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The Utility of the Theory of the Organizational Cycle in Managerial and Professional Work

Abstract

This paper presents a synthetic overview of the theoretical framework of the organized action cycle, which was developed by a French chemist and physicist, Henry Louis Le Chatelier. The theory was presented as a useful philosophy for efficient operation in various areas of managerial work and social life. It was observed that the theory comprises three phases: the preparation phase (which includes defining the objectives of the action, planning, and acquiring resources), and the implementation and control phases. The paper delineates the specific phases, providing a comprehensive account of their essential details, such as the types of goals, characteristics of an effective plan, the process of resource management, features of an ideal efficient organization, and types of control and its validity in management. The paper concludes with a summary that demonstrates the potential for the proper application of the assumptions of the organized action cycle theory to lead to a variety of successes in managerial and social endeavors.

KEYWORDS: organized action, goals, planning, resources, control, effective action

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1 | Introduction

According to Henryk Bieniok in the book *Metody sprawnego zarządzania* [*Methods of Efficient Management*], the actions of many people and the results of their work indicate significant individual differences, expressed both in the way work is organized and in their final effects. Some people can work efficiently and thus achieve the desired results, while others, despite considerable efforts and treatments, achieve mediocre results. The secret of some people's successes and others' failures results mainly from how they act. Successful people work in an organized, thoughtful, planned, consistent way (they pursue their goals). Poorly organized people, and therefore ineffective people, improvise without deeper reflection, preparation, and proper motivation. Therefore, it can be concluded that high efficiency, and especially high effects of well-organized work, require not so much superhuman diligence but a certain mental effort, therefore devising an appropriate preparation for the entire activity^[1].

One of the most valuable elements of the achievements of praxeology and general organizational theory in this area is the so-called theory of the organized action cycle, the creator of which was a French chemist and physicist, and at the same time, the promoter Henry Louis Le Chatelier (1850-1936). This theory – the philosophy of efficient action – shows that well-organized and planned human activity should occur according to a uniform pattern.

As Władysław Kobyliński writes in the book *Fundamentals of Contemporary Management*, any well-thought-out project should be undertaken in a certain, successive manner, in a strictly defined order, and should comprise a number of stages. These stages may also be referred to as phases of performed activities or phases of organized activity. Although the number of these phases and the terminology used to define them are treated differently by different authors, the general vision of the cycle of organized action is almost identical^[2].

¹ Henryk Bieniok, *Metody sprawnego zarządzania* (Warszawa: Placet, 1997).

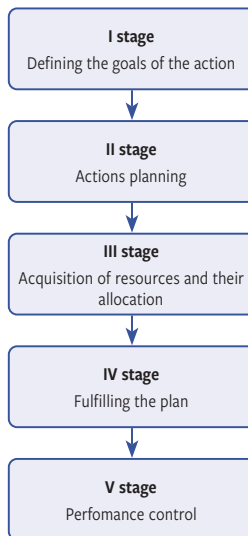
² Władysław Kobyliński, *Podstawy współczesnego zarządzania* (Łódź-Warszawa: Społeczna Wyższa Szkoła Przedsiębiorczości i Zarządzania, 2005).

According to Jan Zieleniewski's version, a well-organized action should take into account:

1. Making yourself realize, and in the case of teamwork - also members of a given team, the actual goals of the activity and their relationship to each other;
2. planning an action, that is, devising its means and methods, which are adjusted both to the goals and the conditions or, in other words - organizing the course of action;
3. acquiring and arranging the resources needed to implement the plan, which can also be defined as organizing structures in a static sense;
4. implementing the plan;
5. control, consisting of comparing activities' results with adopted patterns and drawing conclusions from such comparisons for the future^[3].

In the aforementioned publication, Henryk Bieniok provides a brief overview of the theory of the organized action cycle.

Drawing 1. Stages of organized action



Source: Own study based on Bieniok et al., *Metody sprawnego zarządzania*.

³ Jan Zieleniewski, *Organizacja i zarządzanie* (Warszawa: PWN, 1975), 203.

In summary, it should be stated that each well-organized activity consists of the preparation phase (goal definition, planning, acquisition of resources), implementation, and control. Each phase is of significant importance and directly impacts the effectiveness of undertaken projects. These phases will be briefly characterized in the following parts of the publication.

2 | Formulating the goals in the organization process is the first stage of effective action

2.1. The meaning of a goal in the theory of organization

According to the organized action cycle theory, the first stage of any effective action is the proper formulation of the organization's goals. They are the basis for proper functioning because they define its goals and tasks. Formulating the organization's goals is important because without specifying the goals, the organization is going nowhere, making it unnecessary.

Goals, on the other hand, fulfill four crucial functions in the life of the organization:

1. They are guides and give uniform direction to the activities of the members of the organization, thanks to which they help to understand its policies.
2. They are conducive to good planning, which, in turn, helps to set goals for the future.
3. They can be a source of motivation for employees.
4. They are a practical evaluation and control mechanism. Future performance should be judged by the achievement of the goals set. The priority of the organization, i.e., the most important of the goals, is referred to as the mission. All other goals must be subordinate to it.^[4]

⁴ Przewodnik metodyczny Kursu Organizacji i Zarządzania Doskonałego, oprac. Bolesław R. Kuc (PTM: Warszawa, 2000), 28-29.

In the literature on the general theory of organization, it is assumed that the goal of an action is a state of affairs which, being in some way valuable (desirable) for the person acting, determines the direction and structure of his action. In practice, this means the last, final effect, i.e., the result of the intended tasks. At this point, it is also worth paying attention to that the Latin word *finis* means both the goal and the end. Similarly, in old Polish, „at the end” was synonymous with „for this purpose”. It should also be mentioned that other authors treat the concept of a goal much more broadly and define all future states with it, not only states of affairs in the literal sense of the term. We find such a view, for example, in the *Encyklopedia organizacji i zarządzania* [*Encyclopedia of Organization and Management*], where we read that the goal is „the future state of things or a process, and in areas such as education, health, upbringing as well as the condition of a person or a group, which is to be created or preserved in order to satisfy a specific need of people in accordance with its imagination”^[5].

2.2. Types of goals distinguished in the scientific literature

Various goals can be distinguished depending on the adopted division criteria in the total of human activities. Taking into account, for example, the source from which the goal comes, one can talk about spontaneous goals, i.e., formulated by the person who is to pursue the goals and the goals set by someone else, i.e., from outside. The last one is also described as a task commissioned by another organization or other persons. Graduated and non-graduated goals can be distinguished depending on how the goal is formulated. In the first case, you can achieve a given goal to a varying degree. In the second case, you can reach the goal. A gradual goal is, for example, to increase the level of education of the inhabitants or to improve the quality of roads. An example of a non-graduated goal may be acquiring a new regional strategic investor.

According to Władysław Kobyliński, there are also positive and negative goals in the literature on this subject. We deal with the first kind of goal when the originator causes an event and the second when he does not allow it to occur. Their nature depends on the way they are formulated. Thus, instead of stating that the government will ensure the safety of citizens, it can be assumed that the aim of the activities may be to prevent terrorist

⁵ *Encyklopedia organizacji i zarządzania* (Warszawa: PWE, 1981), 69.

attacks or to eliminate crime in the region. If, as the basis for the classification of goals, we take the number of members of a given team who accept the goal, then we can easily distinguish particular goals and goals of the institution. These last ones are the goals recognized and accepted by the team, or at least by the vast majority. On the other hand, particular goals motivate only some members of a given team (from the Latin word *pars* – a part). They can form group goals when shared by more than one person and individual goals if they are motivated by only one individual.^[6]

Another typology of goals is given, for example, by Bolesław R. Kuc. According to his opinion, the goals set on an ongoing basis and the generation of the organization's policy for a given period are divided into three types, depending on the level at which they are set. Those formulated at the highest level and for the organization's top management are strategic goals set at the middle level, and for middle-level managers, they are tactical goals. In contrast, operational goals are set at a lower level and for lower-level managers^[7].

2.3. Characteristic features of goals

There are many terms that characterize an organization's goals. Lester R. Bittel, in the book *Short Management Course*, states that from a practical point of view, goals in the organization are characterized by the following features:

- The number of the goals may vary from a few to several. Goals are generally defined in terms of revenues, profits of production volume, market share, and measurable tasks related to a specific function.
- Goals are defined in a hierarchical manner, which means that some of them will be more important than others.
- Goals have a different time horizon. The long-term goal can be extended from one year to ten years for a corporation, local government, or state. A short-term goal can relate to any period between a day or a week up to a month, a quarter, or a year.

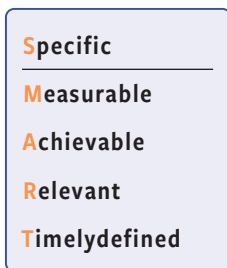
⁶ Władysław Kobyliński, *Podstawy organizacji i kierowania w oświacie* (Ostrołęka: Fundacja Oświatowa im. Profesora Władysława Kobylińskiego, 2009), 36-38.

⁷ Bolesław R. Kuc, *Doskonałe zarządzanie* (Warszawa: PTM, 2000), 95-102.

- From the point of view of a particular manager, goals are either dependent or controlled. The vast majority of goals are dependent in the sense that they are communicated to the manager; where the manager appoints them, they will be dependent by being directly related to other goals of the organization.
- Controlled goals are goals that the manager can independently set, such as the case when the manager of a repair department sets a goal of „achieving the score with less than 5 percent of claims after repairs are performer”, or when the sales manager sets a goal of „10 customers per salesperson per day”.
- Goals must always define what, where, and when: what is to be realized, where to do it, if the location is important, when - by what date the goal is to be achieved^[8].

Goals should be set in an organization in a responsible manner and according to the established rules. This is achieved, for example, by the SMART technique shown in Drawing 2.

Drawing 2. Features of an adequately formulated goal



The presented content shows that the goals of the organization constitute the basis for the proper planning of all undertakings. Hence, they should be appropriately formulated, i.e., detailed, measurable, ambitious, achievable, realistic, and timely. Their appointment should be especially carried out by people who know the mission of the organization and have knowledge and experience in the field of management.

⁸ Lester R. Bittel, *Krótki kurs zarządzania*, trans. Andrzej Dziurdzik (Warszawa-London: PWN, 1989), 88-89.

3 | Planning work as the second stage of effective action

3.1. Types of planning

Planning is one of the basic conditions that determine the management process's quality, effectiveness, and correctness. According to the organized action cycle theory, it is the second stage of necessary activities in effective management. The starting point in planning is an accurately formulated goal, as it is a process of deciding on the methods of its implementation. This, among others, differs from planning from design, which is an analysis of various possible variants of action. Still, this analysis does not include the acts of choice that constitute the plan's essence. We do not decide which variants will be implemented in the design process. This idea was accurately expressed by Jan Zieleniewski, who wrote that „devising a method of an activity – is a project of this activity. A project supplemented by an execution decision is a plan”. Similar to the concept of planning is the programming of activities. Some authors place an equal sign between it and the idea of planning, while others distinguish both of them. The view of J. Zieleniewski seems to have the most supporters, who believe that the program is „a very detailed rule on the sequence of actions”^[9]. This view, moreover, closely corresponds to the common perceptions on this subject, in which the concept of a program functions as an arrangement of events having a clearly defined sequence in time. In this sense, we are talking, for example, about the program of activities, the program of an event, etc. On the other hand, the concept of a plan is sometimes used in a more general and universal sense.

According to Władysław Kobyliński, there are many types of plans. Depending on the agreed criterion, we can distinguish between framework plans (e.g., a curriculum) and specific plans (e.g., a schedule). When we adopt the criterion of dividing the plan's role in achieving goals, we can distinguish between strategic and tactical plans. Strategic plans are always overriding tactic plans. A national property privatization plan is an example of a strategic plan. A tactical plan – on the other hand – is a way of privatizing it based on an assessment of the condition of a given enterprise. The grounds for such a division are contractual and depend on the adopted

⁹ Zieleniewski, *Organizacja i zarządzanie*, 207.

perspective. From the point of view of the interests of the company's staff, the privatization plan is a strategic plan.

In contrast, the tactical plans will be appropriate partial plans made on the scale of departments or divisions of the enterprise or plants cooperating with it, etc. Considering the time horizon (range) of plans as the basis for the division, we can distinguish long-term and short-term plans, also known as operational plans. The last ones include, for example, a plan for implementing new technology, introducing a new product to the market, etc., and a monthly, weekly, or daily schedule of activities, most often described as the so-called schedule of the day^[10].

3.2. Features of a good plan. Planning activities

In the words of Bolesław R. Kuc, plans represent “road maps” that guide organizations in the pursuit of their goals. When well structured, plans serve to guide managers and employees in an appropriate manner. Properly arranged plans are determined by at least 10 factors:

1. Resources that will be used: premises or buildings, equipment, materials, financial resources, information, and employees.
2. The methods, processes, and procedures that will be used.
3. Tasks to be performed, often each has its own standard or a result to be achieved.
4. Order or procedures to be followed.
5. People who will have to complete the task and those responsible for implementing the plan and achieving goals.
6. Redefine the plan's goal or specify or adopt a goal appropriate for the given plan.
7. Place where planned activities are to take place.
8. Binding deadlines and schedules.
9. Points where the progress will be checked.
10. Designated measures are used to evaluate progress and verify that goals have been achieved^[11].

¹⁰ Kobyliński, *Podstawy organizacji i kierowania w oświacie*, 53-34.

¹¹ Kuc, *Doskonałe zarządzanie*, 104.

3.3. Planning activities

	ACTIVITIES	Interactions	
PLANNING	Gathering information about resources, needs, opportunities, (things); diagnostic analysis	Pre-plan studies	COORDINATION
	Forecasting (studying available forecasts and compiling your own)		
	Programming (setting goals and means of achieving them)	Information and decision-making interaction	
	Balancing, coordinating and optimization of the content of plans		
	Information and methodological help in the development of plans by subordinated organizational units		

Source: own study based on Bolesław R. Kuc, *Doskonałe zarządzanie* (Warszawa: PTM, 2000), 104-105.

The main tasks of planning, not only in educational institutions, are improving the functioning of the institution, reacting to the changing environment, and implementing the concept of creative organization. Therefore, according to Kobyliński, a properly developed plan should exhibit the following characteristics: purposefulness (i.e., should ensure the achievement of the goal), feasibility (which is also referred to as plan practicability), internal compliance (the plan should not contain conflicting trends), operability (the plan should be simple to use), flexibility (the plan should make it possible to introduce necessary changes to its content), etc. In addition to these characteristics, a well-designed plan should also include: adequate long-distance (which means that a good plan should include a well-established time horizon), punctuality (what and when is to be done), completeness (do not omit anything essential for the goal), communicativeness (the plan should be understandable to all people who implement it) as well as rationality. The last feature means the cognitive grounding of the plan, i.e., that it should be based on rational foundations, proven or verifiable facts or events, and not – as sometimes happens – presumptions and assumptions, beliefs and prejudices, etc. in brief, basics which are not adequate to the contemporary methodology of management science. A well-defined plan is the basis for the proper implementation of the next stages of action^[12].

¹² Kobyliński, *Podstawy organizacji i kierowania w oświacie*, 47-50.

4 | Acquiring resources as the third stage of effective action

4.1. Resources in the understanding of organization theory and its types

According to Władysław Kobyliński (in the book *Podstawy współczesnego zarządzania [Fundamentals of contemporary management]*), in ergonomic sciences, the concept of resources is used to describe the components of productive activity useful to man, both those that are provided for free by nature and those created thanks to human's work. Thus, resources include various products, raw materials, technical devices and tools, and natural goods such as land, air, and water. These are the so-called material resources. However, resources are more commonly understood to be people who participate in work processes.

What is especially important are their qualifications and talents, hobbies and habits, attitudes towards work, and motives for action. These resources, usually human or personal, are given much attention in the literature, emphasizing their unique role and importance. There are frequent opinions from authors who claim that the secrets of success in organizational and managerial processes are, to a large extent, the ability to attract people to tasks and stimulate them to do better and more efficient work. These activities represent a continuous management process aimed at ensuring that the organization has the right people in the correct positions at the appropriate time^[13].

¹³ Władysław Kobyliński, *Podstawy współczesnego zarządzania [Fundamentals of contemporary management]* (Łódź-Warszawa: Społeczna Wyższa Szkoła Przedsiębiorczości i Zarządzania, 2005).

4.2. Managing human resources

As presented in the book *Managing*, managing human resources is comprised of seven fundamental activities. These include the following:

1. Human resources *planning* serves the continuous and adequate satisfaction of the organization's staffing needs. As Michael Armstrong, in the book *People Management*, human resources planning is aimed at adapting employee resources to the needs of organizations, expressed in planning employee employment. It includes:
 - employing and maintaining the necessary number of employees with specific qualifications,
 - estimating qualification requirements and the possibility of satisfying them,
 - preventing the occurrence of shortages and surpluses of employees,
 - developing multiple positions,
 - improving the efficiency of the use of employee resources.
2. *Recruitment* is to gather a specific group of candidates for work in accordance with a pre-established plan.
3. *Selection* involves selecting appropriate people based on the analysis of completed forms, applications, CVs, interviews, or checking references and presenting them to the organization's management to make a final decision regarding their employment.
4. *The introduction* to work aims to help newly recruited employees adapt to the organization's mission, requirements, and culture as quickly and effectively as possible without any conflicts.
5. *Training and improvement*, under which activities are undertaken so that employees contribute more to ensuring and increasing the efficiency of the organization and their promotion.
6. *Assessment of effectiveness* consists of comparing a given employee's performance with the standards or goals set for the position held by him. Consequently, appropriate compensation for the actions is given (e.g., rewards or a change of position).
7. *Promotion, transfers, demotion, and dismissal* result from determining the further usefulness of a given employee for the needs and achievement of the organization's goals. According to M. Armstrong, all efforts are recommended to retain the best

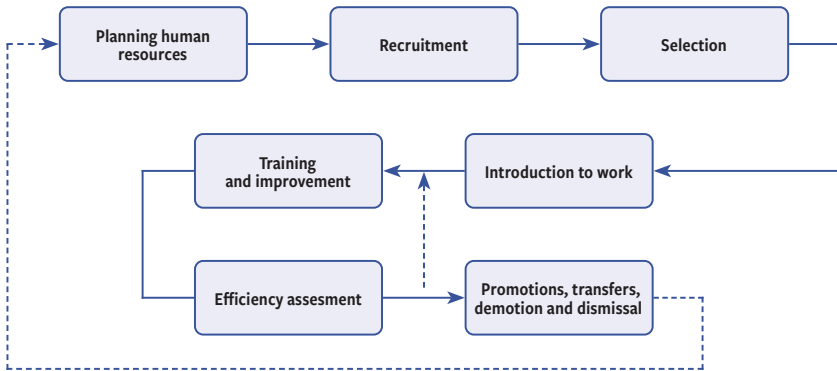
employees, who will be needed in the future. The plan for keeping these people should result from an analysis of why they leave the organization. It is useful to conduct post-interview talks to identify the reasons for the dismissal, although the information obtained may not always be reliable. When preparing an employee retention plan, what should be done is to:

- make sure the salary rates are competitive, and the pay system is fair and consistent,
- guarantee satisfaction from the performed work, which results from the use of employees' skills; creating an opportunity for employees to take responsibility for the tasks performed and providing them with opportunities for development,
- verify whether people know what the institution expects of them and whether their achievements are appreciated which meet or exceed those expectations,
- provide training that enables people to achieve the required results and professional development,
- ensure that recruitment and selection procedures indicate the people most likely to be successful and who stay in the organization^[14].

The analysis of the presented tasks reveals that human resource management should be a staff function. In practice, this implies that individuals associated with its fulfillment should provide guidance to all line managers within the institution.

¹⁴ James A.F. Stoner, R. Edward Freeman, Daniel R. Gilbert, JR., *Kierowanie*, trans. Andrzej Erlich (Warszawa: PWE,1999), 368-369.

Drawing 3. The process of managing human resources in the organization



Source: Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert, *Kierowanie*, 368.

The presented and other activities related to the acquisition and management of human resources are very important and may lead to the so-called ideal organization, which, according to Max Weber, should possess certain distinctive characteristics. These include:

- division of work and responsibilities should be clearly defined for each member of the organization,
- positions should be arranged hierarchically, which creates a ladder of power,
- members of the organization should occupy positions based on their technical or educational competencies,
- managers should be employed by the owners of the venture but should not be owners of the venture themselves,
- Everyone in the organization should be subject to strict rules and controls appropriate to the work performed. It is desirable that these rules be impersonal and universal.

The presented content shows that acquiring resources is an important stage of organized action. It particularly relates to the management of people in the organization. Hence, it seems that the view of Akio Morita – the famous originator of the success of the Sony concern – is becoming more and more correct; He asserted that the success of an organization is primarily contingent upon the individuals employed by the organization.

5 | Implementation of the plan as the fourth stage of effective action

The implementation of the plan primarily concerns the organization of activities, which entails the arrangement of activity components in a manner that facilitates the achievement of the intended goals. The literature on this subject frequently categorizes the organizing activities into two distinct categories: basic and ad hoc. The basic organization of an institution refers to the adjustment of a given unit's structure to align with its goals. The essence of this type of action is expressed, among others, by creating appropriate workplaces, cells or departments, etc., by connecting them into larger units, as well as establishing various connections and relationships between them. The basic organization also includes the preparation of activities, assignments, work plans, schedules, etc. It is also important to establish information systems and methods of communication, as well as norms and patterns of behavior. Basic organization is essentially about building an organizational model of activities^[15].

Ad hoc organizations, described as „continuous” organizations, are defined as entities that are designed to maintain the existing direction of an institution's functioning. In the basic organization phase, it is difficult to predict and resolve all the problems that each team of employees has to deal with in their daily work. Following the established guidelines, it is necessary to constantly select and combine individual parts of a given whole of activities and adapt them to the goals set for the institution. This does not mean, however, that ad hoc organizing was expressed by the manager's constant interference with the work of his employees. On the contrary, such an idea would indicate an overly superficial understanding of his role as an organizer of work processes. Similarly, as in other areas of reality, the maximum does not always coincide with the optimum, and the excess of managerial interference may turn out to be more harmful than the lack of it at all. Contemporary authors posit that a competent organizer always allows subordinates a certain degree of autonomy and intervenes only when necessary to correct their behavior^[16].

¹⁵ Kobyliński, *Podstawy współczesnego zarządzania*.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

In the book *Zarządzanie jutra: jakie jest twoje miejsce w przyszłości* [*Management of Tomorrow*], Gary Hamel and Bill Breen state that according to Frederick Winslow Taylor, who is regarded as the most influential innovator of management in the twentieth century, the empirical approach is of paramount importance for the efficacy of plan implementation. It involves, among other things, a systematic analysis of the causes of wastage of funds, poor work organization, the suitability of the introduced and applied standards, discrepancies between the requirements of the workplace and the employee's abilities, as well as the assessment of incentive systems. Taylor claimed that efficiency in the implementation of tasks comes from the exact knowledge of what is expected of people and from making sure they do their jobs as well as possible and at the lowest possible cost^[17].

Max Weber, an outstanding German sociologist contemporaneous with Taylor, believed similarly about the effectiveness of task performance. He saw bureaucratization as the main factor in the effectiveness of the organization's functioning. In his opinion, it is the best of all forms in terms of precision, stability, rigor, and reliability. Thanks to it, it enables a particularly high degree of predictability of the effects of actions for the needs of those who manage the organization and those who act in relation to it. M. Weber's concept of organization is distinguished by several unique characteristics which include:

- a clear description of the division of work and responsibilities for each employee,
- hierarchical arrangement of positions, thanks to which a clearly defined „ladder of power” is created,
- occupying job positions in accordance with technical competencies or education,
- employing people who are not related to any form of ownership with the organization for managerial positions,
- using impersonal and universal strict rules and control of employees according to the work performed.

Although bureaucratization has been complained of recently, it seems that its requirements still are the basis for the organization of all participants in the public sector and private companies. Progressive managers

¹⁷ Gary Hamel, Bill Breen, *Zarządzanie jutra: jakie jest twoje miejsce w przyszłości* (Lublin: Red Horse, 2008), 28-29.

may attempt to eliminate its more irrational manifestations, but in reality, few are able to envision an alternative that is entirely distinct from bureaucratic structures.

According to Kobyliński, there should be no difficulties in the plan's implementation phase if the action has been properly prepared. This is only the case if other conditions for the efficient implementation of the plan have been met. Above all, consistency in respecting the arrangements made is essential. Plans or intentions that are not implemented are acts of waste, so it would be better not to develop them at all. Each deviation from the plan also creates a precedent for a similar behavior next time, which leads to not considering the plan at all in the long run. An important problem in the plan implementation phase is ensuring ongoing control of its fulfillment. After all, it could turn out that despite fulfilling all conditions provided in the plan, the action did not bring the expected results. Therefore, its further continuation would more and more distract us from the adopted goal. Properly conducted, ongoing control of the implementation of the plan may, therefore, protect the organization from the danger of performing unnecessary activities that disqualify work as an organized activity^[18].

6 | Control is the last element of organized action

6.1. The concept of control and its elements

The activities presented in the four previous articles related to the theory of the organized action cycle (defining the goals of an activity, planning the activities, acquiring resources and allocating them, and implementing the plan) refer to the initial and second stages of a well-organized activity and are described as preparation (preparation of activities) and implementation. In this publication, the last element of the organized action cycle theory, control, will be presented.

According to Władysław Kobyliński, the concept of control refers to the comparison of performance with an appropriate model and drawing appropriate conclusions from this comparison for the future. Such a comparison may be the work of the performer (self-control) or another

¹⁸ Kobyliński, *Podstawy organizacji i kierowania w oświacie*, 88-91.

person. Depending on whether a given person belongs to an organization (institution) that he controls or not, we deal with internal or external control. The subject of control may be the result of an already completed process of work, i.e., the finished product, or the course of this process, so the subsequent phases of the performed activities. Many supporters of it believe that in the second case, the effectiveness of control is generally much greater. You can then notice any errors at the appropriate time, correct them, and thus achieve the intended goal as much as possible^[19].

Rafał B. Kuc gives a slightly different definition of control and its goals in the book *Perfect Management*, who claims that control is checking the compatibility of actually implemented activities and their results with the assumptions made. Through the controlling function, the manager can determine whether his actions led to achieving the set goals. Each control usually consists of three main elements, i.e.:

- defining measures of performance,
- measuring the current efficiency and comparing it with the determined measures,
- taking corrective actions if the effectiveness does not match the measures.

A well-conducted control enables the manager to maintain the proper course of action in the organization, not allowing excessive deviations from the pursued goals. This information is also the starting point for the development of a new plan and thus starting the management process anew, hence performing an adaptive function and not an initiating function^[20].

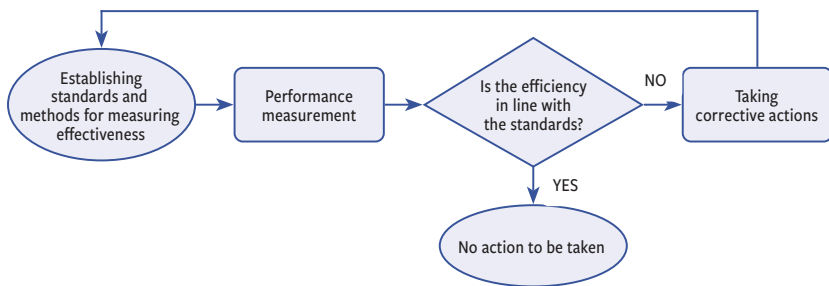
In turn, James A.F. Stoner, R. Edward Freeman, and Daniel R. Gilbert state that management control is a systematic activity aimed at establishing performance standards when planning goals, designing feedback information systems, comparing actual results with established standards, determining if there are any deviations and measuring their significance and taking all actions necessary to ensure that all resources of the organization are most effectively and efficiently used to achieve its goals. According to these authors, the control consists of four stages in drawing 4. These are:

¹⁹ Idem, *Podstawy współczesnego zarządzania*.

²⁰ Kuc, *Doskonałe zarządzanie*, 356-357.

- establishing standards and methods for measuring effectiveness consisting of clearly defining the goals of the organization in such a way that it allows for their measurement and execution deadlines (e.g., related to the time of completing the tasks),
- measurement of performance as a constant and repeatable process, the frequency of which depends on the type of activity measured (e.g., public administration units are required to report on their activities to the relevant authorities in particular periods of the year),
- determining whether the efficiency is in line with the standards, which is about comparing the measured results with the set goals or standards (if the performance meets the standards, the manager may assume that „everything is under control”),
- taking corrective actions occurs when the tasks performed do not meet the standards, and the analysis shows that you need to intervene (e.g., by increasing employment in the organization or changing the applicable standards resulting from new regulations or requirements^[21]).

Drawing 4. Basic stages of the control process



Source: Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert, *Kierowanie*, 539.

²¹ Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert, *Kierowanie*, 538-540.

6.2. Types of control

In light of the above-mentioned literature, management science usually distinguishes three basic types of managerial control: initial, current, and final, also known as the control of effects or results. Individual controls are dictated mainly by changes in the organization's environment, the increasing complexity of management processes, and the need to delegate permissions.

Initial control concerns checking the state of affairs at the beginning of an action and constitutes a „starting point” for it. Its purpose is to determine whether we have everything needed for action, particularly whether we have a correctly formulated goal, an adequate work plan, and whether we will have the necessary resources, both material and human, to achieve it. Network planning is particularly useful for initial checking, as it allows for a precise determination of the course of action in pursuit of the goal, i.e., the sequence in which individual activities are to be performed. Ongoing control consists of constantly and systematically checking progress in achieving the goal and drawing conclusions from it to improve how to organize work. Thanks to appropriate techniques, ongoing control allows you to notice any errors in time, remove them, and take the necessary preventive measures. It is worth noting, however, that the views on ongoing control in the scientific literature on this subject have radically changed in recent years. The promoted belief that an employee not under continuous control works less efficiently has been replaced by providing educational care to him based on creating appropriate conditions for work and professional advice. This belief is accompanied by efforts to broaden the scope of the employee's independence and pay more and more importance to control the results. The final control is expressed by comparing the obtained effects with the adopted goal, revealing possible unconformities, and determining the methods of counteracting their occurrence in the future. Apart from its undoubted advantages, this form of control also has numerous weaknesses, and most of all, noticing a faulty performance of a task may turn out to be late. Sometimes, a long time passes from when an error is detected to when corrective actions are proposed until improvements are made. Meanwhile – as Witold Kieżun rightly notices – „the measure of the efficiency of an organization is precisely the length of that time”^[22].

²² Kuc, *Doskonałe zarządzanie*, 365-366.

6.3. The legitimacy of control in management

In view of the fast pace of changes taking place in the environment of contemporary organizations, in recent years, control has become more and more important. The above-mentioned authors of the book *Guiding* include the main reasons for its systematic conduct:

- Pursuing to increase quality by changing employee attitudes allows, among others, the detection of faults, the avoidance of mistakes, the improvement of products, etc.
- proper introduction of changes and adaptation to them, thanks to which managers can react quickly to the resulting dangers and opportunities,
- the need to accelerate the cycles of fulfilling the tasks, as a result of which it is possible to minimize the time needed to design and implement new products and services and deliver them to recipients,
- creating added value, thanks to which it is possible to gain a competitive advantage,
- facilitating delegation of work and facilitating teamwork, resulting in better use of the creative potential of individual employees and teams^[23].

The briefly presented content of the control shows its great role and legitimacy for its application. However, in order for the goals related to it to be properly achieved, there are needed appropriately prepared people, who, apart from the knowledge of generally accepted and applicable standards and patterns associated with the subject of control, will also have knowledge and experience in the course of individual processes related to production or services. Otherwise, the control will fulfill only part of its function and may even be harmful and prevent the organization's further development.

²³ Stoner, Freeman, Gilbert, *Kierowanie*, 540-542.

7 | Summary

According to Kobyliński, the presented sequence of individual phases of organized action should not be understood as their mutual consequence in a chronological system but rather a logical system. Control, for example, which is last in the cycle theory, should be practiced in a place where it is needed. After all, it would not be useful to check the foundations' condition when the building is already finished. The same applies to the other remaining phases of the cycle, except formulating goals, which should, in principle, always start a sequence of well-organized activities. Therefore, organized action should be understood as a sequence of individual phases in their logical system. It is important not to forget any of the essential elements of the action and to understand the relationship between them^[24].

The success of organized cycle theory will likely depend on many factors. It is difficult to define them unequivocally, as they depend, *inter alia*, on the type and achievements of the organization, qualifications and experience of people involved in management processes in the institution, or their motivation to work. Nevertheless, it can be definitively stated that the ultimate impact of applying the theory is influenced by the high level of implementation of tasks in their respective phases. Those engaged in managerial roles and those who facilitate broadly understood social activities should give particular consideration to this matter. Their work has a direct impact on the effectiveness of both individuals and entire teams or communities.

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²⁴ Kobyliński, *Podstawy organizacji i kierowania w oświacie*, 33.

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