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Learning Activity 1, Theme 1

The 21st century manager is the person tasked to implement the leader's vision and mission for the organization. The manager does this with the help of Fayol's theoretical framework known as the four pillars of management: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. This week, we begin our examination of the four pillars of management with the first function, planning.

The planning stage of management is considered by most to be the most important because of the advantages that planning has for achieving goals. Due to the complexity of the business landscape in the 21st century managers are faced with planning and the need for quick change. The agile organization attempts to address the advantages and disadvantages of planning.

- Explore the Internet and retrieve articles that discuss the pros and cons of the planning function.
- Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages to the planning function and explain how the manager in an agile organization may use both to his or her advantage.

Learning Activity 2, Theme 2

There are several elements that result from the planning stage but for our purposes we will focus on the development of long-term and short-term goals. Long-term goals are set by the owners, leaders or upper management depending on the structure, size or type of organization. Long-term goals reflect the big-picture goals and objectives are directly related to the purpose and vision that the leaders and owners develop. In today's change-dominated business environment long-term goals are set to be accomplished in 2-3 years' time as opposed to the previous century's 5-10 years.

Long-term goals are often created through planning and strategizing. The process begins with the vision and mission of the business. To understand the concepts of vision and mission and their role in the process, you will take the role of the leader and formulate the vision and mission of an organization.

- Create a vision statement and mission statement to fit the company described below. Make sure to explain why the vision statement and mission statement fit the company. Be sure to use the course readings in your response to support your reasoning.

Mohammed Abul and his family own the Long-lasting Boot (LLB) store. LLB is a specialty boot store located in the downtown area in a medium sized city Scottsdale, Arizona and sells a broad line of boots to all members of the family including a novelty pet line. The store sells boots for work and recreation as well as a line of expensive cowboy boots for the tourist trade. The business is twenty-five years old. It has a reputation for being the best place to get boots in the community because of the selection, quality, and customer service. LLB will even work with custom designed boots for people with unusually sized feet or medical problems. The boots in some instances, work boots in particular, are considered expensive by middle class buyers but the construction quality is so long-lasting that it makes the higher prices seem worthwhile. The store is successful but sales are very slow growing at the moment. The family is looking to boost sales by developing a competitive edge for the future.

Hint: Before you begin be sure that you clearly understand the difference between a vision and mission statement as well as the purpose they each serve.