

Role of middle management within organizations



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1. Introduction.

This paper analyses the ways to implement the strategies within an organization, focusing on the role of middle management and the different roles they may adopt depending on the type of implementing the strategy in the organization. In order to cover this aspect, we will review some authors' contributions throughout the years, with reference to Henry Mintzberg, the most important author in this field, and subsequent authors who have reviewed and made amendments to approach the Canadian author.

The purpose of this study is the importance of middle managers for the functions they perform as they are the link inside companies, they are responsible for checking that tasks are all carried out that the atmosphere at work is adequate or ensuring that all organization members understand every change that may be made, among others.

With the idea of studying this series of thoughts and offering a view on this, the work focuses on achieving a number of objectives, including:

- Analysing Henry Mintzberg's contributions in relation with the type of management roles of management behaviour.
- Reviewing the different authors' contributions, which provide some changes or try to redefine Mintzberg's thesis.
- Relating the conclusions made by Henry Mintzberg's contributions with the rest of the authors.
- Studying different ways of introducing strategies.

A series of interviews with executives from a company have been carried out in order to implement the concepts and some points of view and know if their roles and ways to implement strategies correspond to any of the treated cases.

Taking into account the objectives of this work, it is structured as follows:

In the second section a clear definition of middle management in companies is provided, this being the central theme in this project. Likewise, the role of this group in the success of the companies in which they are working. In addition, the most important managerial roles according to Mintzberg are explained, as well as the modifications of several authors of this theory.

In the third section the authors who have focused on middle managers are analysed, to extract how they are differentiated according to the work usually

performed and how to communicate and convey their ideas to other members of the organization.

In the next section, we try to establish a relationship between the conclusions the different authors studied come to, in order to specify to what extent the vision of the authors match regarding the role of middle managers in organizations.

Finally, work with interviews with various managers and mid-level managers of companies to know in much detail as possible whether these roles are met and can be related to the role they have within their companies is illustrated.

2. Middle management.

2.1. Definition of middle managers.

Likert (1965) gives a first approach on the definition of middle management (MM) in which he states that the intermediate command has the role of transmitter, most of the time face to face; this means that these people are responsible for implementing the strategy which begins in the higher positions. Mintzberg (1992), explains that they are those employees of the organization that are in the hierarchy of authority under the highest position comprising all levels up to those who deal directly with the workers. Unlike the previous author, Mintzberg appreciates the contribution of middle management when getting a sense of change in strategy, as it doesn't come from the highest positions. More recently, Martrat (2006) defines a middle manager as a person who occupies a key position in the organization and who is able to plan, implement and control their teams.

Floyd and Wooldridge (1996) argue that middle managers need a series of restructuring in order to move away from the operational and control functions that are made obsolete by new technologies and market changes.

There are new tasks for middle managers that appear and which give greater importance to the implementation of strategies and are responsible for good communication and support the lower levels, among other things. At the same time, they are the ones who have most conflicts which are associated with the development of their functions, since they are very exposed to collective organizational stress.

In short, these are people who have formal authority on organizational units to ensure good resource efficiency, acting as a liaison between the organization and the

environment and they are responsible for operating the system status of their organization (Mintzberg 1973). Channel strategy must assume the objectives and get the equipment to carry out a goal-oriented performance.

Mintzberg (1992) classifies the levels of employees within the organization; middle managers are in third place, the *intermediate level of power*. This level is characterized by liaising with the other parts of the organization, implementing the agreed strategies and communicating every change and modification that occur in the organization to each one of its components. Other levels of the organization that this author describes are the strategic apex, the operating core, the techno structure, the support staff and the ideology.

2.2. Key management functions as Henri Fayol (1916).

As explained above, the directors have a large number of functions. In the aforementioned job, there is a great deal of information that they should know how to transmit to the right person and have a good control on the whole organization. One of the authors dealing with this subject is Fayol (1916), who shows a number of basic functions that managers should have:

First, *plan* all tasks to be performed by means of a small graphic analytical approach showing its future development. This function means advance preparation of all information collected in the study of each of the points that it is composed of and its subsequent analysis with clear conclusions to start a strategy with a control on it. In addition, we will communicate the objectives to each worker and they will be allowed, as far as possible, to be ones who can perform specific functions as comfortably and efficiently as possible.

Second, *organize* the schedule in the *organization*, that is design a structure to be followed in the organization, the way in which information can be transmitted and tasks on which each worker should be focused. An example of this is the weekly meetings where workers and the supervisor discuss the tasks to be performed throughout the week, in order to prioritize the most important activities for easier implementation.

Third, another function by Fayol is the *creation of teams*, that is encourage teamwork versus individual work, join hands in each of the objectives pursued with the intention of being plural and choose among alternatives. From the outset, in the

recruitment of workers, a good variable to consider is the availability and acceptance of group work, since many decisions are carried out this way and with the study and consensus of all members. Therefore, it takes into account their skills and abilities in this area. For example, in an abnormal situation, it would be beneficial to have a qualified, complete and organized group to address and control the situation. It would be more difficult if there was only one member who carried out the whole task.

Fourth, how *leadership* is performed is very important because, if done in the right way, should serve to motivate employees, to have clear objectives to fulfil their tasks and learn to channel all instructions, both general and specific, in a correct way. For example, a good leader can guide the company to succeed in a business, but if you do not know how to motivate and organize employees, the same activity may fail. They must have control over the situation at all times, they must know what is being done and how many resources are being used for this. The internal dialogue, therefore, is crucial to identifying problems both a priori and a posteriori, and is a tool that managers must know well in order to meet each of the goals.

Coordination is another key aspect, as one of the key functions of management is to interrelate the different parts of the work to achieve the highest possible efficiency. Mintzberg (1992) explains some ways to coordinate tasks, such as direct supervision, in which there is individual responsibility for the work performed and mutual adjustment, which is also conducting informal meetings to outline each of the tasks better.

Reporting is another very important aspect in terms of the functions of management; to do it the right way, first the necessary information will be treated and later it will be analysed in detail and conclusions will be drawn. Reporting is the transmission of this analysed information to the appropriate people, in the amount and time required. At all times all staff should be informed of the changes and everything that happens to the organization. All of them will have a common basic information and according to the role or position they hold, everything needed on the specific matter will be attached.

The last of the key functions Fayol talks about is the *budget*. This function is to keep a tight check on everything related to budgeting in the form of accounting and tax planning, in addition to the future planning of the possible costs that may be incurred in developing the agreed activities and other expenses in each exercise.

2.3. Management roles according to Henry Mintzberg (1973).

Mintzberg (1973) lists and explains ten roles managers can play divided into three main groups: interpersonal, informational and decisional. The managerial roles are specific categories of behaviour control of companies. Each role is described in detail below:

The first type includes the *interpersonal roles*; activities are led by CEOs such as the ceremonial job, subordinates requests for specific tasks or letters received as a result of their status. What all these activities have in common is that they are closely related to their position and include the development of interpersonal relationships. Three types can be profiled in this category:

First, the role of the manager as *head*, which becomes a symbol, forced to fulfil a number of duties, either formal setting, such as the signing of certain documents; or a social need, such as the presentation of events to give them dignity and status.

Second, the role as *leader*, in search of formal authority for the guidance and motivation of each employee. The management defines the environment that predominates in an organization. He/she tries to explain the steps but it is the responsibility of each worker how to do it. The manager is shown as a figure of support and constructive error correction to maintain a good line of work. One such example is the implementation of a change in which the manager communicates the objectives to be achieved, such as reducing the waiting time of customers when they come to the company and the workers must try to find ways to comply with their own ideas.

The third interpersonal role is the figure of a manager as a *link* which corresponds to the significant network of contacts and relationships that management maintains with numerous individuals and groups outside the organization which they are responsible for. With this figure the exchange of information should be much more fluid and easier to be in the right moment and place. The typical example would be attending lectures, exhibitions or meetings with other managers from the same industry in which, in a formal or informal way they can see the company and make it more international.

The second type of roles corresponds to *informational roles*, which implies the reception and transmission of information. When dealing with subordinates and observers, the manager occupies the central position of the movement of certain types of information within the organization. Two of the characteristics of the job of management and corresponding to this role are its exceptional access to external

information and its full scope of the internal information of the organization. Also we find three types of roles within this type of informational aspects:

The manager as *monitor*, whose role is to continually seek information to help you understand what is happening inside and outside your organization in order to detect errors and identify problems and opportunities. With his/her great knowledge, the manager becomes the hub of data and information on the company, which is updated as soon as possible and tries to anticipate possible future changes. An example of this type might happen when a manager finds some improvement and communicates it to others, helping them to do it in the most comfortable and beneficial way as possible.

The role of *disseminator or diffuser* is characterized by the transmission of external information within the company and this information from a subordinate to another. This information can be objective if data comes from the company or information from professional journals or evaluative criteria, if it comes from personal opinions or conclusions of an individual company or directly from the manager.

Finally, the role of *spokesman*, which unlike the previous one, is characterized by transmitting the information from inside to outside the organization. This role requires having informed two groups: on the one hand, the group of the most influential people in the organization, such as the Board or the head of the company and on the other hand the most direct public of the organization, such as suppliers, sectoral agencies, partners, government agencies, customers or the public press. The spokesman transmits information about plans, policies and organizational performance realistically and in the specified time.

The last type of the roles of managers, as Mintzberg suggests, is the question of the roles of decision, that is to make significant decisions. The processing of requests for authorization, time distribution, consultation meeting to determine strategies and negotiation with other organizations is included here. In this case there are four types of roles, as follows:

First, the manager and entrepreneur, who acts as initiator and architect of much of the controlled change that occurs in your organization. That is to say, this type of manager is responsible for making changes according to their own will, taking advantage of opportunities and solving problems of little urgency.

The role of the manager as *anomaly detection manager* is the second of this type; it arises from involuntary situations and changes which remove some of his/her control

limits. The manager acts by necessity and he/she is responsible for implementing corrective measures to prevent that such an isolated problem does not become a crisis that could endanger the situation of the organization. One example is the detection of a minor fault in the steering, which is communicated as soon as possible to the responsible members and together they find a solution that does not affect other areas.

The third decision role is that of *resource allocator*, which is the core of the system for determining strategies of the organization. The manager must monitor the system by which organizational resources are allocated. Some of his/her functions are being the programmer of time and work and actions authorizer. The resource allocator is also responsible for allocating resources of all kinds, such as developing programs, budgets and programming the work of subordinates.

Finally, the *negotiator*, in which the manager is responsible for representing the organization in every major negotiation. This case can occur when an agreement is reached, a meeting with suppliers is held, general assemblies take place or loan calculations with financial institutions are carried out, among others.

Table 1. Summary of managerial roles as Henry Mintzberg (1973).

Roles	Functions or leading roles.
Figurehead	Representative, Symbol, figure.
Leader	Formal authority, defines the steps, supporting subordinates.
Link	Network of contacts and relationships, facilitates communication.
Monitor	Identifies faults, information centre, offers his/ her expertise.
Populariser	Treatment of external information, both objective and evaluative.
Spokesman	Transmits information outside about plans, policies or results.
Businessman	Makes changes, calculates potential investments, trade relations.
Anomaly detection manager	Applies corrective measures in difficult situations, identifies potential problems a priori, acts out of necessity.
Allocator of resources	Programmer of time and work, action authorizer, supervisor of the system for resource assignment.
Negotiator	Represents the organization in negotiations, signatures or acts.

2.4. Managerial skills from management roles.

Henry Mintzberg (1973) explains the eight managerial skills that, according to this author, middle managers should have in order to acquire full management capabilities and leadership in any organization. They correspond to managerial roles before seen, therefore, the more skills the managers have, the greater the number of roles that they can use at any given time.

To acquire them, Mintzberg points out three types: cognitive learning, in which the student is introduced to current knowledge by reading or attending classes; learning by simulation, practising a skill in an artificial situation and learning at work where students develop the activity as a natural part of their work. The eight skills which he explains are the following:

Firstly, *contact skills with peers*, where middle managers must establish and maintain relations and exchanges of points of views with the staff, knowing how to create an extensive network of contacts and communicate with each other formally and informally. This ability corresponds perfectly to the role of manager as *link* as it helps to maintain good relationships with members of the organization who know exactly what they want to communicate at all times. Skill advice is also vital because it is good to communicate with experts in the field, as they can be of great help.

Secondly, we find *skills that are characteristic of leadership*, which are used when comparing with subordinates, such as how to motivate, prepare or help them deal with different situations. It corresponds to a *leadership* role to show a way forward to his/her subordinates and help them to move forward. It is very important to work out contact skills dealing with people from when they are very little, as some of them are almost innate and very difficult to change if they have not used and develop them during the formation stage.

Other skills are used for *conflict resolution*, which also includes the ability to mediate interpersonal conflict between individuals. In this case, it would be more directed towards the roles of *anomaly detection manager*, *resource allocator* and *negotiator*. The manager is forced to act in a situation of strong pressure and must prepare his/her mind for this type of scenario, so the psychological behaviour is extremely important.

The fourth skill with reference to the roles of middle management *skills* corresponds to *the processing of information*. It consists of learning informal networking

information, finding good and reliable sources of information to help understand better the most committed situations and finding ideas for beneficial change. It relates to the role of *communicator*, as he/she is responsible for analysing and communicating important information to the rest of the organization and it is vital to have prior knowledge of this mechanism.

The skills for *making decisions in ambiguous situations* corresponding to unstructured situations is also characteristic of a good leader. First, the manager is forced to decide when the decision will be made, then diagnose the situation, find solutions and evaluate the consequences of choosing one of the alternatives proposed. The roles to which this ability can benefit more are the *spokesperson* and the *entrepreneur*, as the middle manager must keep control over the situation and transmit their decisions as soon as possible.

The next skill is the *technique of allocation of resources*, as managers are often forced to choose between competing demands for resources among themselves. Their role is not easy because they are responsible for deciding on the best option and how to allocate available resources. In addition, this skill determines the work of subordinates and the formal structure that will make it possible, all at short range and high labour demand. It is related to the *resource allocator* role as monitors resources used for each activity and tries to distribute them in the best way possible.

The penultimate of the proposals is for *business skills*, which includes the search for problems and opportunities as well as the controlled introduction of organizational change. It corresponds to the role of manager as *entrepreneur* and as *head* because he/she is a figure with enough power to make the changes to be made timely, always in consultation with others, and which is aimed at exposing new ideas outside when necessary.

The eighth ability of middle managers are the *techniques of introspection*, based on knowledge of the position i.e. to know many techniques, have a good basis on any issue related to the company in performing the work and see first-hand the ins and outs of the organization, studying and promoting self sessions in which managers provide honest criticism of their behaviour. The roles that can be related more with this ability are the *monitor* and the *spokesman*, and it is necessary to have first-hand knowledge of everything that is happening in the company to know the best way to convey the changes to others.

Therefore, there are many skills that managers should have. Knowledge of each of them is essential to bring about a holistic management in which they can use different roles depending on the situation that they face. This would greatly help to create a versatile organization and dynamic and skilled professionals for any changes that may occur.

Table 2. Relationship management skills with management roles as Mintzberg (1973).

Skills	Main roles assigned to it
Contact with partners	Link
Leadership skills	Leader
Conflict Resolution	Anomaly detection manager, resource allocator
Information Processing	Discloser
Decision in ambiguous situations	Spokesman, entrepreneur
Resource allocation	Resource Allocator
Business techniques	Entrepreneur, visible head
Introspection techniques	Monitor, spokesman

2.5. Manager's roles according to J. Balogun (2003).

Other authors have analysed middle management, which provide their views on the role they have and about the roles that follow in leading the activities. *J. Balogun (2003)*, focuses his work on explaining how you can develop a strategy in organizations, how to deal with strategic change and renewal, focusing mainly on large mature companies. *J. Balogun (2003)* distinguishes two *types of roles in companies regarding the role of managers and their interaction with customers*:

The first of these roles is characterized by a descending line of authority, bureaucratic organization, in which the *middle manager is a simple transmitter of information* but does not have enough powers to initiate a complementary activity or possible action in order to resolve a problem. In addition, this hierarchy line appears in all areas of the organization, as in the case of customer service, there is no relationship in terms of the guidelines in each department of the company, but it is every manager who chooses how to proceed. Not being this a standardized task, it is much more

difficult to maintain a lasting relationship with the customer. As for the internal organization, it does not take into account the skills and attitudes of the staff and communication is down. Finally, the use that is given to information technology is of a simple control tool type and is very bureaucratic.

In the second role, the difference is smaller when comparing the jobs, it is more like an organization with an adhocratic structure, in which workers are more versatile and may *change roles* as well as more teamwork is involved. Middle managers make more decisions and are responsible for the entire organization, they ensure that everyone knows what work is carried out and improves work efficiency day by day. They are not simple communicators of their superiors' ideas. The relationship with the customer and how the customer is treated is very important. Information systems are more advanced and can also create databases, tools to communicate more personal relationships with customers and potential customers. The staff has greater flexibility and better combines personal and professional life, so that their productivity increases.

Table 3. Implementation of the changes according to the organizational context, Balogun (2003).

Transmitter	Down-line authority, simply distributes information from senior management, little autonomy in choosing how to accomplish tasks.
Versatile	Greater equality in the workplace, increase teamwork, transmitting information in both directions, greater responsibility of lower-level management.

Therefore, J. Balogun (2003) shows how the roles of middle managers may differ according to the type of business and how it operates, so its members will always try to follow a dynamic line in which more than one role will be used in a more efficient way when each of the changes occurs in the organization.

Given this division by J. Balogun (2003), the attention is focused on companies that are characterized by a more adhocratic structure and, therefore, more flexible and prepared for the changes that may happen. To do this, he classifies the *roles that managers or executives take when applying the changes*. In general he believes that there are four main roles. He uses two variables: the nature of the activity and the orientation. The roles are:

First, *the accomplishment of personal change*, in which the middle manager focuses on the attempt to be the first to understand the situation at that moment of uncertainty. Therefore, the role of *investigatoris* applied, in which everyone has a routine to do and everyone knows how to improve their workplace, how to make it easier to apply. The sum of individual work in the attempt to be more efficient with their homework will make the whole organization be more compact and take more and more resources with which to count on. In this case the guidance would be individually, nature would be focused on the individual and later the communication of all the changes and developments would come about.

Second, *maintaining the business going during the transition*, trying that changes do not occur abruptly, and ensuring that all employees are aware of the steps to internalize and that the change is not so hard. We would be facing a leadership role in the good knowledge about leadership and coordination with all the members that can be used to maintain a stable atmosphere. In this case, the orientation is individual but the nature of the activity is strategic and coordinated.

Another role is to *implement the necessary changes*, centred on a team looking for the best possible way to manage the situation, using a well-coordinated team. It corresponds to a *team leadership* role, as these changes are often made first by departments, in order to ensure that the difficulty of the changes is not so high. Meetings are needed to be held by heads of department to discuss how they evolve and change and devise a strategy to keep in line with the objectives of the organization.

The last of the roles is to *help others through change*, i.e. make known to everyone that there are going to be changes and provide global ideas in order to improve the tasks at hand, by way of teamwork and mutual support, this being a characteristic of *shared leadership*.

Table 4.Roles management in implementing the changes as Balogun (2003).

Researchers	Carries out a personal change, then communicates it to the rest.
Leader	Maintaining a stable climate, changes regularly without alterations.
Leadership Team	Coordination team, department changes, making a global problem small.
Shared leadership	Coordination of the heads of each department to provide global ideas of joint actions.

2.6.Management key tasks of management according toDelmestri (2005).

Delmestri (2005) argues that the primary responsibility for the middle management is to maintain a positive social environment, in which there is a good relationship between all components of the organization, both formally and informally, in order to explore different areas, be knowledgeable about all facets of the company and have an overall knowledge of the whole so that they can provide new ideas and develop teamwork among managers from different areas of the same company. This has a positive influence on any strategy or change to follow, as it can deploy more quickly; members of the organization will trust in those who have initiated the change and bring new ideas to improve it.

In addition, another of the tasks a manager has to face is to provide solutions to unexpected problems and exceptional issues, as if they work on a regular basis, problems are easier to resolve. But we must be very attentive to these abnormal problems, which at first may seem to be very important but, if they are not confronted, can lead to a serious crisis.

Therefore, the author defends the roles of managers in *control of situations*, in which the main objective is for there to be harmony in the organization at all times no matter what changes are being applied; the roles of *information*, in which the transfer of information between all areas is essential to achieve all the objectives and the *decision*, in which all members of the organization must make decisions that can mark the future on a daily basis, since it is up to them to maintain a good climate and distribute information to all points of the organization. They are the ones who are primarily responsible for allocating resources and lead the changes that occur.

2.7.Ways and participation of managers in changes according to Floyd (1992).

As it has been explained, the changes that happen in organizations occur in many forms, each one accompanied by a series of functions. *Floyd (1992)* is an author who emphasizes on the study of middle managers, in which he identifies three possible types when implementing change in organizations.

The first one is the *expansion of formal limits*, in which more responsibility is given to middle managers, i.e., they have the task of mediating between internal and external groups, either formally or informally, in search of stability in the company to make the changes as quickly and effectively as possible.

Second, the *increased variety on the influence of workers*, in which it will depend more on their work and the managers will only show them the objectives that need to be achieved but they will have to use the mechanisms they deem appropriate to give greater autonomy and responsibility.

Finally, *the increased consistency in the patterns of influence downward*, with the aim of finding the right balance of control and flexibility in the implementation of the strategy. Workers should not be pressured to do the work, they should be told the objectives that need to be pursued, but they will be self-sufficient in terms of how to do it and also to seek greater productivity.

From this study about the ways to implement a change, *Floyd (1997)* determined the involvement of middle management in the strategy and its association with the strategic type.

Four types of managers differ within the meaning of communication in the company, ascending, descending or from both directions and if divergent or inclusive, i.e., if the company is prone to separate more tasks or more cohesion and the tasks are larger, if the employees always perform the same activities or if they change their position to acquire greater knowledge about more areas.

The first case is the *defence of alternatives*, which is characterized by diverging upwards, in which the intent is to come up with ideas from the lowest positions which arise individually and meetings are held to determine which ideas are believed to be the best to make them into more concrete facts and possible scope.

Secondly, the *ease of adaptation*, diverging downwards, in this case orders and tasks to be performed are received from the senior management and each of the

workers should know how to perform them, trying to use the least possible resources but getting the desired work carried out.

Another strategy is to *synthesize information*, which is characterized by integrating up, in which workers can agree on a few improvements, they try to explain them well by way of debates between them and then they take the best proposals to their superiors, thus everyone is happier with the results displayed and brings benefits to the entire organization.

Finally we have the *deliberate strategy implementation*, inclusive down. The senior managers agree to launch a new strategy or objective, with the help of all workers, the lower-level workers must understand these changes and get used to them.

Table 5. Roles of management in implementing the strategy according to Floyd (1992).

Defence Alternatives	Contribution of individual ideas from all levels and subsequent meeting to elect one.
Ease of adaptation	Orders of senior commanders on tasks to be performed are received, each of them carries it out in the most efficient way.
Synthesize information	Meetings at lower levels and the agreed proposals are taken to the superiors
Deliberate strategy implementation	Meeting of senior executives to lead a strategy that all the members of the organization must follow.

2.8. The importance and relevance of a middle manager's tasks by Tengblad (2006).

Although he does not provide a new classification of the roles of managers, *Tengblad (2006)* conducted a study in which the importance managers give to the tasks they perform in their daily activities is reflected.

Firstly, he states that a middle manager uses 63% of working time to hold *meetings*, either with someone internal to the company or potential customers or suppliers, among others, so that the *role for the transmission of Information* and teamwork is very present. In addition, it is also of great importance to *travel* for reaching new agreements and to be present at conferences or exhibitions related to the sector; according to *Tengblad (2006)* it occupies 16% of the total time. Another fact is that only individual work is done during 12% of the time, so the idea that it can always be used reaffirms the *teamwork* for almost any task.

Secondly, it is also important to convey that 4 in 10 meetings or verbal contact with other members of the company, is made informally, making it not only a formal *role*, targeted task, but it requires a *more informal* role in which you can share ideas with workers also outside the workplace.

Thirdly, the author confirms that whenever you can make *meetings* with several people, in most cases *all areas of the organization* are present, so that everybody is aware of each of the steps that are made. In particular, when meetings in which more than two people attend, 56% of the time there are five or more participants.

Of all the *meetings* that are held in organizations, *70% involve middle management*, for only 3% of the principal or 9% of senior executives, so that the fact that the middle manager is the one nearest to the whole enterprise is evident, that he is the one who spends more time making decisions and who should know how to communicate each and everyone of the strategies in the best possible manner to each of the composite areas.

Therefore, it is clear that teamwork is increasingly important in organizations, as well as a pleasant working environment in which workers can share their ideas even outside their jobs. All this is encouraged to further increase productivity in the organization, that is to say, while workers are happy and satisfied with their work performed, the company improves its working performance, ideas and knowledge, which can be key elements face to competitors.

2.9. Changes in the roles of management during the XX and XXI century.

One of the main ideas that can be drawn is the continued increase in jobs and increased responsibility of middle managers. Fayol already exposed in 1916 that they carried out planning, organizing staff, created teams to provide more ideas, going, seeking coordination among all members, reporting and budgeted. These ideas have remained unchanged until today, so it is deductible that this position has been and is a fundamental part of any organization scheme.

Over half a century later, Mintzberg (1973) made a classification of middle manager roles, which are little changed. In interpersonal roles, the leader perfectly relatable to the function of organizing and directing Fayol (1916) appears. Second, the role of liaison link between all areas of the organization, which may include the coordination function. In such roles, Mintzberg (1973) himself makes a small modification to the principles of Fayol, as Mintzberg includes a visible head role. That is, there is no longer the CEO or senior officers who show the image of the company and attend meetings, travels or conferences, but this role is shared more and more with the middle manager, who is becoming the visible head of the organization, much closer to other workers and outside the company.

Second, Mintzberg (1973) mentions the new roles, in which the diffuser is included, related to Fayol's (1916) function of reporting, in which the manager receives the information, stores it in the optimal support, deals with it and it is then distributed to the appropriate area. In addition, it also indicates the role of spokesman (Fayol 1916), which plans and sets out the objectives and ideas to reach them, always leaving room for workers to do it in the most suitable way. In this case, Mintzberg (1973) also includes a change, such as the organization monitor. The work of employees is no longer static, but the idea is now to optimise their ways of working, which will be in different parts of the organization so that the greatest number of workers has a comprehensive understanding of their place work, with the aim of bringing new ideas, be faster if a change occurs or also have more views when dealing with a conflict.

The last of the types in which Mintzberg (1973) classifies the roles of managers is the decision roles. In this case, the above functions of Fayol (1916) to create teams and budget can be classified into Mintzberg's role of resource allocator, where the manager oversees the assignment of resources, i.e. distributes the best as possible, to go and make interrelated objectives obtaining the equipment. Mintzberg introduces three new roles, such as that of negotiator, businessman and manager of anomalies, representing more responsibilities and skills to be developed by this group.

Therefore, how the roles and functions of middle management has maintained its spine throughout the twentieth century has been reflected, although improvements or modifications that are more suited to a changing world and more technology than the above are being made. By the end of the century, Floyd (1997) refers to these previous classifications, supports but adds three features that he thinks need new businesses to survive in this dynamic, such as the increase in informal meetings, that is, less bureaucracy in organizations and that all organizational levels are equalized more and not have disparate differences. He adds that workers at the lower levels have a greater power, that they feel capable of being the drivers of change as they are the main focus of the production of new materials or new services and finally, and in connection therewith, delegate responsibility to these workers, giving them autonomy in work to be able to have a higher rate of productivity and involvement with their work.

Following changes in the way of working of middle managers, some differences were observed between the control functions according to Mintzberg (1973), and of Tengblad (2006) already at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

First, the importance of the meetings remains as important to Tengblad, which is expected to be an activity that remains not very variable in the coming years. Yes, a change appears in the first type and in the case of individual work. If Mintzberg had already reduced this point compared to previous works, Tengblad continues to carry out this chore and places it behind the hours for transport, that if the trend continues, it may increase in the coming years and, if it continues in this way, there will be an increase in number of trips to try to cover a larger market.

Second, it is important to mention the decline in the meetings with the CEO in Tengblad (2006), which reaffirmed the idea that the middle executives are more and more important and have more power and are taking on the responsibilities and activities of the higher positions. Moreover, the percentage of informal meetings remains the same, namely, it is still important to maintain a cordial relationship with colleagues and share impressions even outside of work, apart from holding meetings in the business.

Third, meetings with 5 or more managers are becoming more common, encouraging teamwork, brainstorming and complete knowledge.

In short, the core functions of middle management remain the same, but every time new activities and responsibilities are added and this increases the importance of this group in organizations. In recent times, it has been taken to the most important command, it is a dynamic organization.

Table 6. Relationship roles Mintzberg (1973) with the functions of Fayol (1916).

Role (Mintzberg)	Function (Fayol)
Leader	organize, direct
Link	Coordination
Diffuser	Report
Spokesman	Plan
Allocator of resources	budgeting, create teams

There are other roles that Mintzberg introduces but there is no direct relation with Fayol's functions which are figurehead, monitor, negotiator, businessman and anomaly detection manager.

Therefore, it can be seen that Fayol's main functions remain as important as ever over time and they have been studied by recent authors. However, new roles have been introduced because of continuous change in the context and characteristics of the businesses today.

3. Ways to implement strategies.

There are many changes that occur in companies over the years, an important part of the success of each of them lies in the way that such modifications are carried out. Implementing a strategy is to introduce changes in the operations of an organization, depending on their nature, the roles of managers and accompanying functions will be different. For this reason a number of authors have focused on this part of the implementation of the strategy, in different forms and ways in which they could lead an important strategy in an organization.

Implementing changes in an organization is always complicated. We must take into account various factors and the union and knowledge of how to implement the changes is paramount for everyone.

3.1. Models for strategies implementation according to Bourgeois and Brodwin (1984).

There are many ways to apply strategies, which require different management roles. As for the authors that focus on this change and more specifically in middle management, we study *Bourgeois and Brodwin (1992)*, who divided the *models for implementing strategies* into five:

The first model defines it as *the strategist as a rational actor*: The model of the commander, in which the CEO is a rational actor, has power and access to the most complete information and uses that power to carry out rational and detailed analysis depth before taking action. He/She gives greater importance to the formulation than to implementation. This model is slightly better in changing environments.

Another model is *the strategist and architect*, model of change. Greater importance is given to the implementation; the strategist designs structures and systems in order to ensure the implementation of the strategy. This model considers the quarterback directly, not only translates the strategy and plan, but is actively involved in the implementation.

The third model is *the strategist as coordinator*, it is the collaborative model. The strategist is concerned with how to make the senior management team to help develop a good set of goals and strategies and commit to it. The idea is to get good ideas as a team, compromise is achieved with the strategy and people feel more participatory in the process of formulation and implementation.

Quarterback coaching is the fourth of the models of these authors, it is the cultural model. Here the strategist urges the company staff to believe in the mission, but allows people to create the details to meet that goal. This model overcomes the distances between thinkers who execute the strategy.

The last model is *the strategist as orchestrator and judge*, it is the growing model, so named because the director encourages managers to develop, advocate and implement sound strategies, plays a role of facilitator, putting boundaries or assumptions for the actions to be taken and ponders the value of the suggested strategies.

Table 7. Models for the implementation of strategies and Brodwin according Bourgeois (1984).

Rational actor	Attach more importance to the formulation, more significant levels of power, commander model.
Architect	Quarterback design structures and systems to ensure implementation. Greater importance of implementation.
Coordinator	Get support and assistance from senior management to transmit the strategy in a good way.
Trainer	Lower levels can decide how to carry out the activities but with objectives.
Judge	Senior officers only have the role of moderator, so it gives much more responsibility and freedom to the lower controls.

3.2. Methods of strategic process according to Hart (1992).

Another author who made a study of middle managers was Hart (1992), who carries out a *study of the modalities of the strategic process*, and then different types are shown:

The *authoritarian or imperial* strategy is driven by a leader or a small team. The role of senior manager is to provide a direction to the strategy while middle managers merely obey orders. In this case, communication is down and the leading role of middle managers is to transmit information to their subordinates. In this case, the responsibilities of this group are much smaller, converting it into a monotonous job and is characteristic of a bureaucratic organization.

The second form is the *symbolic and cultural* strategy led by a mission and a vision of the future. Top managers carry out the function of a good coach, they motivate and inspire, while organizational members play the role of players, they respond to the challenge. In this case, middle managers have more responsibilities, joining the ability to modify and work the information received and distributing it in a concrete way, transmitted to each area what is needed and with more freedom to manage any changes.

The third one is the *rational or analytical strategy*, in which the predominating strategy is conducted by the formal structure and strategy planning systems. The "leaders" of the organization assess and control while other organizational members follow the system. Here all workers can now do the activities in the way they see fit, but always must be approved by the heads of each section. This continuous learning is achieved and wins versatility in the knowledge and skills of each of them, while transferring a potential advantage over other organizations.

Other modalities of the strategic process are the *transactional or procedural modalities*, driven by an internal process and mutual adjustments. Managers try to train and empower their workers while they try to learn and improve. It belongs to unexpected changes, in which not all workers have the necessary experience to implement them safely, so that middle management will support and help the entire organization to achieve good implementation of the proposed activities, managing to increase the educational level of each of the workers.

The last of the modalities explained by Hart is the *generative or organic modality*, driven by the initiative strategy of organizational actors. Senior managers approve and offer facilities while the other organizational members play the role of entrepreneurs, experienced and assuming more responsibilities and risks. It is the most flexible of all, in which workers contribute ideas and display dynamic, willing to work in a different way every day and performing various daily tasks.

Table 8. Methods of implementing strategies according to Hart (1992).

Authoritarian	Strategy and direction is provided to the lower levels and subordinates only obey orders.
Cultural	It motivates and inspires all workers from a mission and vision for the future.
Rational	There is a formal strategy and an action plan; senior officers control the actions of the lower ones.
Transactional	The strategy is driven from an internal process and mutual adjustments. All try to learn from each other and managers try to train and empower their subordinates.
Generative	The entrepreneurship is the central idea, workers are increasingly seeking lower levels, have greater accountability and middle managers are responsible for supplementing these ideas and provide the resources needed.

4. Importance of roles of middle managers' roles in the different ways of implementing strategies.

As seen before, there are many authors who have devoted a part of their work in investigating the role of middle management. In these previous sections a synthesis of some authors' ideas and new tools that can be used by these managers have been exposed, covering almost a century of progress.

4.1 Relationship of roles with the organizational structure.

Occasionally, middle managers in organizations cannot establish the role they would like; here we find the static organizations, which have not evolved over the years. It can be a big problem, because the entire organization gets used to a routine, to making some specific activities and focuses only on the inside, without stopping to think about the changes that occur outside and that can be vital.

That is why some authors attribute the possible roles that middle managers can exercise to the level of hierarchy of the organization.

On the one hand, Balogun (2003) makes a distinction between bureaucratic and adhocratic organizations. As for the former, the role of the middle manager is simple transmitter, which obeys the orders of his superiors and communicates them to the other members. This would correspond to Hart's authoritarian role (1992) and the rational actor role by Brodwin and Bourgeois (1984). In the same type of organization, but slightly less hierarchical, we find Hart's symbolic role and the architect role by Bourgeois and Brodwin, where an improvement occurs in the role of middle managers, who are starting to lead workers and can make changes and process the information they have received. The bureaucratic structure not only affects middle managers, but Balogun (2003) also emphasizes customer service, from which he considers is not fully taken advantage of. Besides this type of business is "doomed" to failure, because if it is not able to continue to modernize and applying new techniques, competition will do and it will have increasingly less market power.

Moreover, Balogun (2003) defines as adhocratic those companies that are prepared for changes, and which invest in further innovation and are open to the outside to redirect situations. In this context, Hart's transactional role (1992) and the role of coordinator by Bourgeois and Brodwin (1984) appears. In this case, the tasks are divided into teams to try to have a broader view; more autonomy is given to

workers thus achieving greater commitment and are more participatory in both the formulation and the implementation. Going a little further, there are a number of roles such as Hart's generative role (1992) and that of coach and judge by Brodwin and Bourgeois (1984) representing the highest level of autonomy and decision making power of middle managers.

There are organizations that believe it is convenient to reduce the number of levels, share more decisions that allow information to go in both directions, which contribute ideas from the lower levels, with these organizations that according to these authors are more likely to succeed, to anticipate changes and to be leaders in their sectors.

Table 9. List of roles proposed by Hart (1992) and Bourgeois and Brodwin (1984) with the divisions in the organizational structure posed Balogun (2003).

Structure		Roles	
Balogun	Hart	Bourgeois and Brodwin	
Very bureaucratic	Authoritarian	Rational actor	
Bureaucratic	Symbolic	Architect	
Adhocratic	Transaction	Coordinator	
Very adhocratic	Generative	Coach and Judge	

4.2. Relationship between modalities of implementation of strategies by Hart (1992) with the possible managerial roles by Mintzberg (1973), Floyd (1992) and Balogun (2003).

Not all roles can be used in all the changes of an organization, as they depend on a multitude of factors such as the characteristics of the sector, the structure of the company or the nature of change, among other things. That's why below you will find a table that specifies the best roles to be used in each of the possible scenarios.

Table 10. Summary of arrangements for implementing strategies with potential roles.

Hart	Mintzberg	Floyd	Balogun
Authoritarian	Populariser Anomaly detection manager	Deliberate strategy implementation	N/A
Cultural	Link Spokesman Allocator of resources	Ease of adaptation	Researcher
Rational	Figurehead Negotiator	Ease of adaptation	Leader
Transactional	Monitor Businessman	Synthesize information	Shared leadership
Generative	Leader	Defence alternatives	Leadership team

The first of the modalities of implementation strategies that Hart talks about is the manager as authoritarian. In it, the top of the organization prepares objectives and action guidelines, while the rest of the organization obeys orders and does not modify any of the marked actions. As for the roles that might be rooted in this modality, they are according to Mintzberg, that of disseminator and anomaly detection manager, because they are senior managers who handle information and study the steps, plus they are also the ones who apply corrective measures and identify possible errors in planning and implementation.

According to Floyd, this modality identifies with the role of implementing the deliberate strategy, because they are the senior managers who direct the strategy, which will subsequently be followed by all members of the organization.

However, according to Balogun, when talking about such a bureaucratic form, does not give details on the roles that should be used to implement these strategies are not given.

The second mode is the cultural mode, in which the objective is to motivate and inspire workers from a mission and vision for the future. Mintzberg's roles that can be used in this context are that of link, spokesman and resources allocator. In this case, middle managers communicate the goals, mission and vision of each of the changes so that everyone can know and work towards it. At the same time, they should allocate

resources between areas and have meetings with those responsible for continuously monitoring their development.

For Floyd, in this case, it is the ease of adaptation the best choice because they are senior managers who send orders, but then middle managers now have greater responsibility and freedom in interpreting that information and deal with it as efficiently as possible.

Balogun believes that a new role appears at this point that may be associated with this type and this being that of investigator, in which the middle manager can make a personal change, and then communicates this to his/her subordinates.

The third of the modalities that Hart exposes is the rational role, characterized by middle manager control by way of implementation of activities by subordinates. In this case, the roles that are more appropriate according to Mintzberg are that of visible and negotiator head, as they are at all times they are in contact with other workers to check and correct their work, and are responsible for giving help and advice to others.

According to Floyd, the role most similar to this is the ease of adaptation, as before, since it is the middle managers who control the work of the others.

Finally, Balogun uses the leadership role for this modality, as it maintains a stable climate in carrying out the changes.

The fourth of the conditions set by Hart is transactional, where workers are learning from each other and try to train managers and enable each of their subordinates. It is associated with the figure of monitor and businessman raised by Mintzberg, since managers offer their expertise so that together they can correct errors while carrying out the necessary changes and calculating alternatives.

The role of synthesizing information by Floyd is the one that is most related to this mode, in which meetings between the lower and intermediate levels, to carry out the actions and the result are communicated to the top of the organization.

As for the roles described by Balogun, shared leadership would be the most similar, as there is coordination between those responsible for each of the departments to provide global action ideas together to inform each of the available areas.

The last of the modalities is generative, in which entrepreneurship is the central idea of each of the changes, and in which lower-level management increases their

responsibility. In this case, the role that best fits this situation is Mintzberg's role of leader. This is because the figure of the middle manager is seen as a support to subordinates, the one which defines the steps but leaves it to all the workers who have the final say on how to make these changes.

The alternative defence would be the best option in this mode, when considering the roles suggested by Floyd, as each member can bring individual ideas and then there are meetings to harness the best and carry them out.

Finally, the leadership team by Balogun is the role that is most related to this modality, in which the coordination team is rewarded and in which the idea is to breakdown the global problems in order to solve them slowly.

5.Illustration (Case study)

Having seen the theoretical contents and the relationships between the various authors, this last section tries to show how companies and organizations today follow the models and trends studied and detailed above. To carry it out, I've been to an export company of Almazora (Castellón) called Element Fresh, coinciding with my Business Administration internship last year.

As a presentation of the organization under study, it must be said that it is a family business born of generations cultivating citrus fruits and more than twenty years working in the production, packaging and marketing of the product to the end customer. During times of crisis, it has managed to maintain and even increase its market share both domestically and in Europe. Each of its employees strives for a quality product, thanks to good communication between all and lifelong learning. Another of its qualities is the proximity of the management team to all levels of the company, in which a CEO can be seen controlling the tasks at hand and ensuring they are performed in the most comfortable and dynamic way.

In addition, middle managers are of great importance, as there are times when customers or suppliers meet with these people, and have full confidence in the senior management.

In accordance with the discussion in the previous sections, we will proceed to determine if the company complies with what each of the authors transmits.

First, as to the basic features described by Fayol (1916), there is a clear relationship, due to the fact that, in this organization, senior executives carry out short and long term planning which is updated in order to meet all obligations and to be aware of market developments. In addition, teams are created to develop each of the phases that oranges and derivatives go through before reaching the final customer, achieving a high degree of coordination among all its members. Likewise, information exchange is continuous at all levels, whether up or downward, including incremental improvements that reduce the expected cost.

Secondly, taking into account possible managerial roles as Mintzberg (1973) states, I believe that managers at Element Fresh develop the three types of roles. First, interpersonal roles, which are displayed as the visible head of the organization, as they act as leader to achieve the predetermined targets and they are the link with the outside. They also highlight the informational roles, as has been mentioned before, the information is very valuable and a high number in the organization knows the sector firsthand and the changes that are likely to materialize, so there are constant meetings between levels to reach agreements regarding resources and effort and time. Decision roles are also present, and at all times the organization is concerned about any anomaly that should appear and does its best to rectify them.

Thirdly, following the proposed management skills by Mintzberg (1973), the one that most characterizes this organization are contacts with peers, in which at all times there are exchanges of different points of view and information updated regarding what happens in each area, given by their superiors, who are spokesmen for their areas. It also highlights the ability in making decisions in ambiguous situations because it is a very dynamic sector, in which a penny less here or there in the cost of citric fruit can be of high importance when selling to a customer or not. It becomes very important to maintain control in new situations in which you have to raise the various opportunities and calmly and with the consent of all those responsible, change the direction towards is the new target, with the intention of getting the maximum number of potential customers, so as not to rely on only a few, and also to achieve their loyalty by giving them all possible attention and the highest quality. At the same time, the third main skill of the managers of this company is the resolution of conflicts, and given the fact that having such a large number of suppliers and customers, it is difficult to maintain a right climate, the truth is that they know well what they do very well because they focus on ensuring that all parties agree to avoid a major problem.

Next, with regard to the types of roles according to J.Balogun (2003), it should be mentioned that this company does not have many organizational levels, i.e.

adhocratic shows a structure in which at each level there are many responsibilities and communication and it is ongoing in both directions. With these features, the workers are more versatile and can change roles as much as possible as well as working continuously as a team. At the same time, it is of great importance for customer satisfaction, this is why using all necessary means and using advanced information systems and getting databases updated is so important, and is used to make a correct forecast of potential sales in each of the periods. In addition, it also shares the ideas of Delmestri (2005) in which he stresses that one of the most important responsibilities of middle managers is to maintain a positive social environment, in which there is a good relationship between all components, both formally and informally with the aim of introducing improvements that may be crucial for the development of competitive advantages in the sector. In addition, another feature that should have a policy for this author and which characterizes this company is fast performance against unexpected problems of this volatile sector, where there are many competitors in many countries, so we must achieve differentiation and show an outstanding idea with the aim of drawing attention and put the organization in a privileged position in the national and international citrus sector.

Compared with Tengblad (2006) and when referring to meetings of senior managers and middle managers, it should be noted that this company does not follow the approach of the author because meetings for middle managers occupy just 30% of its time, 63% of Tengblad. It is true that around that percentage is used by the top of the organization, and that in at least half of the time the middle manager also attends them. It does seem like there is a match with regards to the use of informal meetings, either with people in the organization or people nearby, which sometimes does not mean that the physical space of the company is used but elsewhere to maintain a friendly and informal conversation.

Compared with the possible modes when implementing a change according to Floyd (1997), the strategy most used in this company is the expansion of formal limits, because when there is an area that needs improvement, given greater responsibility to its responsibility to find a quick but stable change, as it is the person who best knows the section. Another strategy used is to increase consistency in the patterns of influence downward, in which greater flexibility is given to workers to implement small changes, leaving a margin so that they are not pressured.

Going straight into the authors that focus on middle management, Hart (1992) exposed the different modalities of the strategic process, in this case the one that is most related with the company studied is the transactional or procedural, in which

managers help train each worker, so that they are happier with their work and contribute more to the company, as they see their job easier and in the future have access to more senior management. This volatile sector needs of these small but continuous improvements, it is the correct mode for this company.

Finally, in the case of models for implementing strategy and according to Brodwinand Bourgeois (1984), the coach is the one that can be connected to this organization, as the short and long term objectives are put in the higher management's hands, but the implementation of it is the responsibility of each worker, it is up to them to decide how to perform each of the activities, making their job more flexible and dynamic at the same time as they feel more involved in the successes of the organization.

In summary, in this work we have tried to summarize each of the points of view of the different authors and the evolution in time of the changes that have taken place in the strategies of implementing changes in organizations. We have also put in practice the knowledge gained through the study of a nearby company with a high turnover, which is in a sector with high volatility but that has managed to implement changes, taking into account all stakeholders, trying that all changes benefit all parties. In order to do this, flexibility in the tasks of each worker has been tried to maximize, leaving each of them the responsibility to do their best job.

6. Conclusions.

Throughout this study, it has been proved the importance of middle managers in companies. As seen above, the roles which they can play are numerous, however there is a number of factors that influence the decision to adopt in each situation. The contributions of the authors who have worked on this issue in the last century have been reviewed reaching the conclusion that a middle manager's functions have evolved over time and their responsibilities have increased. Another main conclusion is the verification that the context and the organizational structure as well as the own characteristics of each Company, influence middle managers when playing different roles.

The work also reflects the characteristics that middle managers should own and the importance of lifelong learning in organizations. The relationship between the roles given by different authors helps to choose the best options in each circumstances that appear when they make changes. The more versatile and knowledgeable a middle manager is, the more flexible will be the way of implementing his/her work and therefore, the more likely that modifications will be stable and secure.

Given the complexity of the subject because there were different authors to study, it can be included the fact that I have been able to check the list of roles and their characteristics in only one company.

In sum, in future research the accuracy and the rate of security in relation to different authors' principles can be confirmed if studies are done in companies, their results are compared and it is checked that they follow the theory described above, just as it has been done with Element Fresh.

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