

## **WORK MANAGEMENT IN AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION: A TREATISE FOR JOB SATISFACTION**

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**ABSTRACT:** *When multiple human organizations interact, productivity and effectiveness losses are inevitable. Mitigating and minimizing these losses is done through implementing and driving a consistent work management process using continuous improvement tools. Work Management includes the integrated processes and procedures that help the organization schedule work more efficiently, meet consumer's needs, utilize assets and evaluate performance. However, the overall functions of an extension office are of two folds; information management and provision of adequate and suitable work environment, of which Work Management standardizes the entry point of all 'work' done within office and organisation. Thus; Work management is the process by which leaders are able to develop a safe, reliable and profitable operational environment while An office is referred to a place or room where clerical duties are carried on. In view of these, this study used available literature to review the followings; Office management in agricultural extension, Work management, six suitable steps of work management, Forms of work management and office management.*

**KEYWORDS;** Work management, office and environment

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### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Office Management in Agricultural Extension**

According to Madukwe (2015) office could be seen as a collection of department carrying out work clerically in nature. However it is an important aspect of the administrative activities of any organization. An office is referred to a place or room where clerical duties are carried on. For an office to be installed, some major factors have to be considered in the management of an office. They are as follows; the personnel, personnel relation, productivity and physical management. The overall functions of an extension office are of two folds; information management and provision of adequate and suitable work environment.

#### **Information Management**

This means obtaining, processing and handling information. An office may be looked at as a very important, sophisticated, administrative centre for handling information. It serves as a data base for information storage and dissemination across the communication board. Information management in an institution involve the followings: obtaining information, keeping records of

information, preparation of information, communication and protection of information.

**Obtaining Information:** The basic function of an extension office is to receive information from both within and outside extension services. It is the onus lies on the office to take measures in collecting information not yet available and this makes an office the centre of information reception and dissemination.

**Protection of information:** information should be guided and recorded properly for future needs. There should be adequate security of information just like any others physical assets of the organization.

**Preparation of information:** Information received is processed and could be consist of listing of figures priors to entering into documents, arrangement or processing of statistical data for headquarters and field staff.

**Communication:** Information received in the extension office is often communicated to those who need them, particularly the field staff and farmers. Some of that information could be communicated verbally or through e-mail, use of telephone or in writing through circular, letters, bulletins, among others.

**Keeping records of information:** Information received or sent out are recorded and documented for future and reference purpose. Such information includes that information from research centre to be made available to the farmers and the response of the farmers to be sent back to the centre.

### **Work management**

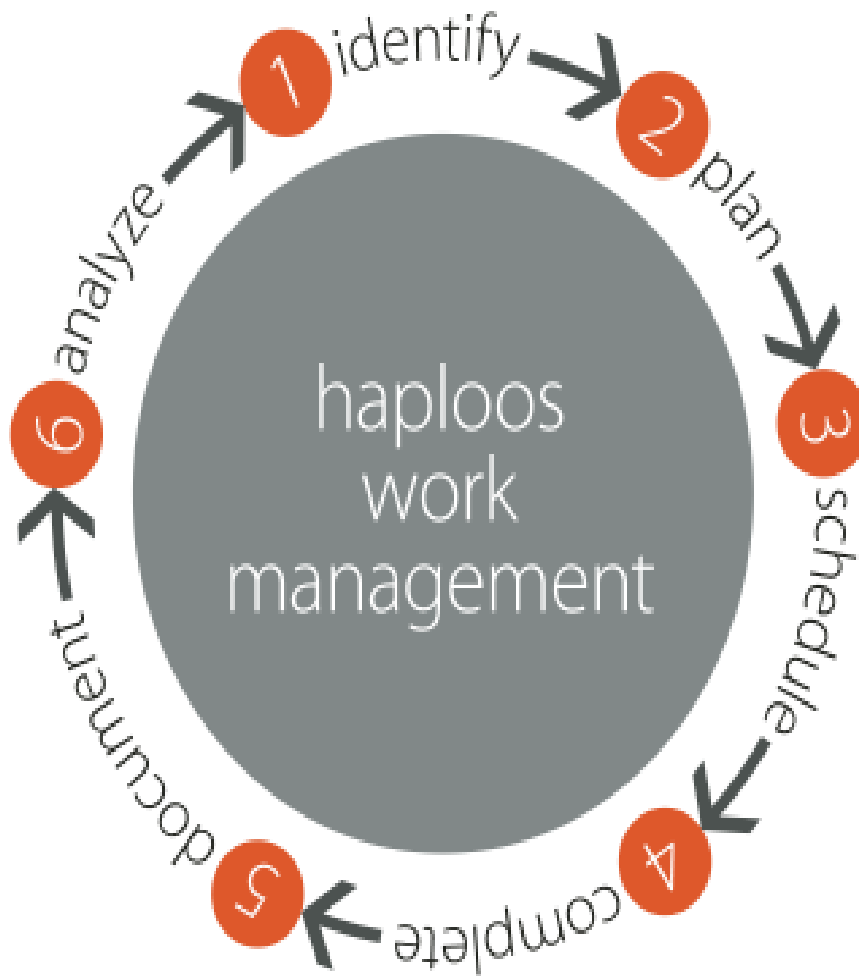
Work management is the process by which leaders are able to develop a safe, reliable and profitable operational environment (Haploos,2017). Work Management includes the integrated processes and procedures that help the organization schedule work more efficiently, meet consumer's needs, utilize assets and evaluate performance. As an enterprise-wide process, Work Management standardizes the entry point of all 'work' done within organisation. Whether the work is capitalized or not, it will have a common origin, common number used to track, and be traceable throughout the service Order and Cost Accounting Systems. This allows for better customer services, estimates to actual comparisons, and more accurate bench-marking. We can more readily attain the actual cost of work completed when there is commonality through all systems([www.workmanagement.htm](http://www.workmanagement.htm)). According to Mathias Le Cren (2016), Work management pertains to managing individual and team workflow and workload – whether within the scope of a project or related to organizational operations. It can be associated with the application of some of the core principles of project management outside of the project management scope. Projects revolve around teamwork and collaboration, while work management is managed at an individual level. Some people manage inquiries from their email inbox, other write down their own to-do lists. While the project management field is rich in methodologies and dedicated software, there is little information or knowledge about work management, or rather, teamwork management. Methods and processes are often used in work management, but collaboration is omitted. This is why teams should empower themselves with tools that share some of the best qualities found in

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project management. Project management is, by definition, the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements. Work management is a set of software products and services that apply workflow structure to the movement of information as well as to the interaction of business processes and human worker processes that generate the information. Work management streamlines and transforms crucial business processes and thus can improve results and performance. Translation: work management is software that gives structure to the execution of processes (tasks) and to the flow of information (internal communication), to improve performance. The workflow structure can take many different forms and is highly dependent on the organizational structure and on the nature of the tasks and processes being performed. Work management should not only give structure but should also foster collaboration in the workplace. This process governs how operations, maintenance and support groups interact and support each other in order to accomplish work. When multiple human organizations interact, productivity and effectiveness losses are inevitable. Mitigating and minimizing these losses is done through implementing and driving a consistent work management process using continuous improvement tools. To see where your company stands, ask yourself this question, "Do we have the processes in place to continuously drive and improve safety, reliability and profitability while mitigating our operational risks?" The Work Management process has six steps. When implemented, you have the potential for a substantial increase in machine uptime, productivity and quality improvements and overtime reductions that generate productivity.

### **Six suitable steps of work management**

- 1. Identify.** The process that defines how, when and in what way work is identified and organized in a tracking system. Elements; proactive and early identification, Complete and accurate information and Proper equipment monitoring
- 2. Plan.** The process that defines what work needs to be done, how long it will take, what crafts are involved, what tools and materials are required and how it is accomplished. Elements; Job packaging/field scoping, Parts and materials resourcing and cross-functional collaboration
- 3. Schedule.** The process that defines when the work will be accomplished and who will do it. Elements; daily/weekly scheduling, Logistics, kitting and staging and Cross-functional collaboration.
- 4. Complete.** The process that standardizes the steps followed in each job in order to accomplish the scheduled work. Elements; highly productive, Supervisor follow-up and Cross-functional collaboration
- 5. Document.** The process that defines how knowledge is captured and communicated. Elements; quick, accurate and organized, easily accessible and Produces performance metrics
- 6. Analyze.** The process that defines how leaders work together to continuously improve the safety, reliability and profitability. Elements; cross-functional collaboration, change authority and Problem solving abilities



### **Six Simple and Sustainable Steps of work managements (Hploos,2017)**

#### **Forms of work management**

- a) Office location and layout
- b) Office physical condition

#### **Office Location**

The site of the office must be carefully located and there is need to maintain easy content with the branches, work areas etc. The site should be near and easily accessible to field staff and farmers.

The cost of acquisition and preparation of land should be well considered before sitting the office. It is not reasonable and conducive to erect an office in a poor or inaccessible locality. The office should have potential for expansion to meet the need of the organization. In extension, an office should be constructed to create conducive feelings to the workers. The idea of office layout and planning should be considered when an office is about to build because they are important element in the successful operation of an extension office (Madukwe, 2015). In view of this, the following should be put into consideration when building an office:

- 1) Department and rooms should be arranged so that documents handled flow naturally, from one room or department to another, in such a way that movement is minimized to check loss of time, reduce distraction and can as well promote efficiency.
- 2) Spacing provision should be made for (a) waiting room (b) Board room and conference room (c) Sanitary convenience (e) typing pool and (f) sound-proof for office machinery.
- 3) Account must be taken whether to adopt open plan or participation type of floor plan. Open plan allows easy supervision and coordination of office work but it is characterized with cleaning, ventilation, sanitation, lighting and temperature

### **Cleaning**

Office and other facilities should be cleaning regularly. There must be a regularly routine of cleaning the office and other facilities, and these need a daily programm of work and periodic cleaning of walls ceilings and core things.

### **Lighting**

It is important and advisable to use natural light where necessary but is where not possible artificial light like fluorescent light is recommended. It is not good and advisable to stress eyes when working in an office because it can cause irritability and mental fatigue in such a way that the output and job performance will be affected.

### **Noise**

Too much noise is disturbing and distracting and can even set up emotional reaction. Effort should be made to reduce noise to the minimum. Carpets should be fitted to reduce reverberating. However, door fittings with hydraulic stands, do not bang on closing and separation of noise machine, installing double glass window to reduce extension noise, placing felt pads under typewriters should be done to reduce the incidence of noise making.

### **Heating/cooling and Ventilation**

Suitable temperature should be maintained. High temperature and stuff atmosphere affect work efficiency.

### **Safety Precautions**

Care must be taken to protect staff, building and furniture. There should be rules about the use of chair, smoking, leaving objects that people might trip over on the floor, leaving fans, light and air condition on at the closing of work. Precautions and sanction about stealing of office equipment should be made know to the entire staff.

### **Office equipment and Management Office**

Office equipment and management office equipment are essential to work effectively. The quality of office equipment increases the efficiency of workers. Use of machines in an office has globally changed office work from locality to modernity and makes work easy and more interesting to perform. However, to make work environment more conducive, office should be well furnished and installed with modern equipment like desk; chairs, filing cabinets, tables, computer, scanning equipments, photocopying and typewriter. All these office equipments should managed well and placed under the custody of security agent of the concerned institutions to avoid stealing and other illegal usage.

### **Office Management**

Office management according to Madukwe(2015,) in Nigeria has the following shortfalls;

- a) Lack of basic office equipment and accommodation. Most of the agricultural offices in Nigeria are not only begging for repair but also physically democratizing. Some are leaking with harsh floors and roofs without ceilings. Majority do not have basic office equipment to perform job effectively.
- b) Lack of adequate office staff: There is limited number of staff in agricultural offices in Nigeria today. This could compel the available staff to do more jobs than above their capacity and this could as well risk work efficiency.
- c) Pre- service training of agricultural office: Most of the staff occupied agricultural office today does not have training background in office management and the roles they should play and a situation like this can cause conflict and misunderstanding.
- d) Different power base: With the fear of intimidation and abuse most of the workers on professional basis from what one may call professional association on state and federal basis. These associations as at present appear to have over stepping their bounds and now acts as power base in controlling the behaviour of their colleagues positively or negatively.
- e) Dishonesty: This has to do with the form of lateness to work by office workers, absenteeism, and use of the little available equipment for private purpose and stealing of office property.
- f) Inflated Ideal Attitude: The average Nigerian want his/her position to be recognized and can go extra miles to achieve it. This kind of attitude creates mistrust, misunderstanding, and rivalry among members in an office and department.

### **CONCLUSION**

Work management is the process by which leaders are able to develop a safe, reliable and profitable operational environment. It includes the integrated processes and procedures that help the organization schedule work more efficiently, meet consumer's needs, utilize assets and evaluate performance. On the other hand, office could be seen as a collection of department carrying out work clerically in nature. However, it is an important aspect of the administrative activities of any organization. An office is referred to a place or room where clerical duties are carried on. For an office to be installed, some major factors have to be considered in the management of an office. Those factors are; the personnel, personnel relation, productivity and

physical management. The overall functions of an extension office are information management and provision of adequate and suitable work environment.

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