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ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE

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UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF ADMINISTRATION

Just as it is with other concepts in management research, words like administration are defined based on perspectives. Scholars have defined management from several perspectives. The quality of administrative activities in any organization is the strength of her performance. These tasks primarily deal with information collection, collation, storage, retrieval, processing, analysing and communication. The thread that runs through any administrative activity is information management.

Dr Ilia Bider of IbisSoft has defined administration from a process perspective. He says administration represents the functioning of an organization as **"People running Processes based on Rules using Tools"**.

Management Scholar, Oliver Sheldon says, "Administration is concerned with the determination of corporate policy, the coordination of finance, production and distribution, the settlement of the compass of the organization and the ultimate control of the executive."

The thread that runs through any administrative activity is information management.

The views of Tead, Spriegel and Walter suggests that "administration is the phase of business enterprise that concerns itself with the overall determination of institutional objectives and the policies necessary to be followed in achieving those objectives."

A broad overview of these diverse perspectives from many scholars can be summarized thus that administration has a focus that it is principally centred around:

- Policy Formulation.
- Objective Setting
- Managerial Functions of Planning, Organizing, Controlling and Staffing
- Use of conceptual and human relation skills above technical skills.

The principal resource for achieving this goal is Information. Information like other critical organizational resources - people, technology, finance, energy-bearing and non-energy bearing materials - is an asset of value.



FORCES OF ADMINISTRATION

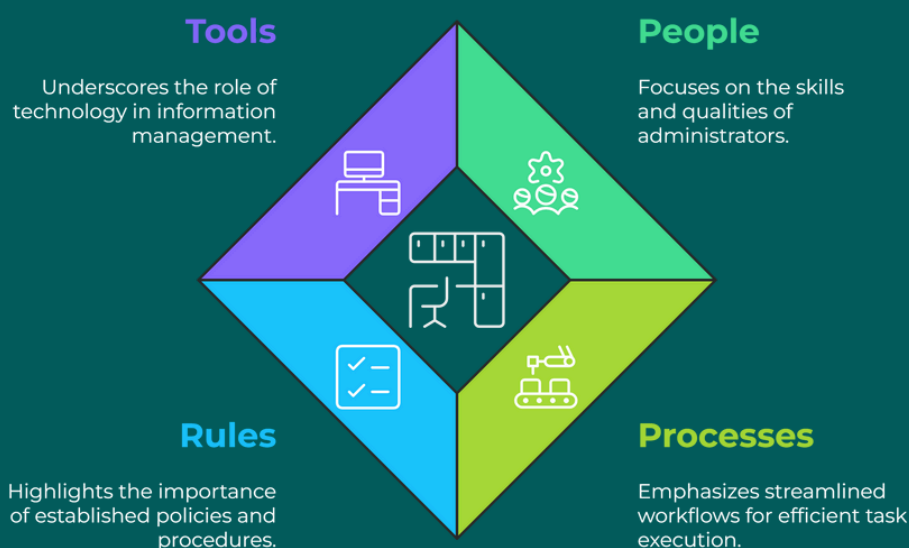
The interaction of the forces of administrative excellence is critical to the accomplishment of corporate goals. These forces have been derived from the definition given by [Dr. Bider](#). A modification in one of the elements must inform a modification in the other elements. Several examples abound for change in technology that has not resulted in change of rules or improvement of competence. Administrative ineffectiveness becomes the experience of an organization that ignores the value of this interplay.

1. **People:** The focus here is on administrative competence. The multiple competences of an administrator will span across administrative support, internal resource management, policy and procedure awareness, development and implementation, project/program administration, qualitative/quantitative analysis. The strength of any administration lies in the quality of the people running the process. They must possess the right skill set to drive the task to completion.

2. **Processes:** All desirable business outcomes must go through a set of activities before realisation. Administrative efficiency requires that work flows are properly designed to enable easy execution of tasks within the shortest possible time. Processes such as sales, customer service handling, procurement, product design and development must not face obstacles if administrative efficiency is to be attained.

3. **Rules:** Here, focus is on shared goals and approaches for the coordination of peoples efforts when working towards a corporate outcome. This approach is always within established policies and practices that govern the execution of professional tasks in medicine, law or accounting just to mention a few. Rules are operational instructions or standard operational procedures that establishes the parity of authority and responsibility within a work flow. Rules are a way of getting work done, hence, it can exist as a tradition in addition to a written form.

4. **Tools:** These administrative tools have a primary essence of guaranteeing efficiency in collection, collation, storage, retrieval and procession of information - which is the principal raw material for an effective administrator.



TARGET OF AN EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

Administrative excellence is achieved when there is the smooth running of the organizations processes. This suggests accuracy and steady pace of work execution without encumbrances and unnecessary stumbling blocks due to negative bureaucratic bottlenecks.

Administrative activities in organizations has become the responsibility of everyone in the workforce. This is because the demand for information collection, collation, storage, retrieval, processing, analysing and communication is now everyone's business. However, expectations differ because those who hold managerial portfolios and are responsible for top-level decision making have the burden of more activities beyond basic information management to cover planning, coordination, controlling and staffing among others.

The two core targets of an efficient administrative system that guarantees the smoothness of workflow are timeliness and continuity.

- **Timeliness:** Waiting time must be reduced. The shorter the period between when a request is lodged and when it is finally executed, the more efficient the administrative process. Timely responses make good impressions. The time consumed by administrative activities must be kept to the barest minimum else the process of executing a task will become too lengthy.
- **Continuity:** Every administrative process becomes more efficient when the expected quality and experience of a noble service is unbroken and consistent over a long period of time. Those who engage must be assured that they will always meet quality service delivery.



Timeliness

Waiting time should be reduced for efficiency and good impressions. Time consumed must be minimal.

Consistent quality of service delivery assures those who engage. Quality and experience should be unbroken.

Continuity



INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY

Administrative tasks excel on information management. Information management is a core administrative activity that is cyclical in nature. The administrative activity begins with information collection, collation, storage, retrieval, distribution, dissemination and disposition through archiving or deletion.

The Information School of the University of Washington has [described](#) the critical need for Information Management as they introduced their Master of Science in Information Management program. They said, organizations exist in the reality of a knowledge economy that prides herself in properly utilizing information assets. Therefore, the management of information for administrative efficiency requires that organizations that will avoid the risk of failure must pay attention to:

- how information management processes are designed, developed and utilised
- how information management supports executive management decisions by creating value for all the stakeholders
- how technology enhances the quality of information collection, collation, storage, retrieval and utilization.
- how procedures and policies support the flow of information for timeliness and continuity
- how information is viewed as a critical resource and asset that requires proper management
- how people engage with the information at their disposal.



THE COMPETENT ADMIN.

The responsibility of administrators places the demand of quality service delivery for every activity and task in the work flow. The tasks of the administrator is primarily information centred. He is responsible for collecting, collating, processing, analysing and communicating vital information within the system that allows for free flow of work in the organization.

In driving any administrative effort, the people, rules and tools engaged are vital to the smooth flow of the work processes. The people are the most critical asset in this mix of forces of administrative excellence. In driving administration efforts and quality, care should be taken to ensure that administrators are equipped with the relevant skill-set fit for the task.



COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK OF AN ADMINISTRATOR

Drawing largely from the National Institute of Health General Administration Competency Model, the following competences are expected of an administrator:

1. Administrative Support: He is mainly concerned with office management procedures that enable the successful execution of the activities. In discharging this task, the administrator is expected to conduct himself/herself as a trustworthy partner, a good record keeper and manager of information. The administrator in performing this role must be fit to prepare and manage reports and correspondences. He is the scheduler of meetings and events. He is adept with the use of current technology to drive office processes. He ensures compliance with procedures.

2. Internal Resource Management: It is the responsibility of the administrator to show the ability to spot, choose and organize all the corporate resources - people, technology, finance, and information - to deliver expected business outcomes. The administrator is the custodian of the targets of the organization. He manages workplace relationships. The competent administrator keeps tab on budgets, inventories, space, purchasing and staffing activities. He is expected to monitor the performance of outsourced activities. The administrator is expected to know how to form new alliances and relationships across the organization to achieve results.

3. Policy and Procedure Awareness, Design & Implementation: The excellent administrator sees his role as being able to compile and review organizational regulations, policies and procedures. This demand compels him to become a researcher of current standards within the industry. He is the source for current frames of reference. He is the go-to person for the interpretation of expectations as stipulated in work manuals and policy handbooks in the organization. He is also responsible for the execution and compliance monitoring of established policies.



4. **Program Administration:** When it comes to events, projects and programmes, the administrator is responsible for planning, budgeting, documentation and reporting of the tasks that adds up to the event and its successful execution. It is the duty of the administrator to have a project plan that includes guiding principles for the event, timelines for all tasks, and follow up with key executors of the event.

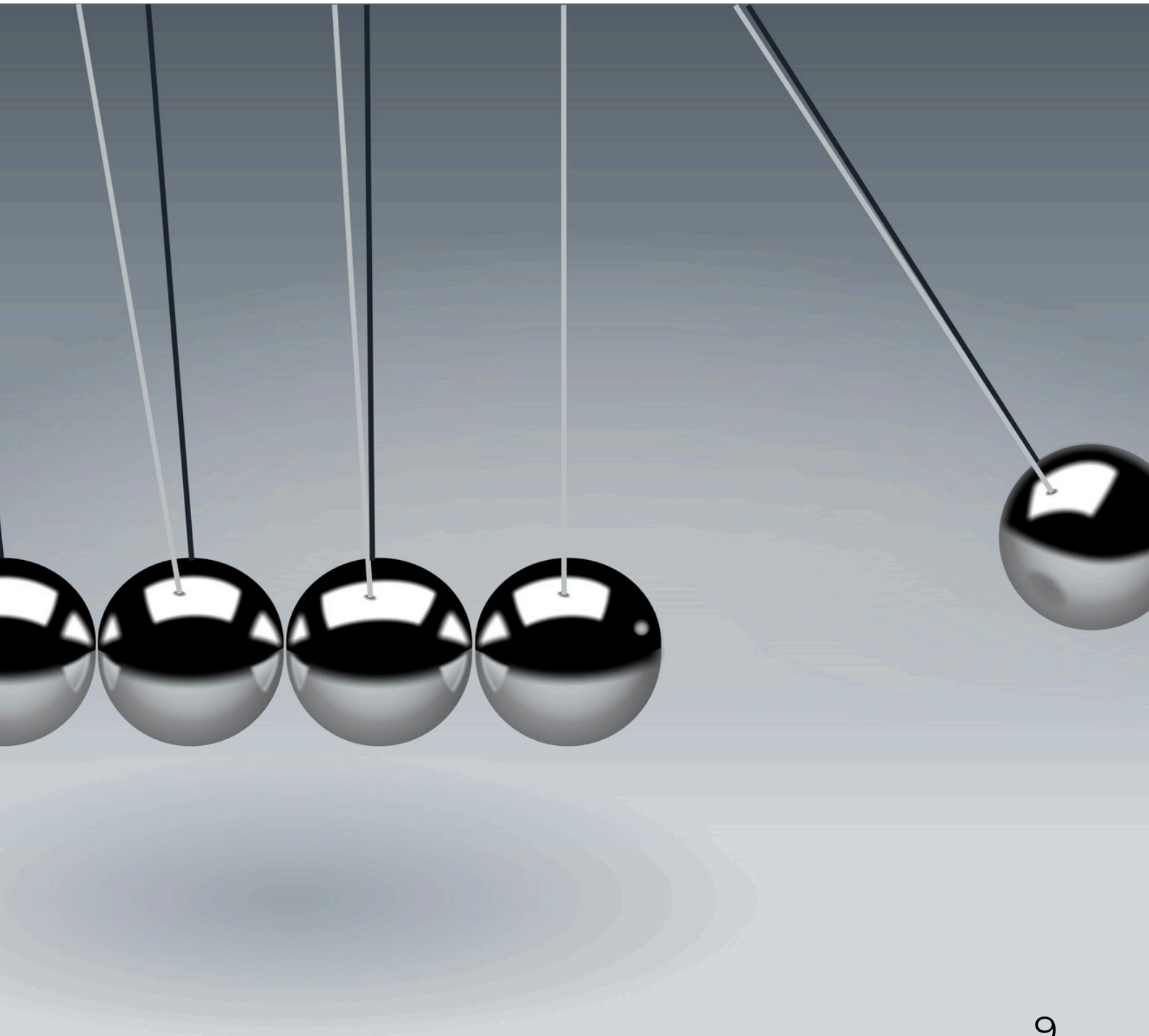
5. **Qualitative/Quantitative analysis:** As an examiner, the administrator checks and evaluates data in order to coordinate the process towards achieving expected outcomes. In fulfilling this responsibility, the administrator learns how to make differentiation in data in order to reach a generalisation. The ability to analyse data helps the administrator determine causes of occurrences in the organization. The administrator checks out trends and is able to be a partner in driving the vision of the organization.



THE ADMINISTRATOR'S SKILLS

In my quest to be professionally relevant, I scaled down my interests to Personal Development, Entrepreneurship, Administration, Relationships, Leadership and Success. I have tried to share what I find on my journey. One very important thing I found was that "nothing moves unless someone moves them." The people that move things have a responsibility to do it in the best of ways, fastest of means and smartest of moves. There is a tall order of responsibility on the man that will take charge of making things happen in the organization. He must know how to harness all his personal resources to deliver the results his organization wants.

nothing moves unless someone moves it.



THE DYNAMIC WORKPLCE

The world of work is demanding more skills from the actors in the workplace. There is a huge need for people with the right oratory skills, men and women that can interact with people of diverse interests and orientations in a professional manner. The rapid changes in the world of work today needs fast paced learners and adopters of new technology. These new devices have made work to slip through our front porches into our homes, hence the need for work-life balance. The world of work need leaders that can motivate people to deliver results while achieving a balance on their roles outside the workplace. The administrator of the 21st century must be a leader who can assign tasks and follow through with its execution. He monitors the process of getting work done and ensuring that it is done under conditions of passion and not stress.

The world of work is demanding more skills from the actors in the workplace.



SKILL DEMANDS FOR AN ADMINISTRATOR

The administrator that will meet the demands of the dynamic work environment must be an organized person, one who can demonstrate common sense and has the ability not just to chart the course for the organization but also stir the ship in the direction of its destination. The work of Robert L. Katz suggests that the chase for the right person for managerial roles may hinder the focus on what is to be accomplished on the job. In the second part of this series on administration, I explored the competency framework of an administrator.

The purpose of this article is to outline the broad and general skills required of an administrator in today's world of work. There is not attempt to be exhaustive in the submission here rather there is a need to establish a baseline for the abilities that an administrator should possess. The skills mentioned here are abilities that can be developed through training.



Broad Skills of an Administrator

Having adopted the definition of administration as given by Dr. Bider, where we say administration is simply about people running processes based on rules using tools. The broad skills that the quality of service an administrator will rest upon are: technical, human and conceptual skills. The inter relatedness of these skills however should not stand as an obstacle to the exposition of their individual meanings.

Technical Skill: Administration is a professional field of engagement that require a great deal of proficiency in taking on the tasks associated with it. The skills that make up the technical ability of an administrator are found in his capability to execute specialised tasks.

Human Skill: The effective administrator knows that the success of his efforts lies in the contribution of other people. He needs to know how to interact with people. He is either going to be a team lead or part of a working group and must be responsible. The success of any administrator is dependent on his people skills.

Conceptual Skill: Every administrator requires the skill to visualize the interconnections of his organization. He should know the impact of the inter dependencies and inter relationships within the organization. The skill set here will be expressed on a level of contextual and historical intelligence. An administrator with a good conceptual skill will be creative in his engagement. The efforts of the administrator should be geared towards the overall well being of the organization.

These 3 broad skills are so connected and they find expression across the different strata of leadership in the organization. The overarching goal of possessing requisite skills is be able to translate knowledge into actionable steps.



General Skills of an Administrator

These general skills can actually be distributed under the 3 broad skills of technical, human and conceptual skills. An in-exhaustive short listing of these skills will include the following:

- **Technical Skill:** Technology usage, Technical Oversight.
- **Human Skill:** Conflict Management, Communication Skills - Verbal and Written, Negotiation, Interpersonal relationship, Adaptability.
- **Conceptual Skill:** Organizational, Time Management, Management, Problem Solving, Planning, Multitasking, Change Management

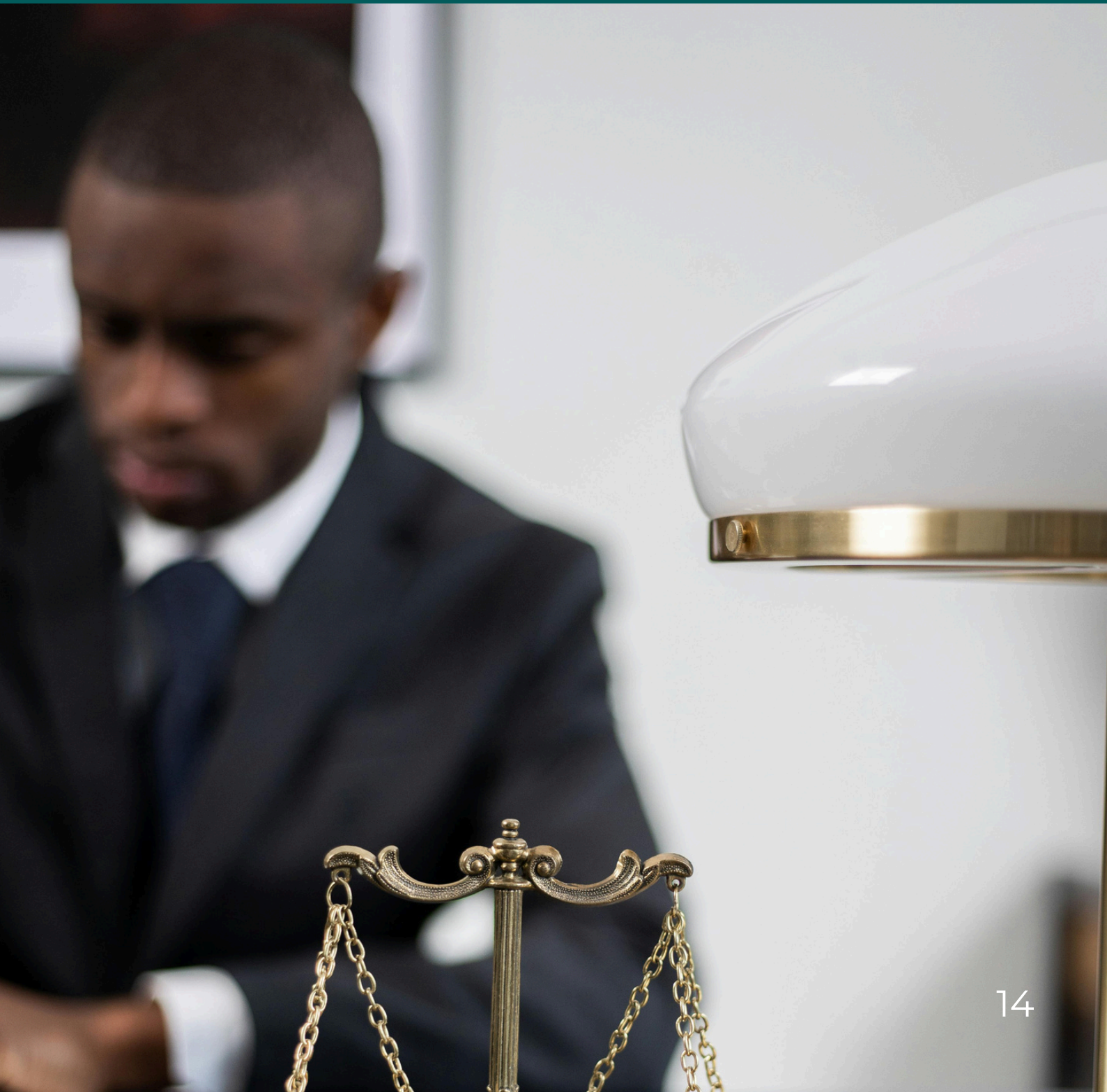
Continuous personal development is essential for any administrator to remain relevant in the workplace. You cant afford to be left behind.



Final Word

It is no longer practicable to expect corporate success without driving administrative efficiency. The strength of any administrative activity is in information management. Organizations must know how to draw value from the information it collects and utilises. The elements that drive administrative excellence - people, rules and tools - must be reviewed for optimum performance and an approach - be it incremental or instant - to their development must be determined in order to increase the chances of success of the organization.

The multiple competence of the employee is wrapped up in his C.A.S.K.E.T. (Credentials, Attributes, Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Talent).





Profile for Dr. Olumuyiwa Akinrole Oludayo

Dr. Olumuyiwa Akinrole Oludayo is a transformative leader and consultant with a distinguished career across higher education, human resource management, and organisational development. His professional journey reflects an enduring commitment to influencing impactful change and advancing practices that drive growth and excellence at both individual and organisational levels.

With a strong foundation in academia, Dr. Oludayo has contributed extensively to higher education as a Member of Faculty for Human Resource Management, guiding the next generation of professionals and leaders. His roles as Dean of Students, Registrar, and Director of the African Leadership Development Centre have enabled him to influence institutional leadership and capacity-building across Africa, crafting learning environments that are centred on holistic development and resilience.

As a Research Fellow with the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria, Dr. Oludayo has made notable contributions to HR practice in Nigeria. His publications and development of frameworks have significantly shaped best practices within the industry, equipping HR professionals with contextually relevant strategies that address both contemporary and emerging challenges.

Organisations that engage Dr. Oludayo's consulting expertise benefit from a wealth of experience and a bespoke approach to people management. Through his work, he has supported a diverse range of organisations in optimising their talent strategies, enhancing leadership capacity, and creating resilient teams. His consulting work is marked by a commitment to solutions that are analytically robust and deeply aligned with an organisation's unique culture and objectives.

By partnering with Dr. Oludayo, organisations gain access to innovative approaches to talent development and organisational effectiveness. His strategic guidance encourages a culture of resilience, adaptability, and continuous improvement. His proven ability to integrate strategic insight with a people-centred approach makes him an invaluable asset for organisations striving for sustainable growth and a competitive edge.

In bridging the realms of academia, research, and practical consulting, Dr. Oludayo offers a holistic perspective that is both visionary and results-driven. His contributions go beyond enhancing performance; they cultivate lasting organisational value, enabling businesses to thrive through a stronger, more cohesive approach to human capital management.

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