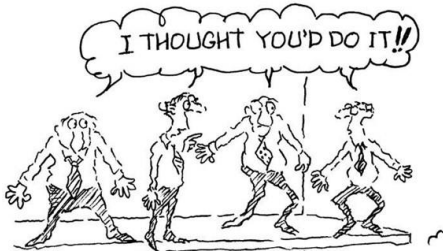


## Chapter 10

### Structure for Effective Delivery - Roles and Responsibilities



**K**rishnappa serves as an elected representative of Manchanabele Gram Panchayat and is entrusted with the responsibility of preparing reports for Gram Panchayat projects. However, Krishnappa lacks the necessary

skills to write reports effectively. As a result, he relies on a consultant or other elected representatives to provide him with the reports. Additionally, Krishnappa has a habit of delegating his work to other elected representatives.

"Please obtain a detailed report from the consultant and make photocopies of it. I will be back in an hour," Krishnappa instructed the office assistant, Suresh, as he left the office.

"I will ensure they are ready by the time you return, sir," Suresh assured Krishnappa, as he continued working on filling in some information on the application forms in the record book.

Once Suresh finished filling in the information, he placed the record book on the shelf and rode his bicycle to the post office to send some letters by post. Upon returning to the office, Suresh hurriedly approached his desk as another panchayat member, Rangappa, was waiting to give him one of the application forms. Krishnappa returned just as Suresh was examining the application form.

"Are the report and photocopies ready?" Krishnappa questioned Suresh upon his return, as he needed to attach the photocopies of the report and submit it directly to the Health Department.

"Oh, Krishnappa sir, I forgot!" Suresh's face filled with fear, realizing that they had to submit the report within the next hour.

At this point, I paused the story and asked those present in the meeting, "Do you understand why I am sharing this story?"

"Why, Shankranna?" inquired Paropakari Padmini, the Adhyakshe of one of the Gram Panchayats who was attending the meeting.

"This simple example illustrates the consequences of unclear roles and responsibilities and how reliance on others can lead to confusion and inefficiency in the workplace," I explained. "I am narrating this story to emphasize the importance of clearly defining roles and responsibilities, which are crucial for achieving a Six Sigma Gram Panchayat."

"Suresh did not seem to have a clearly defined role, and elected representative Krishnappa depended on him to fulfil his duties. This is how failures or declines in productivity occur when dependencies increase among officials in many organizations or offices where the tasks at hand are not clearly defined," I elaborated.

"As we have previously discussed, the Gram Panchayat serves as a civic service center that needs to be managed effectively to attain Six Sigma standards. As the president, it is your responsibility to not only assign roles and responsibilities to all office bearers and elected representatives but also ensure that they complete their assigned tasks on time," I concluded.

"Shankranna, there is a team of staff to handle the work in the village panchayat, isn't there?" Paropakari Padmini asked.

"Yes, indeed," I responded, "there is a team of staff members to handle various tasks within the village panchayat. However, it is essential to define their roles and responsibilities clearly to avoid confusion and ensure smooth functioning. Each team member should be aware of their specific tasks and be held accountable for their completion within the given timeframes. This clarity and accountability will contribute to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Gram Panchayat."

"Indeed, any business, including a Gram Panchayat, requires a competent team to efficiently run its daily operations," I acknowledged. "As the Adhyaksha and head of the organization, you have the Upadhyaksha, Secretary, Computer Assistant, and Panchayat Development Officer working under you. Additionally, there are committees dedicated to various issues such as social justice, economic development, and environmental concerns. All these roles contribute to the effectiveness of the Gram Panchayat, as they have unique responsibilities and make different contributions towards achieving the organization's goals."

"I apologize if my previous explanation was unclear, Padmini," I responded to Paropakari Padmini's request for clarification. "Let me provide a different perspective. Think of a school, which consists of students, teachers, headmasters, principals, and non-teaching staff. Each of these roles has clear responsibilities and tasks, right?"

Padmini nodded in agreement.

"Exactly," I continued. "For instance, a teacher's role is to educate students, assign homework, review answer sheets, and assign grades. It is also the teacher's responsibility to report any other relevant matters to the principal. To ensure the effective performance of a

teacher, other office bearers in the school also need to fulfil their respective roles adequately."

"I see what you mean now, Shankranna," Hebbet Nanjamma chimed in.

"If a sweeper fails to properly sweep and mop the classrooms, it disrupts the smooth functioning of the entire system," I explained. "Teachers or students may complain about a dusty classroom or scraps of paper on the floor. In such conditions, a teacher cannot effectively conduct classes."

"Teachers and other officials have assigned roles and responsibilities to help the school operate smoothly. This example illustrates how an organizational structure promotes discipline and accountability in any organization," I emphasized.

"I understand the importance of organizational structure in a school, but how do we establish it in a Gram Panchayat?" Simple Sudarshan asked.

"I understand your concern about defining the organizational structure of your Gram Panchayat. If you want to have responsible elected members in your team, it is a simple yet effective step," I assured them.

"To ensure the proper functioning of your Gram Panchayat, consider the following points:

- Are the roles of Gram Panchayat members and stakeholders clearly defined?
- Does this definition facilitate the Gram Panchayat in progressing towards its goals?
- Are decision-making processes defined and followed?

- Is information readily available to all concerned parties? Is the flow of information clear?" I outlined.

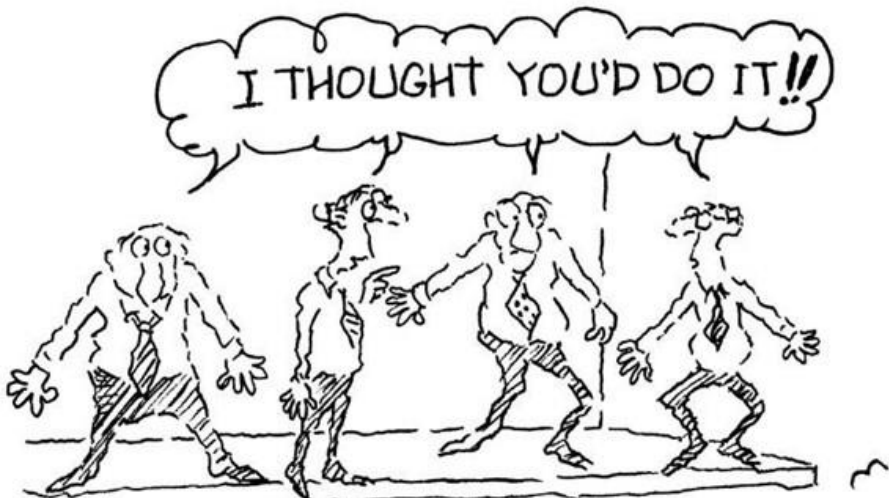
## 10.1. Organizational Structure

"Then, what exactly is the organizational structure, Shankranna?" Simple Sudarshan inquired.

"The organizational structure is a system that formally defines how activities in your Gram Panchayat are directed to achieve the organization's goals," I explained.

"Why is such a structure needed?" Sudarshan followed up.

"This structure is crucial for effectively carrying out the objectives of the Gram Panchayat. Both large and small enterprises use organizational structures to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each individual. By defining roles and responsibilities, you can also track the productivity of the members contributing to the Gram Panchayat," I clarified.



### **Figure 10.1: Expectations when roles and responsibilities are not defined [106]**

"For example, when organizing awareness programs for citizens or introducing financial assistance programs for women and economically weaker sections, there may be a lack of interest from members if roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. However, if there is a well-defined scheme, only a few influential members may take advantage of it for their own benefit. Without an organizational structure, it becomes easy for such situations to occur," I explained.

"What can we do to prevent such issues?" questioned Sahukar Seenappa.

"As the Adhyaksha, you should take the lead in assigning different roles and responsibilities to your team of elected members to ensure that the activities in your Gram Panchayat are implemented with equal importance," I suggested.

"For instance, if Suresh is given the responsibility of holding meetings twice a month to review the progress of projects, he will not wait for someone else to initiate the meeting. Suresh will proactively conduct the meetings as assigned. Similarly, if Lakkamma is responsible for signing application forms daily, she will be required to be present in the office every day to ensure timely processing of documents. This demonstrates the significance of having defined roles and responsibilities for everyone," I explained.

## **10.2 Roles and Responsibilities**

"What would happen if we fail to clarify who is responsible for what?" inquired Paropakari Padmini.

"In the absence of defined roles within an organization, confusion can arise regarding responsibilities, work processes, accountability, and more. The individuals performing the tasks may not have a clear understanding of how well they are fulfilling their roles," I answered.

"For example, let's say there is a finance function that requires an experienced candidate. If such a person is not available, an inexperienced newcomer may end up taking over the role, leading to potential inefficiencies or errors. Alternatively, someone with expertise in a different area may be assigned the finance role, diverting their attention from their core competencies," I elaborated.

"Consider the case of Suresh, a new member in the office. If Suresh is asked to prepare a detailed project report without proper expertise or knowledge, the quality of the report may suffer, potentially causing delays in the work. Furthermore, assigning a well-experienced elected representative to a task like collecting application forms could result in underutilization of their skills, preventing them from contributing to the development of the Gram Panchayat in areas where their knowledge and experience could be more valuable," I explained further.

"To ensure that all members and office bearers serve the community to the best of their abilities and contribute to all relevant matters, the Adhyaksha and the team should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each person. It is crucial to emphasize that every role is equally essential for the functioning of the Gram Panchayat. This approach also enables the effective implementation of various schemes mandated by the Central and State Governments and other responsibilities assigned to Gram Panchayats," I concluded.

### **10.3 Vision-Oriented Gram Panchayats**

"But Shankranna, the nature of other institutions and panchayat institutions is not the same. Is it possible to implement such a structure here as well?" expressed Simple Sudarshan with scepticism.

"Sudarshan, you raise a valid point. When we look at organizational structures in larger organizations or the public sector, we often see a hierarchical system of authority in place. This means that decision-making typically follows a top-down approach," I acknowledged.

"On the contrary, Gram Panchayats are designed to operate using a bottom-up approach for decision-making, implementation, and planning. The organizational structure should support the development of strong accountability and ownership within the Gram Panchayat, which helps clarify the roles and responsibilities among the various contributors. This, in turn, facilitates the movement towards the vision of the Gram Panchayat and ensures the effective allocation of functions," I clarified.

"As we discussed in the previous chapter, the Gram Sabha is the fundamental unit in the Panchayat Raj system. All matters, including discussions, planning, budget preparation, and implementation, are deliberated and approved within the Gram Sabha itself. This bottom-up approach, which involves citizen participation, empowers the Gram Panchayat to progress towards its vision. As the Adhyaksha, it is your responsibility to encourage people's participation in the village meetings and ensure that your team works for the benefit of the villagers," I emphasized, redirecting their attention to the important considerations for Adhyakshas.

## **10.4 How to Develop a New Structure?**

"But, Shankranna, if roles and responsibilities have already been assigned, do you think there is a need for a new configuration?" questioned Sahukar Seenappa.



"Yes, Seenappa. I anticipated someone would raise that question. However, when we examine the functioning of the Gram Panchayat, we often find that many functionaries are passively involved, merely existing as Gram Panchayat members with little or no meaningful contribution. On the other hand, as the president, you may have multiple responsibilities of your own. Therefore, when planning an organizational structure, it is crucial to ensure that responsibilities are shared among members and that everyone contributes equally," I explained.

"When devising an organizational structure, it is important to consider the following points:

- Manpower is the most valuable asset when defining the structure for your Gram Panchayat. The required manpower for each task should be planned and allocated accordingly. In a manual mode of operation, more manpower is needed to fulfil the tasks, whereas automation of processes can significantly reduce the demand for manpower.
- Clarity in roles is essential to understand what each individual is expected to contribute to a specific task. Delays in services occur when there are unclear expectations or overlaps in roles, leading to the inefficient utilization of human resources. As the Adhyaksha, you will ensure that each role contributes uniquely to adding value to the organization.
- It is also important to provide appropriate compensation or have a reward system for individuals who contribute to certain tasks, which may not always be monetary.
- The attitude and behaviour of individuals also influence the output. The organizational structure demands a change in the behaviour of members based on their roles and responsibilities.
- Lastly, each Gram Panchayat functions uniquely, so the structure may not be the same as that of another

organization. It needs to be tailored to meet the specific needs and demands of the Gram Panchayat," I explained.

I summarized the key points and reiterated the importance of these considerations to the attendees, ensuring that they understood the significance of defining and implementing an effective organizational structure within the Gram Panchayat.

## **10.5 Structure to Deliver**

"So, how should this structure be created?" Simple Sudarshan asked.

"The structure should aim to build and enhance the capacities of individuals within the Gram Panchayat to successfully deliver key processes. Each process requires different capabilities for ensuring quality service delivery," I explained.

"For example, if the Gram Panchayat needs to prepare a report on the status of water resources in the village, you would require someone who has knowledge of the water sources, its quality, and another person who can effectively write the report. Therefore, it is crucial for the members to develop their capabilities, enabling the organization to work effectively as a cohesive unit," I emphasized the importance of capacity building for Panchayat members.

"Establishing a structure and defining clear roles and responsibilities for members is another significant step in empowering the Gram Panchayat. With the powers and mandated functions conferred by the 73rd Amendment, the Gram Panchayat must function successfully as an official body. As the Adhyaksha, you will lead key activities such as technology implementation and planning, ensuring that the Gram Panchayat is structured for maximum productivity," I explained.

"What are the benefits of doing this, Shankranna?" Hebbet Nanjamma inquired.

"One of the greatest benefits of incorporating technology into an organization like your Gram Panchayat is that it automatically increases accountability for every member. The use of technologies such as automated workflows can make tasks highly efficient. Adoption of Six Sigma management ensures that all elected members effectively perform their duties, elevating your Gram Panchayat to a higher level of maturity. When all these elements are successfully integrated, your Gram Panchayat will truly become a civic service-oriented center," I highlighted the advantages.

"Now that you understand the importance of organizational structure, we will proceed to understand workflows and how they can be automated in your Gram Panchayat using Workflow Automation Technology to further enhance productivity. From here on, we will embark on a journey where you will learn how to incorporate different technologies into your Gram Panchayat and ultimately move towards digitization to create smart villages and smart Gram Panchayats," I explained.

"So, does that mean we can now learn how to use computers?" Hebbet Nanjamma's question indicated her increased interest.

"In the previous chapter, I asked the question, 'What do you want your favourite dosa to be like?' I also explained the entire process of making dosa in the form of a workflow. Using the same concept, we will learn about defining steps for any task and understanding how you and your team of elected members can optimize Gram Panchayat processes and automate Panchayat functions," I replied.

"Are the computers in your Gram Panchayat office being utilized? Are you using smartphones for Gram Panchayat work? Let's put the

computer and the smartphone to work!" I hinted to the gathering about the upcoming topic.

