

Business Services - Common Problems:

Inappropriate or misunderstood management reports

The business is not maximising the benefits which can be extracted from the use of effective and efficient management reports.

Indicators

- Management reports are rarely used in the decision-making process.
- Management reports are not understood by key operational people; instead they are just filed or ignored.

Causes of the problem

- Management do not understand the reports.
- Management have never indicated what information they require from the reports.
- The reports are too detailed and bulky.
- The people who designed and created the reports do not understand how or why the reports will be used.
- The people compiling the reports are not sufficiently qualified to produce the information required by management.
- The reports are not up-to-date or they are not submitted to management in a timely manner.

Short term solutions

- Ensure all reports are as current as possible and delivered to management on time, therefore set out dates for their submission.
- Management should explain what information they require from the reports, and the use of the reports, to those responsible for the reports' preparation (eg have regular meetings to discuss needs).
- The reports should be made as simple and concise as possible.

Long term solutions

- Encourage the use of management reports to set and monitor 'action plans' (i.e., use the reports to examine the progress of developments or changes).
- Training should be conducted to:
 - Teach management how to use reports; and
 - Teach staff how to prepare required reports.
- Regular meetings should be conducted to alter reports to meet managements' changing needs.
- Regular meetings should be held to discuss and evaluate the progress of the business, using these reports.



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