

# INFS 212

# Principles of Management

## Session 8 – Authority Relationships

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# UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

College of Education

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# Session Overview

An organisation needs to be structured in such a manner that human and physical resources are brought to action to achieve goals and objectives. In this connection, authority relationships need to be established so that there is a clear line of authority and cohesiveness among workers. It is equally important to establish who should report to whom, how many levels of managers should be available as well as the number subordinates each manager can properly supervise.

# Session Overview

Further, it is important for anyone being given a piece of work to have the necessary authority to be able to carry out that job. Besides, that individuals must be responsible and accountable for the results of that job. In this session, I will discuss reporting relationships among positions and delegation of authority.

# Session Objectives

## Objectives

After completing this section, you should be able to

- Explain the different reporting relationship i.e. the chain of command and span of control
- Define and explain the concepts ; authority, responsibility and accountability
- Explain of delegation of authority and how it takes place in the organisation
- Explain the differences between line and staff structures

# Session Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:

Topic one: Positions and Authority Relationships

Topic two: Delegation of Authority

Topic Three: The Delegation Process

# Reading List

1. Robbins, S.P. & DeCenzo D.A. (2008) *Fundamentals of Management: Essential concepts and applications*, (Sixth Edition), Pearson, Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ. (**Read Chapter 5, pages 130-151**)
  
2. Chandan JS (2002). *Management: Concepts and Strategies*. New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, PVT Ltd (**Read Chapters 9 & 10: Pages 201-210 & 224-247**).

Topic One

# **POSITIONS AND AUTHORITY RELATIONSHIPS**

Slide 7



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# Authority Relationship

## Chain of Command

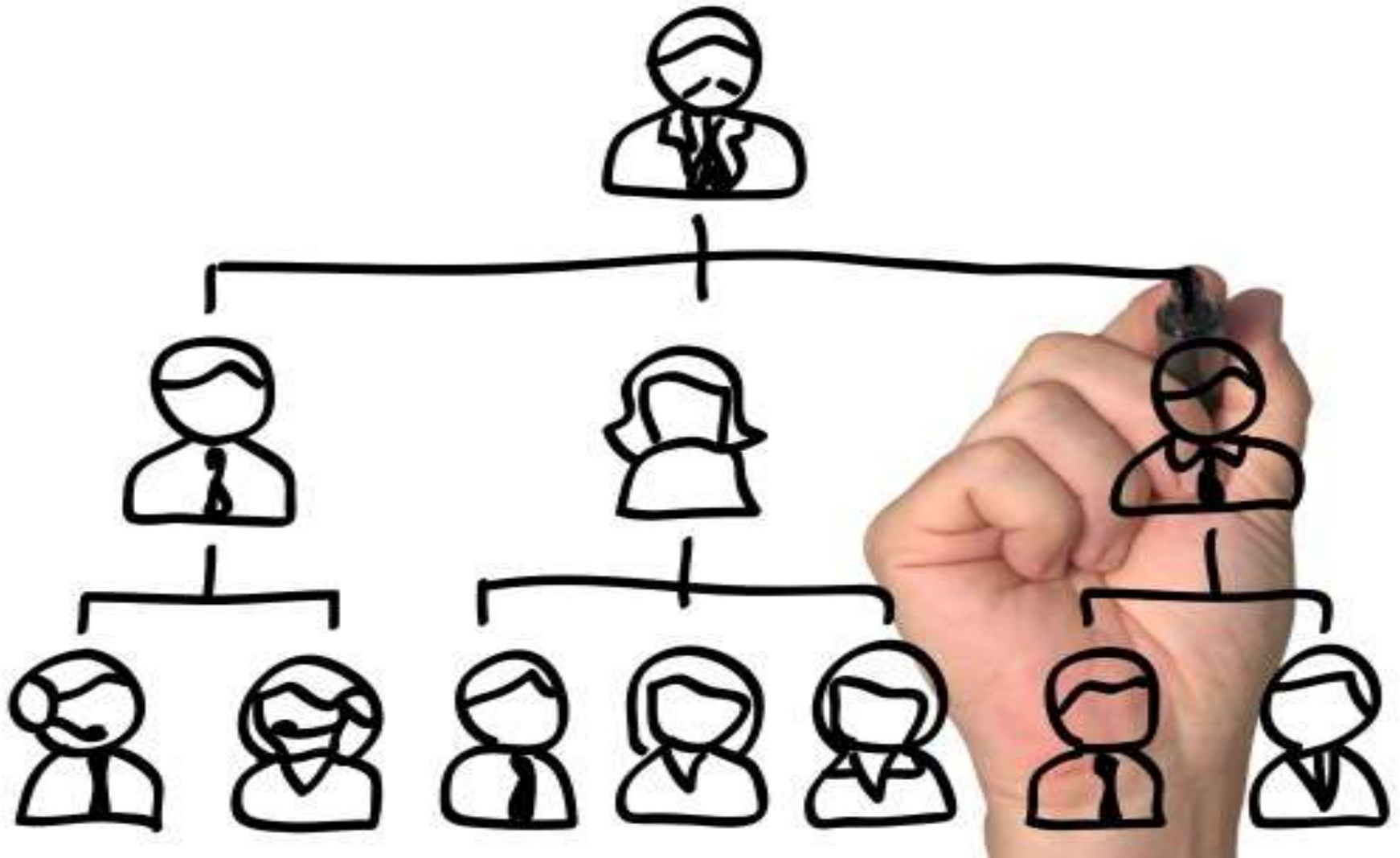
This is a clear and distinct line of authority among positions in an organisation. The concept of chain of command is based two underlying principles

- ❑ **The Unity of Command**
- ❑ **The Scalar Principle**

A related concept is the Span of Management or Control



# Authority Relationship



# Authority Relationship

## ❑ Unity of command

Each person within an organisation must have a clear reporting relationship with one and only one boss

### UNITY OF COMMAND



# Authority Relationship

## **Scalar Principle**

There must be a clear and unbroken line of authority that extends from the lowest to the highest position in an organisation

# Authority Relationship

## Scalar Chain

Scalar chain means line of authority or chain of superiors from highest to lowest rank. Organisation should have a chain of authority and responsibility that runs from top to bottom and should be followed by manager.

Every info. must pass through every key of this chain, no skipping of any one key should be allowed. In case of emergency when information has to be passed so Fayol has permitted a short cut in the chain which is called "gang – plank". Gang plank permits direct communication between the employees working at the same level of authority without following scalar chain. It leads to systematic flow of chain.



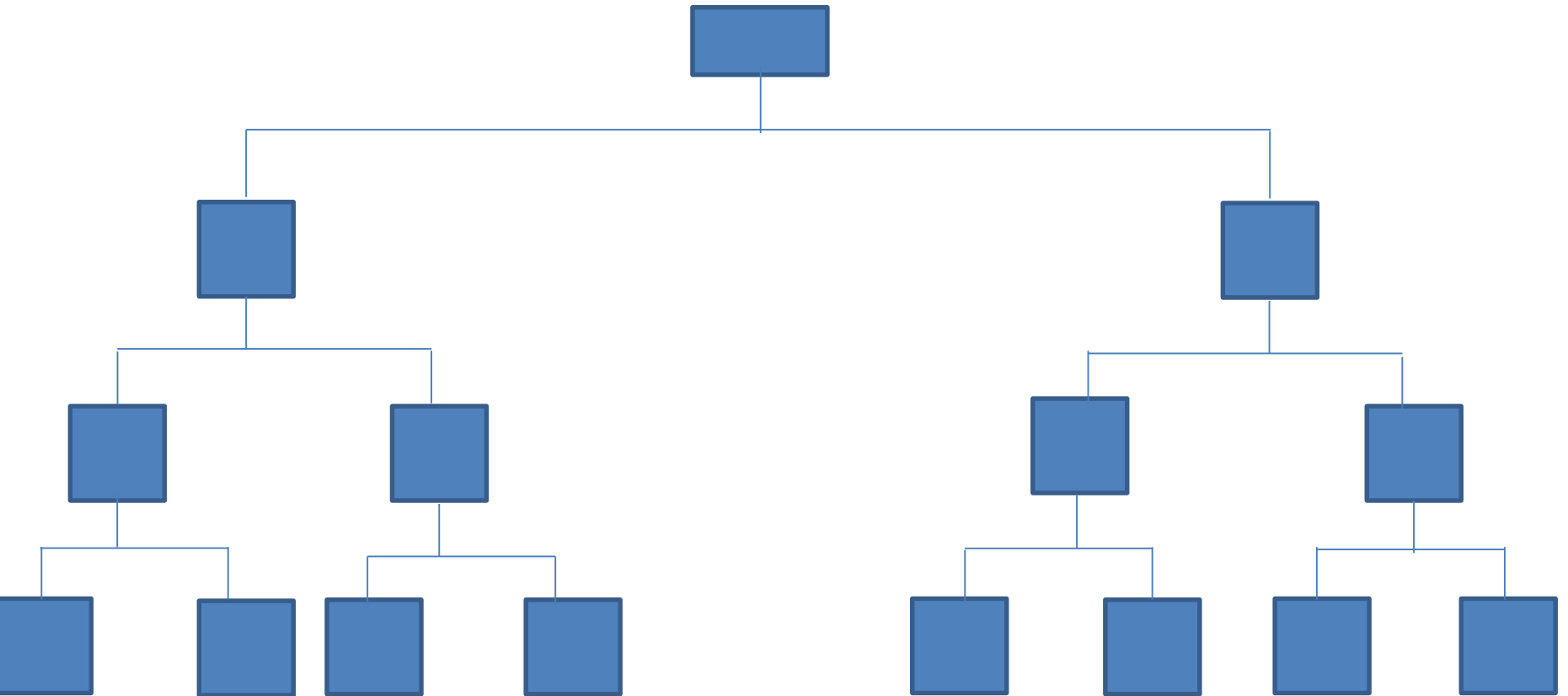
# Authority Relationship

## □ Span of Management

- This refers to the number of subordinates a manager can effectively manage. This defines the span of management or span of control. This varies from one situation to another. There is no magical number

# Authority Relationship

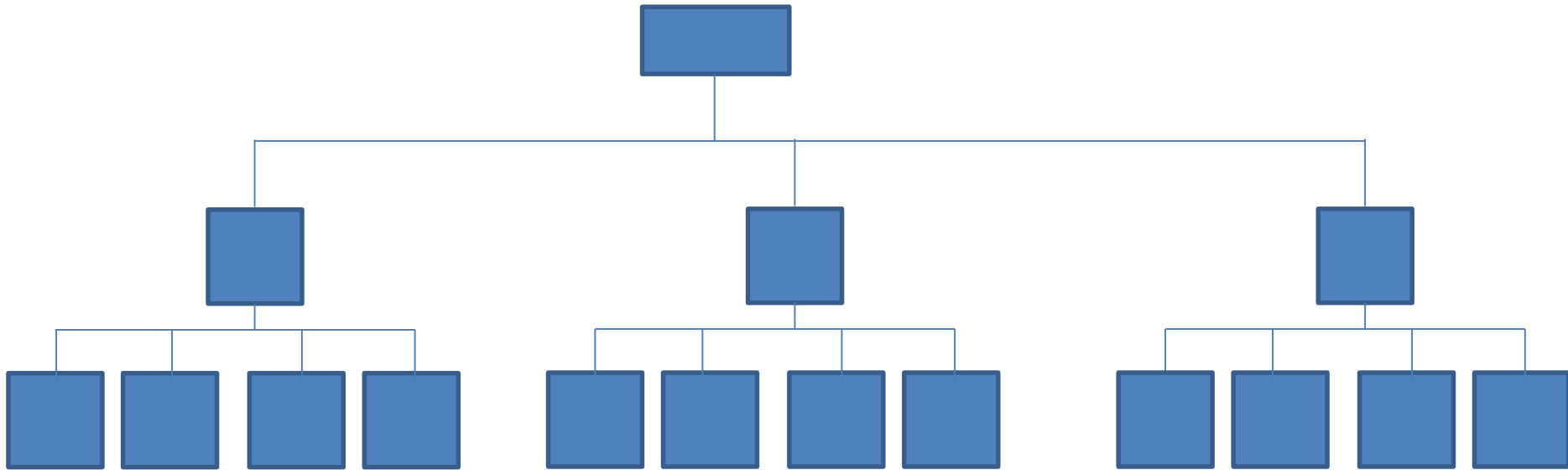
## Span of Management



**Tall Span**

# Authority of Relationship

## Span of Management



**Wide Span**

# Authority Relationships

## □ Line And Staff Authority

### Line Authority

- Managers with line authority are those people in the organisation who are directly responsible for achieving organisational goals.
- Line authority is represented by the standard chain of command, starting from the board of directors and extending down through various levels in the hierarchy to the point where the basic activities of the organisation are carried out.
- Line authority is based primarily on legitimate power.



# Authority Relationships

## Staff Authority

- Belongs to those individuals or groups in an organisation who provide services and advice to line managers.
- The concept of staff includes all elements of the organisation that are not classified as line. Staff provides managers with varied types of expert help and advice.
- Staff authority is based primarily on expert power.

# Authority Relationships

## □ Line and Staff Structure



Topic Two

# DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY



# Delegation of Authority

## Delegation Defined

The process of allocating tasks to subordinates, giving them adequate authority to carry out those assignments and making them obliged to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

# Elements in the Delegation Process

- Authority**
- Responsibility**
- Accountability**

# Elements of Delegation

## □ Authority

Authority is one of the 'glues' that holds an organisation "together".

From organisational viewpoint Authority is the right that a manager has to request or require subordinates to do something to accomplish organisational goals.

# Elements of Delegation

## Authority and Power

Authority is the *right to do* something. On the other hand, *power is the ability* to do something

# Elements of Delegation

## Types of Authority

1. Legal Authority
2. Traditional Authority
3. Charismatic Authority





# Elements of Delegation

## Types of Power

### Position Power

1. Legitimate Power
2. Coercive Power
3. Reward Power
4. Reward Power
5. Information Power

# Elements of Delegation

## Types of Power

### Personal Power

1. Expert
2. Referent Power

# Elements of Delegation

## ☐ Responsibility

Responsibility is closely related to authority and power.

Responsibility is the *obligation* to do something. In organisations, responsibility is the duty that one has to perform his organisational tasks, functions or assignments.



# Elements of Delegation

## □ Accountability

“Accountability refers to the fact that each person who is given authority ... must recognize that the superior above him will judge the quality of his performance” Hicks). Each organisational member is obliged to report to his superior how well he has exercised his responsibility and the use of authority delegated to him

Topic Three

# THE DELEGATION PROCESS

Slide 29



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# The Delegation Process

Delegation of authority involves the following steps:

1. Assignment of duties
2. Granting Authority
3. Creating Responsibility and Accountability



# Some Merits of Delegation

## Some Advantages of Delegation

1. It frees a manager from time consuming duties
2. Timely decisions by lower level managers
3. Subordinate managers can reach their fullest potential if given the chance
4. Results in quick decisions
5. Serves as training ground for subordinates

# The Delegation Process

## Problems with Delegation

1. Some managers feel that they need to be in total control over the organisation
2. Some managers lack confidence in their subordinates or fear the consequences of having subordinates make decisions
3. Some subordinates are reluctant to assume an equal amount of responsibility and this inhibits the delegation process in a variety of ways
  - Subordinates are already overworked



# Problems with Delegation

They are also reluctant because

- Subordinates fear criticisms for making a bad decision
- It's easier to let the boss make the decisions; subordinates usually feel that making decisions is the boss's job
- Subordinates are lack self-confidence
- There is a lack of incentive or reward for assuming a greater work



# Summary

- In this Session you learned about authority and reporting relationships in organisations. You learned that:
- Chain of command is a clear and distinct line of authority among the positions in an organization
- Chain of command is based on two underlying management principles namely, **the unity of command** and **the scalar principle**. The unity of command suggests that each person within the organization must have a clear reporting relationship to one and only one boss. The scalar principle suggests that there must be clear and unbroken line of authority that extends from the lowest to the highest position in the organization

# Summary con't

- The span of management or span of control refers to the number of subordinates that a single manager can effectively supervise.
- Having a narrow span means having a few subordinates to control. This results in **tall organizations**. Having a wide span means having many subordinates to control. This results in **flat organizations**.
- Factors which determine the appropriate span of management include: routineness and simplicity of work, geographic dispersion of subordinates, subordinates training and experience, management by exception, use of assistants

# Sample Questions to be considered

1. Explain the following terms:
  - Authority
  - Responsibility
  - Accountability
2. Explain in detail
  - Line Organisation
  - Line and Staff Organisation
3. What factors will you consider before delegating authority?

# References

1. Robbins, S.P. & DeCenzo D.A. (2008) *Fundamentals of Management: Essential concepts and applications*, (Sixth Edition), Pearson, Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ. **(Read Chapter 5, pages 130-151)**
  
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