for a job to be done well and are an important part of recruiting the right person for the job. The wrong person can cause a lot of problems for an organisation.

**Recruitment.** This involves a range of processes, such as advertising, sending out information, selecting people for interview, holding interviews and deciding on the best candidate. Managers and team leaders might be involved in drawing up job descriptions and employee specifications, telling potential applicants about the job, selecting people for interview on the basis of the employee specification and being part of the interview panel.

**Selection Procedures.** The most popular panel is one involving managers and team leaders. Sometimes tests are used as part of deciding who should get the job. Did you have to do any tests to get your job?

## **6 INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT**

**Employee Training and Development.** Managers and team leaders need to make sure that staff have the competencies and right attitude to work within an organisation and so ensuring there are ways of training and developing staff is important.

**Evaluation of Training Needs.** Before training is provided it is important to identify just what is needed. This can be done by looking at which competencies need to be kept up to date and seeing what new demands there will be in the future which might need new skills. In a Fire Service new pieces of equipment often mean that people need to be trained to use them safely and effectively. Organisations often like to ensure that staff have the skills needed for them to be promoted and / or given more responsibility.

**Individual and Team Development.** All teams are made up of individual employees, each of whom will have their own training needs. However, very often work is carried out on a team basis, like in fire fighting, and so it can be important for the team as a whole to be developed.

**Performance Monitoring.** Managers and team leaders have to monitor the way in which employees and teams are performing to ensure that they are working effectively. Doing this will often identify training and development needs.

**Planning of Development Activities.** The way in which training and development is provided will depend on the competencies to be developed. Different methods can be used to achieve this.

**Providing Feedback to Staff.** Very often training and development will mean letting

staff know how they have get on. Also many organisations have staff appraisal schemes where staff sit down with their line manager and discuss their work. New staff often need information on how they are getting on. Sometimes more experienced staff need advice on their performance if it's not to a required standard. The way in which these situations are handled can have a major effect on motivation and working relationships

**CPD/ own Development Plans.** CPD. It's important for anyone who sees themselves as being professional to carry out CPD, so that they always keep abreast of things and that any advice they give is good advice. The IFE CPD scheme identifies ways in which CPD can be carried out. By showing a commitment to CPD, managers and team leaders can set an important example to their staff.

**Staff Appraisal.** Many organisations have formal appraisal schemes so that the contribution staff make to the organisation can be explained to them and targets agreed for the coming year. The scheme also gives staff the opportunity to raise issues of concern. The way the staff appraisal is operated by managers and team leaders can affect the motivation of employees. Do you have a staff appraisal scheme at your place of work?

**Team Leadership.** Managers and team leaders are responsible for developing the way in which their team works to ensure that it is effective and that people work together in cooperation. The way in which a team is managed affects how effective it is - so good leadership skills are important.

**Team Work Plans.** Teams very often work to plans with targets which they have to meet and so need to be aware of the plans and how they contribute to achieving this. Where new work or tasks are involved then it is important that the team has the right skills or receives training.

## **7 IMPROVING TEAM PERFORMANCE.**

**Causes of Poor Performance.** There are many factors which can affect the performance of individuals and teams and managers and team leaders need to be aware of these and how problems can be approached.

**Confidentiality.** Staff who are performing badly may have personal problems which are affecting their work which they don't want other people to know about. Maintaining confidentiality whilst finding ways to help them is important

**Disciplinary Procedures.** Some times staff do not heed advice and continue to perform badly or cause problems. To deal with such situations organisations have disciplinary procedures so that they get a fair hearing and the chance to improve.

**Effective Working Relationships.** Teams tend to work best when people work together in a spirit of cooperation. Developing good teams is part of the work of managers and team leaders.

**Employee Training and Development.** All teams are made up of individual employees each of whom will have their own training needs. However very often

work is carried out on a team basis, like in fire fighting and so it can be important for the team as a whole to be developed. It is the role of managers and team leaders to identify the training needs that would help the performance of their teams

**How to support Team members.** Supporting staff involves demonstrating good leadership skills and also being aware of the different types of help within the organisation for employees who might be experiencing personal problems.

## **8 INFORMATION COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS.**

**Confidentiality.** In terms of personal information about staff it is important for staff relationships to be handled sensitively and staff should not feel "spied on". In some organisations where there might be commercial rivals information can be valuable and staff need to be aware of this and ensure that they do not reveal sensitive information.

**Effective meetings.** One way in which organisations share information. This may be achieved using meetings and it is important to ensure that these are well organised.

**Effective recording systems.** All organisations rely on information. It is important that good recording procedures are in place so that information is available when needed, can be accessed by relevant staff, is up to date and is relevant to what the organisation does.

**Investigations.** Some times organisations have to carry out various types of investigations and it is important that these are well organised, take into account the resources that will be needed and identify timescales and deadlines.

**Planning Meetings.** The purpose of meetings needs to be clearly identified, so that they can be properly planned to make them effective and not seen as a waste of time

**Providing feedback to staff.** Managers and team leaders often have to provide technical information to staff or pass on information from higher up the organisation. This needs to be done clearly to ensure that staff understand what they have been told.

**Team Leadership.** Team leadership very often involves the collection of information in a timely and accurate manner, sitting down with staff to analyse the information and identify ways to tackle any problems areas which the information reveals.

**Team Work Plans.** These can often be based on management information and organisational plans, for example where targets have to be met by certain dates. Team leaders need to take this into account in the management of their team and make sure everyone understands what they need to do.