

CONCURRENCY, SYNERGY AND COHERENCE IN MANAGEMENT

Hatim Kanpurwala

Information Technology & Management Consultant, Mumbai, India

Email: hatimk@rediffmail.com

INTRODUCTION

In this paper we will explore the concepts/issues of Concurrency, Synergy and Coherence in Management with a suitable example. All good managers perform or should perform tasks in a Concurrent, Synergistic fashion and with Coherence in execution of projects/assignments.

OBSERVATIONS

Let us illustrate this idea with a suitable simple example. Suppose we are given the job of serving lunch to our guests at a Conference. What are the main tasks for this, namely,

- That food is cooked in time and it is delicious to eat.
- There is enough space for the guests and the dining room is nice and clean
- There is sufficient furniture/vessels to lay the table and they are clean, assuming it is a buffet lunch
- Linen is clean and the crockery is dry/clean and sufficient for the guests
- There is sufficient Cold drinks/Water and/or Sweet dishes for the guests to down the food with
- There are sufficient Waste baskets to dispose of the food plates and assorted items
- There is a washroom for ladies and gents
- There are sufficient waiters and helpers available to serve the food and do assorted tasks

The good manager realizes that the above tasks are sufficient and necessary to execute the job; also he realizes that these tasks can be and should be carried out concurrently, synergistically and with coherence to smoothly execute his job (and we shall see how); also there are several interdependencies between the tasks. The first thing the manager will do is to see whether there are sufficient resources and infrastructure to carry out the tasks, in order words the 5 M's (Man, Machine, Material, Money and Methods) available for each of the tasks e.g. Let us take the first task, That food is cooked in time and it is delicious to eat. Here is there a cook available (Man) who knows how to cook the desired menu in the prescribed time (Method), does he have the necessary ingredients (Material) and tools (Machine) to cook the requisite food – we assume there is kitchen close by to the dining room for the guests (Infrastructure).

Let us take the second task, There is enough space for the guests and the dining room is nice and clean, here again we assume that there is a large enough room close by the conference (Infrastructure) which is made available for a few hours (before, during and after lunch) by booking it (Methods). The manager has to ensure that the room is comfortable, nice and clean with the aid of his helpers (Method and Man) prior to the Lunch.

The third task, There is sufficient furniture/vessels to lay the table and they are clean, assuming it is a buffet lunch. Here again the manager has to ensure there are clean serving vessels and furniture available (Machine, Materials) in the room prior to the Lunch. This task is dependent on the second task i.e. availability of a dining room. The furniture/vessels and the table can be laid only when the room is made available and it is ready. This necessitates storing (Infrastructure) or making available the furniture/cleaned vessels at the appropriate time (Methods and Man).

The fourth task, Linen is clean and the crockery is dry/clean and sufficient for the guests. Here the manager has to ensure there is clean, dry and sufficient linen/crockery for the furniture/guests (Machine, Materials and Methods) and a place to store them (Infrastructure). This task is dependent on the second and third tasks, namely availability of dining room with closets (Infrastructure to store linen/crockery) and the furniture/vessels are laid out so that the linen/crockery can be used on them.

The fifth task, There is sufficient Cold drinks/Water and/or Sweet dishes for the guests to down the food with. Here there is a special requirement of a cool/cold storage area for Cold drinks/Water/Sweet dishes and the manager has to ensure there is sufficient storage (Infrastructure) and the Sweet dishes/Cold drinks/Water is stored at the right time (to ensure temperature requirement, a dependency) when available (dependent on first task) at the storage place.

The sixth task, There are sufficient Waste baskets to dispose of the food plates and assorted items. Here again the manager has to ensure there are sufficient Waste baskets in the store (infrastructure, Machine, Materials) which has to be placed at convenient locations in the dining room after the second and third tasks are complete (Dependency, Methods). Again after the Lunch the dishes/crockery has to be obtained, food disposed of, dishes/crockery cleaned/checked and kept back in its rightful place (Infrastructure for cleaning, Man, Machines, Material and Methods required; Dependency on completion of Lunch).

The seventh task, There is a washroom for ladies and gents. Here again the manager has to ensure there is a washroom for ladies/gents (Infrastructure) which is sanitized and has sufficient soap, water, towels, tissue etc. (Methods, Man, Materials).

And the last task, There are sufficient waiters and helpers available to serve the food and do assorted tasks. Here the manager has to ensure that there is sufficient manpower (Man) with the requisite skills (Methods) available at the right time, right place and right person to carry out each of the above tasks and serve food.

It is clear from the above example that all or some of the above tasks can be executed parallel y or concurrently e.g. while the food is being prepared, the dining room can be readied, the linen/crockery can be cleaned and made ready for the occasion, the furniture/serving vessels procured etc. Also some of the tasks are dependent on completion of other tasks and all/some of the tasks are complementary or have to be performed synergistically e.g. if the dining area is not ready then the furniture and linen not be laid out

etc. Again all of the tasks have an underlying theme or objective i.e. serving Lunch to our guests, in other words there is a coherence/binding factor binding all the tasks together.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that for any job/assignment/project the factors of Concurrency, Synergy and Coherence play an important role in the execution of that job/assignment/project. Taking a step further we can say that for multiple jobs/assignments/projects again there should be Concurrency, Synergy and Coherence among them with intra and inter dependencies within the projects and between the projects. And we can safely assume that without Concurrency, Synergy and Coherence a project or projects cannot be executed smoothly with efficiency, productivity and good service even with infrastructure/resources available.

IMPLICATIONS AND POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS

1. Viewing projects along these lines helps us in better understanding of projects.
2. It enables better execution of single/multiple project(s).
3. It enables the manager to take a more holistic approach towards projects.
4. It enables the manager to diagnose/remedy and take effective steps to potential and existing problems in projects.
5. It enables the manager to take a bird's eye view of projects being executed in an organization or country.

SUMMARY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The example illustrates there is a very wide scope for Work Breakdown structures, Intra/Inter dependencies, Critical path, Costing, Scheduling, Scope Management and Resource Management in the Management of different and allied projects.

REFERENCES

1. Speech delivered by Dr. R. Chidambaram (Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India; Chairman, Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet; Former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission) at Searcc 2011 Conference.
2. Speech delivered by F.C. Kohli (Father of the Indian Computer Industry and Chairman, Tata Consultancy Services, Mumbai) at Searcc 2011 Conference