

Pathways to Management and Leadership

Level 3: First Line Management

Unit 3002V1

Resource Planning

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Unit 3002V1: Resource Planning

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Resource Planning

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About this workbook

The unit

The main purpose of this workbook is to support you as you study for the Chartered Management Institute Level 3 – First Line Management, so it specifically focuses on the content of the syllabus for Unit 3002V1, *Resource Planning*.

This workbook provides underpinning knowledge and develops understanding to improve your skills as well as to prepare for future assessment. If you are studying towards the Level 3, then you will be assessed by your approved centre on 'your knowledge and understanding of' the following learning outcomes:

1. understand how to plan resource needs with the team, to meet team objectives
2. understand the need for change to resource requirements
3. be able to monitor, record and control resources within the work area.

The content of this unit may also assist you with some aspects of other units, such as Unit 3003V1, *Meeting Stakeholder Needs*.

The aims of this workbook

This workbook aims to help you learn how to:

- plan your resource needs with your team
- identify changes to resource requirements and present a case for them
- monitor the use and quality of your resources to improve efficiency.

This workbook, then, is about identifying and recommending the resources that you and your team need for your operation, and monitoring and controlling their use and quality.

Syllabus coverage

The table below shows which sections of the workbook address each individual assessment criteria within the qualification syllabus.

Unit 3002V1: Resource Planning Syllabus coverage	Addressed within section
1.1 Identify a team's responsibilities in connection with managing resources	1, 3, 4
1.2 Describe the components of a resource plan used to achieve team objectives	3, 4
1.3 Describe the impact of environment and legal factors on the team resource plan	2
2.1 Identify how information obtained impacts on changes to resource requirements	4
2.2 Describe trends and developments that affect resources	4
2.3 Identify the impact of resource change on the team's objectives	3, 4
3.1 Describe the need to monitor and record the use of resources	2, 4
3.2 Explain the importance of recording relevant and accurate information, and using records to plan for future resource requirements	2, 3, 4

Getting started

Part of a manager's job is to obtain and manage the resources needed to meet objectives. This may not be easy, as resources are often stretched to the limit as organisations 'slim down', 'cut costs', or 'restructure' to stay competitive in an increasingly competitive market place. It is in the front line that many of these issues hit hardest, so this area of study is particularly important for you. You need to ensure that you understand what resources are available to you, and that you make the most efficient and effective use of them.

This workbook will help you to analyse what you are currently doing, and suggests general tips and techniques to support you in managing – recording, monitoring and controlling – your resources.

How to use the workbook

The workbooks provide ideas from writers and thinkers in the management and leadership field. They offer opportunities for you to investigate and apply these ideas within your working environment and job-role.

Structure

Each workbook is divided into sections that together cover the knowledge and understanding required for that unit of the Level 3 in First Line Management. Each section starts with a clear set of objectives that identify the background knowledge to be covered, and the management skills in the workplace that enable you to demonstrate this knowledge. You do not have to complete the sections in the order they appear in the workbook, but you should try to cover them all to make sure that your work on the unit is complete. There are self-assessment questions at the end of each section that allow you to check your progress. You may want to discuss your answers to the self-assessment questions with your line manager or a colleague.

Activities

Throughout the workbooks there are activities for you to complete. These activities are designed to help you to develop yourself as a manager. Space is provided within the activities for you to enter your own thoughts or findings. Feedback is then provided to confirm your input or to offer more ideas for you to consider.

To get the best from the workbooks, you should try to complete each activity fully before moving on. However, if the answer is obvious to you because the issue is one you have encountered previously, then you might just note some bullet points that you can then compare quickly against the feedback. You may sometimes find it difficult to write your complete response to an activity in the space provided. Don't worry about this – just keep a separate notebook handy, which you can use and refer to as needed.

Try not to look at the feedback section before completing an activity. You might like to try covering up the feedback with a postcard or piece of paper while you are working through an activity.

Timings

Timings are suggested for each section and activity, although it is important that **you** decide how much time to spend on an activity. Some activities may occupy only a few moments' thought, while others may be of particular interest and so you might decide to spend half an hour or more exploring the issues. This is fine – the purpose of the activities is to help you reflect on what you are doing, and to help you identify ways of enhancing your effectiveness. It is always worth writing something though, even if it's brief – the act of writing will

reinforce your learning much more effectively than just referring to the feedback.

Scenarios

There are scenarios and examples throughout each workbook to illustrate key points in real workplace settings. The scenarios cover a wide range of employment sectors. As you work through, you might like to think of similar examples from your own experience.

Planning your work

The reading and reflection, scenarios and activities in each section of the workbooks are designed to take around two hours to complete (although some may take longer). This is a useful indicator of the minimum length of time that you should aim to set aside for a study session. Try to find a quiet place where you will not be interrupted and where you can keep your workbooks, notes and papers reasonably tidy. You may also like to think about the time of day when you work best – are you a 'morning person' who likes to get things done at the start of the day, or do you work better in the evening when there may be fewer disturbances?

Preparing for assessment

Further information on assessment is available in the Student Guide produced as part of the *Pathways to Management and Leadership* series. If you have any further questions about assessment procedures, it is important that you resolve these with your tutor or centre co-ordinator as soon as possible.

Further reading

Suggestions for further reading and links to management information are available via ManagementDirect through the Study Support section of the Institute's website at <http://mde.managers.org.uk/members>. Alternatively, email ask@managers.org.uk or telephone 01536 207400. You will also find titles for further reading in the Bibliography at the end of this workbook.

The CMI Management Library holds an extensive range of books and pamphlets for loan to members. A postal loan service is offered to members in the UK only. You will only pay your return postal charges. Go to www.managers.org.uk/library to review the collection and to place your requests.

Section 1 The nature of resources

Learning outcomes (about 2 hours)

By the end of this section you should be able to:

- 1.1 Identify a team's responsibilities in connection with managing resources.

Types of resource

The starting point for anyone dealing with resources is to be clear about what resources are, and what is available. If you think of an organisation as a machine that produces goods and services, the resources are the oil that keeps that machine operating efficiently and effectively.

Activity

Activity 1.1 (about 5 minutes)

What are some of the resources that typically 'oil an organisational machine'?

Feedback

You probably listed a number of things, such as:

- *time;*
- *information;*
- *people;*
- *machinery, equipment;*
- *raw materials and supplies;*
- *finished products;*
- *money.*

Some of these are obvious, but a few might not be quite so obvious to you. For example, some people do not include time in the list, and it is only relatively recently that people have started to include information and knowledge, and finished products. But all of these are available for use, and therefore are resources that need to be managed.

Activity

Activity 1.2 (about 5 minutes)

Why should these resources be managed?

Feedback

You might think this is an obvious question, but it's an important one.

Without active management of resources, things can easily get out of hand. A project may end up without the right information, poorly equipped, under-budgeted, or with people who don't have the right skills for the job.

Activity**Activity 1.3****(about 5 minutes)**

A key question is exactly who should manage what. Indicate clearly who is responsible (including their job role) for managing each of these resources in your team or organisation:

- time:
- information:
- people:
- raw materials and supplies:
- machinery, equipment:
- finished products or services:
- money:

Feedback

Your responses will depend on the job-roles and context in your team or organisation. For example, if you come from an office-based situation, then you may have said the responsibility for machinery and equipment is usually with your IT or communications department, whereas if you work in manufacturing then you might be personally responsible for your own machines. If you are working in the public sector then you might hold responsibility for information in your area; while in retail, most of your information may be the responsibility of a section head.

There are some useful guidelines that you can apply. Let's take each of the headings in activity 1.3 in turn.

Time

This resource is very different to the others. There is a fixed amount of it, and it is available to everyone. It is not possible to obtain more time, and therefore what time there is (168 hours per week) must be managed carefully. It is the responsibility of everyone to decide how to spend their time, and to manage it carefully to meet their personal priorities and objectives. This topic is covered in more depth in the workbook on Unit 3001V1, *Personal Development as a First Line Manager*.

However, there is another aspect of time that you should consider – that of *timeframes*. A timeframe is the allocated amount of time in which a project has to be completed, or a service has to be provided. A timeframe may be under the control of people who are not carrying out the work, for example: a hospital administrator, project manager, or the line manager of a group of staff.

Activity

Activity 1.4

(about 5 minutes)

As a first-line manager, you are likely to have some control over how other people in a team use their time. You may set timeframes for delivery of products or services.

Make a list here of the people whose work time you control, or strongly influence:

Make a list here of the activities with timeframes that you set or influence:

List here those that are controlled by members of your team:

Feedback

Your response will, of course, be personal to you and your situation. However, you should reflect here on the amount of influence that you have over the use of time.

Often, your influence will be significantly more than you think it is. If you have been surprised at the amount of influence you have, you may not be managing time well enough. If this is the case, realising the extent of your influence should enable you to begin managing all of the issues well.

If, on the other hand, you found that you have very limited control over time and timeframes, you could consider how you might gain more. Time is a valuable but limited resource. Controlling it will benefit you, your staff, and the organisation as a whole.

Information

Increasingly, information is a vital resource to everyone – not least to you, in the front line. Many organisations slip up in this area, by providing information that is inaccurate, incomplete, too detailed, too late, or even the wrong information altogether. Information management is one of the essentials for today's effective manager, and should be a key focus for you in your studies. It is so important that it has a whole unit and workbook to itself: Unit 3004V1, *Managing and Communicating Information*. It is also very closely related to Unit 3009V1 and the associated workbook *Management Communication*.

People

People are a key resource in organisations, too. Most larger organisations have an HR department (Human Resources) to guide on the management of this resource. The concept that people are an important resource is a good one, but it needs watching carefully. There can be a tendency towards treating staff as 'resource units' in the same way as any other resource. Of course, work must be carried out, but some organisations have tended to lose sight of the fact that staff members are human beings, with the skills, knowledge, and attributes essential for organisational success. For this reason, many organisations are changing their focus to one that demonstrates that they value staff as individuals. Some have changed their HR department's title to one with the word 'people' in it, to reflect this change. (For example, a County Borough Council recently advertised for a 'Head of People Management and Development'.)

The management of people is one of the most difficult tasks for managers to get right. Again, this is covered in specific workbooks: Unit 3005V1, *Identifying Development Opportunities*, and Unit 3008V1, *Improving Team Performance*.

However, a number of the techniques for planning and allocating resources within this workbook can (and should) be applied to managing the resource of people – as long as you don't forget the human relationship issues too.

Raw materials and supplies

This is one of the areas that many people focus on when talking about managing resources. Supplies and raw materials provide the basis for producing the product, or the infrastructure for the service. As a result, many organisations spend a lot of time and energy on monitoring and controlling them.

Scenario

Stationery requisitions

An opera company was undergoing some financial difficulty. Members of staff were going out and buying things without anyone controlling the expense, and with no budget to cover the items. An investigation discovered that people were buying stationery and related items from a local shop. The company had its own stationery storeroom and most of these items were available there, bought on bulk purchase at reduced prices. However, the storeroom was barely used by staff.

It turned out that the person responsible for holding the key to the storeroom, and re-ordering the stock, had developed systems to track and control the stationery resources so tightly that the storeroom was only open on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Also, the procedure to obtain items involved the completion of a 'stationery requisition order', even if all someone needed was a new pen. As a result, most staff just gave up and went to the shop (where of course they bought other things that looked interesting, as well as what they actually needed). It was cheaper in the long run to leave the storeroom unlocked, and allow staff to help themselves as they needed things.

Activity

Activity 1.5

(about 5 minutes)

Are you *sure* that large amounts of energy and rules and regulations are not applied disproportionately to aspects of your operation? List the aspects of your operation that you think may be controlled too rigidly.

Feedback

You may have identified many, or just a few, according to your own circumstances. For example, you may think that stationery in your area is too tightly controlled, or that the exact timing of breaks is overbearing and unnecessary.

Micro-management

The term 'micro-management' can be applied to situations where extreme control and detailed scrutiny is taking place. This approach *can* have a place in the management toolkit, especially when budgets are tight, or if problems have been encountered. However, it is not usually as effective as other methods. Expensive staff time can be wasted on checking things that might not be critical – and it is sometimes the case that the cost of checking is greater than the cost of the potential wastage.

Activity

Activity 1.6 (about 10 minutes)

Look again at the list of items you identified in activities 1.3 and 1.5. Which of them are under *your* control? What would be the potential saving or purpose of tightly controlling these items? Would it be worth the time, effort and cost? Write your thoughts here.

Feedback

Again, this will depend on your own specific circumstances. You may have decided that many of the issues are already being handled appropriately. This is another straightforward way of checking how you are monitoring and controlling resources, and is well worth carrying out regularly. You could also ask other people (for example some of your staff) to do this activity, so that you are aware of their perspective. You might gain an insight, not only into what they think about how these things are managed, but also on some aspects that you have not been aware of.

Your analysis may have shown you that you are micro-managing in places where this is not a good use of time and effort. If this is the case, you should set some action plans to change the situation to one that is more effective for yourself and for others.

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Activity

Activity 1.7 **(about 10 minutes)**

If you discovered that you are micro-managing in any areas, use the following questions to make an action plan.

What are the changes you will make?

What will be the effect?

When will you do this?

Who needs to be told?

Now that you have looked at resources to see if any are over-controlled, you should look to see if any of them are *under-monitored* and *under-controlled*.

Activity

Activity 1.8 **(about 15 minutes)**

Look again at activity 1.3, at the resources that you hold responsibility for personally, and those for which members of your team hold responsibility.

Which are not monitored or controlled as well as they might be?

What are the actual and potential effects of this?

What needs to happen to improve things?

Feedback

Again this will depend on your circumstances. You may have found little that needs attention. (Are you sure about that?) You may have found a number of points that you can improve on. Check that your suggestions for improvement are focused and actionable (as SMART as possible). SMART objectives should be:

*Specific and Strategic
Measurable and Meaningful
Achievable and Acceptable
Realistic and Resourced
Time bound and Timely*

(SMART objectives are discussed in more detail in workbook Unit 3001V1, Personal Development as a First Line Manager.)

Machinery and equipment

Most tasks need some kind of machinery or equipment. The extent to which these are needed obviously depends on the task in hand, what is available, and what the organisation is able and chooses to provide.

Whatever equipment and machinery is used in your area, it needs to be managed effectively and efficiently.

Activity**Activity 1.9** (about 15 minutes)

List the equipment and machinery in your area.

Now consider who is responsible for each of them – revisit your list and write a name against each item.