



Administrative Effectiveness

Handout 8

Stationery Management

STATIONERY MANAGEMENT

One cannot think of running an office without stationery and office supplies. Office stationeries are those expendable items that are necessary for and consumed in daily operations but do not generally enter into a finished product. Office stationeries and supplies comprise office forms, letter-heads pads, rough-work pads, envelopes, pencils, pens, erasers, pins, tags, files and folders.

Office stationeries occupy a key position in the office activity because proper and efficient use of stationeries and supplies brings the following advantages to the firm.

- (a) It provides better service at the lowest cost.
- (b) It occupies 30-40% of the non-salary cost and therefore is viewed seriously by the management.
- (c) It facilitates the smooth functioning of office work. The need for proper control of stationeries arises because it will cause the following difficulties. to the firm.

PROBLEMS THAT CAN OCCUR WITH STATIONERY:

EXCESSIVE INVESTMENT: Unless there is proper control of stationeries, it will cause excessive investment in stationeries. The work may be suspended or could be managed through local purchase if there is no control over stationeries.

WASTAGE: A lot of losses are caused due to careless handling, defective store-keeping, indifferent issuing and indiscriminate using of stationeries. A good system of stationery control enables proper use of stationeries and therefore avoid all possible wastages.

INFERIOR QUALITY AND HIGH PRICE: In the absence of systematic control of stationery a higher price is paid, and products of inferior quality are purchased. So, proper and efficient control of stationery enables to get a fair price for stationery and better-quality products.

DISORDERLY ARRANGEMENT: The stock of stationery may not be arranged systematically if a proper method of stationery control is, followed. Such an unsystematic arrangement of stationery puts a lot of difficulties in locating particular stationery at the time of need. So, a system of stationery control ensures the proper arrangement of office supplies and stationeries.

DETERIORATION: Without proper stationery control there will be a large quantity of stationery. The maintenance of a large number of stationeries involves the consumption of those stationeries over a long period. This long period of consumption facilitates deterioration in the quality of stationery. Thus, systematic control over the stationery is needed.

PROVISION FOR RIGHT TYPE OF STATIONERY: Right type of stationery should be purchased because the defective and improper quality of stationery decreases the quality of work.

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The essentials of a good system in the use of stationery involve:

- (a) Sufficient buying of stationery in the right quantity.
- (b) The issue system of stationery should be planned in such a manner that it should check wasteful consumption.
- (c) The storing of stationery should be done in such a manner that it should make the best possible use of space.
- (d) Maintenance of as little stock as possible.

GUIDELINES TO ASSIST IN STATIONERY MANAGEMENT.

Consolidate your stationery purchasing so that each department request new stationery from one person. This helps control costs by making sure that orders are not duplicated and gives you the ability to consolidate several order requests into one. For example, if one department needs special thank-you cards while another needs an invitation, order the two together for a volume discount at your printer.

Store stationery in a central location. Monitor the location regularly to check the inventory. Create an inventory list that prompts you to order items when they reach a certain level. For example, when you notice the last box of letterhead was opened, it's time to order more.

Track the dates of your stationery orders to create an estimated date of when you'll need to order more. This is just a guideline, but it helps you manage overuse. If you have to reorder envelopes a month earlier than expected, this may be a red flag that one department is hoarding envelopes, or someone is taking them home for personal use.

Reuse old stationery to reduce costs on notepads or test copies. This means you need to reorder note pads and copy paper less often, helping you manage those items. For example, use the blank side of printed paper for rough notes.

Shred sensitive documents printed on your stationery and recycle the shredded paper. Create a secure, central location for employees to deposit sensitive documents, such as a covered bin with a thin slot in the top. Shred the documents weekly — or more often if necessary — to maintain confidentiality. Provide several recycling bins for the non-sensitive paper to encourage people to recycle rather than throw old stationery in the garbage.

Compare the master list of what people will need in the next three months to the list of what stationery is already available in the office.

Choose where to purchase the stationery supplies by comparing prices. Check whether the suppliers offer discounts for bulk purchases. Compare prices for custom printed company letterhead. The prices of a local printer might be comparable to that of a large stationery chain store.

CUTTING EXPENDITURE BY IMPROVED STATIONERY MANAGEMENT

The most important department that costs you quite a bit is the office stationery. Here is where one needs to have a check to cut down on the total expenditure figures.

The following tips would help in this regard -

1. Always encourage your employees to reduce the paperwork. Some people have the weird habit of printing out the stuff just to check them out. Ask them to do it directly from the computers.
2. Lay strict rules of not taking home the office stuff even if it is not for personal use. By doing so, it is possible to control the misuse of office stationery.
3. Recycle stuff - Always look in for notepads, pens, files and other stuff that were disposed of even before half of its utility was done. By doing so, you can cut the costs incurred by buying new ones for it.
4. Have a close check on the stationery inventory and always keep track of all the inward and outward movements. This will in turn reduce the unwanted usage of stationery in issues of very little priority.
5. Always order stationery in bulk. This will help out in saving a considerable amount of money as well. On the downside, you might end up spending more than required up-front, yet, it's a saving in the long-term.

These steps may seem simple, but they yield good results.