SPAN OF CONTROL

Span of control or span of management represents a numerical limit of subordinates to be supervised and controlled by a manager. A number of direct, group and cross relationships exist between a manager and his subordinates. An executive having four subordinates under him is required to deal with

1) Four direct single relationships
2) 12 cross relationships and
3) 28 group relationships in all 44 relationships.

Graicunas, a French management consultant, has derived the number of relationships as

Number of direct relationships = n
Number of cross relationships = n(n-1)
Number of group relationships = n[2^(n-1) - 1]
Total number of relationships = n[2^(n-1) + n - 1]

Where n represents the number of subordinates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of subordinates</th>
<th>Number of relationships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>222</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>490</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>1080</td>
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Wide span of supervision (flat structure)

Chief executive = 1

- Second Level Executives = 4
  - Workers = 256
  - Span of Control = 64 Workers
  - 64 W
  - 64 W
  - 64 W

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Narrow span of supervision (Tall structure)

1) Number of executives is less
2) Less expensive
3) Better communications
4) Better coordination
5) Quality of performance deteriorate
6) Less effective supervision
7) Less time to devote in directing each and every subordinate
Narrow span of supervision
   a) Better personal contacts
   b) Tight control
   c) Close supervision
   d) Sufficient time for developing relations with the subordinates

Factors determining span of control
   1) Trained and experienced subordinates need less direction and hence large number of them can work under one executive
   2) All doing specialized and same work at one table or very close to each other require a wide span Eg.: routine clerical jobs
   3) For maintenances and R&D department and other departments which require many policy decision and coordination with the work of others narrow span of control is ideal
   4) Narrow span of control is ideal when a number of employees are working in isolated areas doing different types of work and require close supervision and control
   5) Complex nature of work demands narrow span of control
   6) Span of control depends on the capacity of the executive to guide and work
   7) Wider span can be employed if the organization and its control system are efficient and communication is good
   8) A personal assistant to executives will reduce the routine work leading to wide span of control
   9) For an executive who checks each and every action of his subordinates, a narrow span of control is ideal
  10) A wider span can be employed in an organization which has clear and definite objections, policies and plans and if each employee knows his job duties, responsibility and authority
  11) A wider span will lead to delegation of authority to the subordinates who in turn will be forced to learn their jobs better and hence acquire a sense of accomplishment, responsibility and high morale