

Leadership and its roles

Objectives:

- Explain the concept and theories of leadership.
- Identify different types of extension programmes.
- Explain the principles of extension programme planning.

In this lecture you are introduced to the concept of leadership with certain theories. Hence, discusses the nature of leadership and how managers can influence individuals and groups within an organization to attain the overall goals and objectives of the organization. You will also learn why motivation is important and how to apply motivation within your organization.

What is leadership?

Leadership is the action of leading a group. Within an organization, management and leadership can be used interchangeably. It is the role of management to make the necessary decisions to lead the organization towards a goal. Leadership is essential in an organization because it gives the organization direction. It is important for extension managers to understand leadership so that they know how their decisions can influence moving their organization, and its beneficiaries, forward.

Theories of leadership

There are different leadership theories. The four theories considered to be main leadership theories are:

- 1. Trait theories**
- 2. Behavioural theories**
- 3. Contingency or Emergency theories**
- 4. Power and influence theories**

- 1- **Trait theories** focus on the personality characters that make a good leader. It was traditionally believed that leadership traits were something you were born with. Nowadays, trait theories are used to identify which characters are useful for leadership, such as integrity (honesty), empathy (understanding), assertiveness (Confidence) and good decision making skills. Having these abilities will not automatically make you a successful leader and some skills may have to be developed further.
- 2- **Behavioural theories** depends on the behaviour of a leadership. Do they dictate or do they encourage their team to get involved in decision making?
- 3- **Contingency theories** focus on how a situation can influence leadership. These theories state that the type of leadership style will change depending on the situation. Leadership style will change depending on whether a quick decision is needed, whether it is important to get the full support of your team or whether a leader needs to be more task-oriented or people-oriented in a given situation. 4-
- 4- **Power and influence theories** focus on what a leader's source of power is. These theories look at how a leader can use their own power and influence to complete a task. Do you use your personal appeal and attraction to motivate your team to do the job? Do others respect you because you are an expert in the field?

There is also a school of thought that people will only do something if they will be rewarded for it. This means that sometimes tasks might have to be designed and set around some form of reward structure to motivate the team to complete the given task. Leading by example can also be a powerful motivating tool for the team you lead.

Leadership types

There are three main types of leaders:

- 1- **Autocratic leaders**
- 2- **Democratic leaders**, and

3- Laissez-faire leaders

An **autocratic leader** makes decisions without consulting their team. This is the leadership style best suited to situations where quick decisions are needed, or when input from your team is not necessary for a successful result. A **democratic leader** encourages their team to give input in the decision making process. This is the preferred leadership style for situations where the team's agreement is vital to get a successful result. One drawback is that there may be many different ideas and perspectives given and it can be difficult to manage. A **laissez-faire or non-interventionist leader** will not interfere. They will let the team make most of the decisions. This leadership style is appropriate when the team is highly motivated and able to get things done without much supervision.

Extension programmes and programme planning

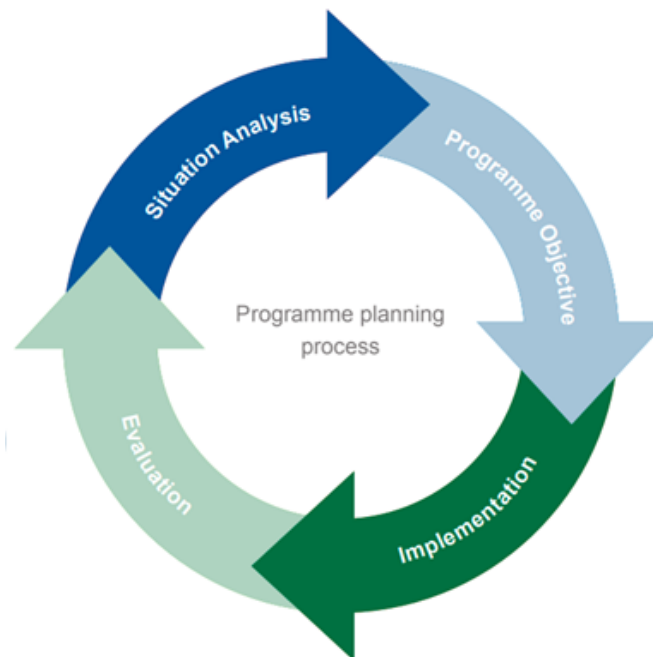
This section provides an introduction to the core definitions of extension programs, components, programme planning and the stages involved in extension program planning. Programs are the heart and soul of extension work. Extension's clients and funders expect officers and managers to design and implement programs that make a difference in people's lives, both individually and collectively. A clear understanding of the primary components of a programme is the foundation for designing and delivering the type of programs that provide solutions for life issues. You will learn about these components in this lecture.

What is an extension programme?

An extension programme is an all-inclusive set of activities designed with a target client base in mind that focuses on the continuous education and development of clients. The educational component is meant to generate specific outcomes for the client base. These programs are usually made available to farmers by government extension service providers or other private consultants as a way to increase their farming knowledge and production potential. This knowledge can be shared through information packs, workshops, presentations, demonstrations and field days. An extension programme will be successful in generating lasting change within a community if the planning process is optimized.

What is extension programme planning?

The process of programme planning is explained better when you look at it as a cycle or progression of certain stages as shown in Figure below. Programme planning begins by looking at where the problems are (situation analysis), finds a solution to those problems (programme objective), moves the solution into actuality through the use of extension methods and communication (programme execution/implementation), makes a continuous study of how successful the extension methods have been (evaluation), and then uses the evaluation result as basis to readjust the extension programme (reconsideration).



The extension programme planning process cycle

Types of extension programs

There are different types of extension programs, each designed to address a specific need. Extension programs can be designed to address development, where the objective is to implement a plan that will drive change for the benefit of an organization or community.

Extension programs can be implemented in order to share information and educate a target audience. These programs can involve learning institutions and their faculties to address pressing issues in agriculture. An extension programme can be reactive or proactive. A **reactive** programme will be planned to address a specific problem, challenge or need within an organization or community. Information gathered in the planning phase will guide the action plan of the programme. **Proactive** extension programs are designed to drive change with the objective of uplifting a community or improving a situation within an organization.

Principles of outcomes-focused planning

There are a few basic principles to stick to when using outcomes focused planning. These are briefly discussed below:

- 1- Always make decisions based on data and facts. Collect enough good information for rational decision making.
- 2- Seek out stakeholders that will understand the issues you face. Involve them in the planning process so they can help guide the programme.
- 3- Set specific targets and goals to ensure planning covers all aspects of what you intend to achieve at the end. Make sure the target clients know which behaviours, skills and attitudes they will need to change for the programme to be successful.
- 4- Identify and understand the root causes of the problems you intend to address. This will help you find the best approach to overcome any potential hurdles you might encounter in the planning process.
- 5- Always aim for sustainable and lasting change within a community. Attempt to make a significant positive impact with the proposed programme.
- 6- Prepare to evaluate your improvement and adjust or refine the plan on a continuous basis, so that the programme will always fulfil its purpose in the community it serves.