

# Planning

Planning is the first function performed by managers that determines the pattern of actions needed for meeting situations in the future in order to attain organizational goals.

Planning is also a management function that produces and integrates objectives, policies and strategies.

Planning is defined as the process of deciding what objectives will be pursued within a future time frame and what will be done in order to achieve those objectives.

## \* **Planning Process :**

(1) **Setting Objectives:** This is the primary step in the process of planning which specifies the objective of an organization, i.e. what an organization wants to achieve. Objectives are end results which the management wants to achieve by its operations.

(2) *Developing Premises* : These planning premises are also of two types – internal and external. External assumptions deal with factors such as political environment, social environment, the advancement of technology, competition, government policies, etc. Internal assumptions deal with policies, availability of resources, quality of management, etc.

(3) **Identifying Alternatives**

The third step of the planning process is to identify the alternatives available to the managers. There is no one way to achieve the objectives of the firm, there is a multitude of choices. All of these alternative courses should be identified. There must be options available to the manager.

#### (4) Examining Alternate Course of Action

The next step of the planning process is to evaluate and closely examine each of the alternative plans. Every option will go through an examination where all there pros and cons will be weighed. The alternative plans need to be evaluated in light of the organizational objectives.

#### (5) Selecting the Alternative

Finally, we reach the decision making stage of the planning process. Now the best and most feasible plan will be chosen to be implemented. The ideal plan is the most profitable one with the least amount of negative consequences and is also adaptable to dynamic situations.

#### (6) Formulating Supporting Plan

Once you have chosen the plan to be implemented, managers will have to come up with one or more supporting plans. These secondary plans help with the implementation of the main plan. So all these secondary plans are in fact part of the main plan.

#### (7) Implementation of the Plan

And finally, we come to the last step of the planning process, implementation of the plan. This is when all the other functions of management come into play and the plan is put into action to achieve the objectives of the organization.