

The Organizing Function of Management

Test Laboratory, Sikorsky Aircraft

Sikorsky Aircraft is the company which is providing the several models of rotary aircraft which are needed to fulfill the requirements of the commercial and military divisions within USA and globally. It was founded in 1925 by Igor Sikorsky who was born in Kiev. He was an engineer and was an American immigrant. This company is further on expanded in several subsidiaries including not only Helicopter Support Inc which handles after market support, and Schweizer Aircraft Corporation which produces small helicopters, light planes, gliders, and U.A.V.s. Thus the company produces one of the leaders in helicopter technology. Additionally, the United States Presidential Transport Program contract currently belongs to Sikorsky Aircraft.

The vertical structure of Sikorsky Aircraft shows that it is a healthy and strong organization. The organization is divided into numerous departments and sub departments. The hierarchal structure consists of the CEO, a board of directors, and shareholders.

According to the horizontal structure, Sikorsky Aircraft is somewhat of a "hybrid" organization, it means that although it is divided in departments but not every department has its own marketing sub division. These departments are the many facades required to manufacture a helicopter. But this is not necessary with all the departments few departments like the internal paint shop is like a complete entity where it has its own chain of management, its own schedule, its own costs metrics. The paint shop handles painting aircraft from several different programs within Sikorsky Aircraft, of which also operate as separate entities with their own operations, engineering teams etc. Sales, marketing, and human resources are central departments; so for example, the "S-76 Commercial Aircraft program" does not have its own separate sales department.

Furthermore there is a Test Laboratory located within Sikorsky Aircraft, here all the facilities like critical flight safety, stress, and electrical testing on all current flight programs as

well as developmental programs is done. All this makes this laboratory as a unique organization. Various stress tests on aircrafts using hydraulic fixtures are conducted by a number of technicians and engineers. These tests ensure the level of the pressure an aircraft can handle and a measure can be given that what could be the point of complete destruction or a major damage. Furthermore, the labs utilize on and off site storage for test fixtures, test equipment kits, and tooling. The functional setup at the highest level, consist of a general manager who is answerable to upper management. There are few lower level managers who perform different responsibilities below him. The test lab acts a gate through which the major structural and electrical aircraft components must pass out and handed over to the customers, therefore it is very important to ensure customers' safety.

It has been said that "a structure with fewer horizontal layers saves time and money (Thomas S. Bateman, 2009). Project budgets are granted to the department through government or company sourced channels. There are at times many monetary issues that are faced by Sikorsky Aircraft Test Laboratory. The Test Lab also measures the viability of multi-million, and even multi-billion dollar developments. For these reasons alone, it is imperative for Sikorsky Aircraft's Test Laboratory to remain organizationally sound. It is necessary that both cost and time restraints must be followed. It is the responsibility of the general manager to ensure that all the constraints are been taken care of. "The Sikorsky Aircraft Test Lab has only one general manager, and three frontline managers. The general manager sees a snapshot of his organizational cost structure, while the three frontline managers monitor the cost and schedule of their individual processes. Here we have an organizational structure that would appear to be quite flat, and in fact, "Most executives today believe that fewer layers create a more efficient, fast-acting, and cost-effective organization. This also holds true for the subunits of major

corporations. A study of 234 branches of a financial services company found that branches with fewer layers tended to have higher operating efficiency than did branches with more layers (Thomas S. Bateman, 2009)."

Moreover if we discuss the physical assets they are the core of the Test Lab's functionality. Most of the lab's processes could not be completed without such assets. The government or any other department may own the material, and all of the test subjects that end up passing through or being stored within the Test Labs, but the equipment or physical assets, that are used to facilitate tests, take measurements, and compile data are the property of the Test Lab. This responsibility to take care of these assets is a part of a specific manager and his teams, as these assets are well recognized within the organization. The job responsibilities of this team and the manager consist of managing the inventory, storing, responding to request, and tracking the Test Lab's physical assets. This is done effectively by using electronic and "hands on" techniques. The decisions are made by the associates whereas the manager issues status updates via e-mail and team meetings hence, the delegation of authority is been followed. Although the goals are set by the manager his team participates in the decision making as operation here are quite tasking.

The success of Sikorsky Aircraft Test Laboratory and in order to remain an essential part of the organization they are dependant on this efficient delegation, streamlining of the processes and following the hierarchal setups. No doubt this is the reason that it is able to work effectively thus ensuring that both the constraints that is time and budget are maintained and followed.

Bibliography

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