



Strategically Integrating the Functions of Management and Effective Leadership to Attain Resilience for Sustainability

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Abstract. The functions of management are well known. Yet, insufficient effort is directed to sufficiently brainstorm how best these functions may be integrated to facilitate resilience to secure sustainability within an organization. This study adopts an interpretive, analytical approach to synthesize the key aspects of each function of management and of leadership qualities that may be skillfully utilized to bring about organizational stability and sustainability. Seminars, informal judgement discussions with experts, training conference sessions and scholarly articles formed the basis of information that was analysed. Thematic analysis with post-coding was undertaken to enhance focus. Organising is critical to integrating all resources (financial, human, physical) together and developing a functional, cohesive relationship amongst them to secure the maximum attainment or organizational goals. The five functions of management overlap and overarch cohesively such that a change in one has a rippling effect on the rest. To ensure that the functions of management are effectively instituted for strategic activities and goal accomplishment, essential leadership qualities are needed. The findings outlay essential practices to upgrade organizational resilience. For the functions of management to be relevant in a VUCA environment and to ensure resilience, they must be skillfully integrated; only then can strategic activities be successful. Essential leadership qualities and skills are necessary for organizational resilience. A resilient leader adapts to changes and capitalizes on prevailing opportunities. This is an interpretive, analytical study so the content will be documented or shared somewhere; however, the integration of the information into a flowchart that succinctly brings together the imperatives for resilience for sustainability is original. The essence of the paper, findings and recommendations are succinctly and vividly graphically represented on a figure for ease of practical implementation to achieve resilience for sustainability through the integration of the functions of management and the development of much needed leadership qualities and skills.

Keywords: controlling, directing, functions of management, leadership agility, leadership qualities, leadership skills, organizing, organizational effectiveness, planning, resilience, staffing, sustainability

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1 INTRODUCTION

Every organization has a specific purpose. However, in order to achieve its goal, specific processes need to be undertaken to ensure proper utilization of finances, effective planning, and effective operation of the organizational system. The responsibility of attaining this rests in the social processes of management, which we have ordinarily and universally understood as the functions of management. This dynamic process consists of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Whilst these dynamic elements have been well known, how to effectively and skillfully integrate them for the purpose of resilience has been neglected. This paper aims to achieve just that.

2. LITERATURE AND ENGAGEMENTS

Planning

Planning is the most basic operation of management and simply advocates that one needs to intelligently decide on the best course of action to take in order to optimally achieve a desired end state or goal. Ultimately, planning relates to knowing in advance what one needs to do, how and when to act in order to cautiously close the gap between where one is (the actual state) and where one needs to be (the desired state). Planning is therefore imperative in order to strategically and effectively utilize available resources (including human) to prevent wastage, confusion, uncertainty and risks especially in a VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) environment, which has recently defined organizations globally.

Organising

Organising is the process of skilfully bringing together resources (financial, human, physical) and developing a functional and productive relationship amongst them to secure the optimal attainment of organisational goals. To simultaneously secure resilience, it becomes imperative to organise in a manner that provides the business with everything it needs (materials, equipment, capital, human resources) for its effective functioning.

This means ensuring that the organizational structure has optimal access to needed resources identified when:

- Identifying organizational activities
- Categorizing the activities.
- Allocating duties
- Delegating authority and establishing responsibility
- Cor-ordinating authority and accountability relationships

Staffing

An organisation can only function if the right human resources with the right competencies are appointed into the right positions at the right time. The purpose of human resource management is to ensure that the human resources of the organisation is adequate, stable, productive and satisfied. Achieving this too needs proper planning and organising to ensure proper and effective recruitment and selection, appointments, performance management, appraisals, remuneration, training and development, promotions and transfer. Fundamental to all of these critical human resource management functions is manpower planning in order to ensure that the workforce is appropriate and stable at any given point in time.

✚ Directing

Managers need to ensure that all organizational activities are geared towards the fulfillment of the organizational purpose and achievement of goals. Directing is that part of the managerial function that stimulates the human resources to optimally and correctly undertake organizational techniques and methods to effectively achieve the intended purpose. It is the life spark that triggers the workforce into action toward effective purpose realization. When dealing with human capital it therefore includes the key aspects of supervision, motivation, leadership and effective communication with the actions of efficiently guiding, inspiring, influencing and encouraging subordinates towards fully attaining the purpose. These elements of directing harness the interpersonal aspect of management.

✚ Controlling

Controlling is aimed at closely watching progression towards the accomplishment of predetermined goals to assess if there are deviations from the expected such that corrective action can quickly be taken to retread in line with achieving the goal or target. The purpose of monitoring and controlling is to ensure that there is constantly conformity to the expected standard. Effective monitoring can even enable the identification of potential deviations even before they can occur. The aim is to secure proper progression to the goal and to be able to take timeous corrective action should a deviation. Even better would be, to predict the deviation before it can occur and to act proactively. Fundamentally, controlling is the measurement and correction of performance activities of subordinates aimed at securing organizational goal accomplishment.

Ultimately, these five functions of management work in tandem with each other in a cohesively integrated way towards attaining the organizational purpose effectively (Figure 1). A disjoint between any of these functions will result in organisational ineffectiveness and organisational collapse and eventually demise.

However, effective leadership has the potential to ensure that the functions of management are effectively instituted to enable strategic activities towards goal accomplishment and organizational competitive advantage, growth and success. To achieve this, good leaders are needed and they should possess 12 essential leadership qualities:

✚ Integrity:

Honest, moral and trustworthy.

✚ Courage:

Enables the leader to take bold action to move things in the right direction.

✚ Self awareness:

Understanding self (strengths, weaknesses), humility.

✚ Respect:

Demonstrate respect consistently, create a culture of respect, support, equality, , diversity and inclusion.

✚ Compassion:

Important to build trust, to increase collaboration and to reduce employee turnover.

✚ Vision:

Having an aspiration for the future- motivating others and garnering commitment to unison. Purpose-driven leadership. Able to connect team's daily tasks and values of

individual members to overall direction of the organization. Supports and behaves in a way that demonstrates support.

✚ Communication:

Active listening techniques. Effective leadership and effective leadership are intertwined as Siamese twins. Both oral and written communication to all equally.

✚ Learning agility

Ability to think on feet. Great leaders are also great learners.

✚ Collaboration:

Work effectively with colleagues of diverse social identities. Be able to span boundaries and learn to work across divides. Value and embrace collaboration.

✚ Influence:

Be an inspiring, effective leader. Be able to persuade to get work done without manipulation. Influence authentically and transparently using emotional intelligence and trust.

✚ Gratitude:

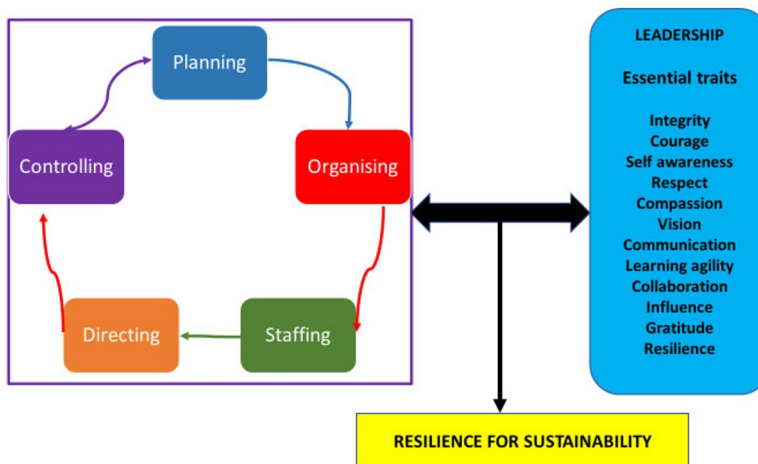
Show sincere gratitude frequently.

✚ Resilience:

Respond adaptively to challenges. Bounce back from obstacles and setbacks. Project a positive outlook. Help others to maintain emotional strength to commit to shared vision, and the courage to move forward and overcome setbacks. Enable better performance for self and teams.

It is important for leaders to learn these 12 traits and improve upon them at all levels of the organization. They also have a symbiotic relationship with effectively fulfilling the five functions of management (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling) individually and collectively (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Symbiotic relationship between effective leadership and the cohesive integration of the functions of management



3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper follows an interpretive, analytical research design. It is based on reading (journals, textbooks, bulletins, magazines) and interacting with knowledgeable others in various contexts (one-on-one discussions, training sessions, seminars,

conference presentations) in order to get a sense of the whole. It entails identifying units of significance, developing themes to tie together units of significance into layered meanings and identifying and reconciling deep structure. The analytical research design encompasses critical thinking skills and the evaluation of facts and information pertaining to the research being conducted. Together the interpretive and analytical research design aim to synthesize a framework for practical implementation to attain effectiveness relative to the research. The methodology is largely emergent and draws from social constructionists ontologies and epistemology (understanding the reality in all its diversity).

4. RESULTS

The results will be presented in terms of each of the key dimensions of the study.

Planning

- The essence of planning is to work to finding and implementing the best course of action.
- It is a systematic approach to achieving the desired goals of the organization.
- Planning should be sure to focus on the proper utilization of the organization’s human resources.

Organising

- Be sure to bring all the resources (physical, HR, financial) together in a meaningful way to achieve the goals that meaningfully work to attaining the vision or future goals of the organization.

Staffing

- Be sure to nurture an adequate, stable, productive and satisfied workforce as these are the purposes of HRM.
- Always ensure the best person-job fit.
- Always know that a productive workforce starts with effective recruitment and selection.

Directing

- The essential aspects include supervision, motivation, communication and effective leadership. Even aspects of coaching and mentoring are relevant to directing but their differences must be understood.

AREAS OF DIFFERENCE	MENTORING	COACHING
Definition and what it encompasses.	someone shares their knowledge, skills and experience with another person to help them to progress, irrespective whether the progress is professional, personal or a crossover between both (Reeves, 2021). One needs to find a mentor match before beginning mentoring (PushFar.com).	Coaching is a process of helping others achieve their goals, overcome challenges and unlock their potential. It is important to adopt suitable coaching skills to elevate one’s leadership (Roberts, 2024).
Orientation (essence)	involves guidance for more general long-term	more targeted assistance given by the coach to the

	career growth, development and skills (O'Connell, 2023).	coachee to overcome specific challenges or to accelerate their progress in a particular area.
Time-frame of use of skills	In the future	now

Controlling

- It is important to always be on track in achieving purpose and goals.
- It is imperative to predict deviations.
- Take corrective actions as soon as deviations are suspected or are encountered.
- Always aim to achieve performance standards.

FUNDAMENTALS TO EFFECTIVELY UNDERTAKING THE FUNCTIONS OF MANAGEMENT

1) Know the vision and mission of the organization (CALM, 2024)

Even within these statements, the functions of management will only be better effectively undertaken if one understands the key differences between these:

AREAS OF FOCUS	MISSION STATEMENT	VISION STATEMENT
Time frame	Focus on the present	Is future-oriented.
Purpose	Defines what the organization does and how it serves stakeholders.	What the organization aspires to achieve in the future.
Scope	Specific and action-oriented	Broad and aspirational.

When crafting effective mission statements, be sure to:

- 1) Identify the core purpose of the organization, that is why it exists.
- 2) Articulate a unique approach from competitors.

These are important as mission statements provide clarity and direction for daily operations.

When crafting effective vision statements, you need to:

- 1) Envision the future.
- 2) Set ambitious goals.
- 3) Reflect core values.
- 4) Keep them concise.

Vision statements motivate employees to work towards set goals.

Well crafted vision and mission statements can:

- 1) Foster a strong sense of identity, unity and purpose, and
- 2) Can lead to long-term success.

2) Engage in effective leadership

Develop and consistently practice the 12 essential leadership qualities as identified (integrity, courage, self-awareness, respect, compassion, vision, communication, learning agility, collaboration, influence, gratitude, resilience).

3) Do not engage in the top 10 leadership mistakes (CALM, 2024)

- 1) Fear of mistakes

The first and foremost mistake that managers and leaders make is that they fear mistakes. They fail to realize that mistakes accumulate as experience. Encountering a mistake leads to a genuine learning curve. The error incident remains in one's mind for a long period of time and so does the events that led to the mistake, the circumstances during the mistake and the outcomes or consequences of the mistake. Undergoing this first-hand is truly learning from experience such that even when the first signs are felt again, the manager or leader quickly identifies the need for reflecting and taking corrective action.

2) The top-down attitude

The top-down attitude is a mistake that dogmatic managers or leaders make. Their self-oriented nature imbues within them a characteristic of abusive authority. Such a mistake in managers and leaders festers in them undesirable qualities of the failure to listen or even to involve others in decision-making. They grow into believing that they are always right and that their way is the right way. Their ego-centric nature leads to behaviours that display their mindset of being the leader of a kingdom and with this mindset, communication and accountability suffers. At the same time, having enjoyed the power position created, the manager or leader develops the fear of letting go and wants to hold on tightly to the kingdom built. Of course, the manager or leader's ability to hold steadfastly to the position will also depend on the cultural orientation of the people. If the culture is one that has high tolerance for autocracy, the manager or leader may succeed in holding on. So, if the tolerance for autocracy is high, the manager or leader may get away with a long-term top-down attitude for a long period of time. Apart from cultural differences, there is also the mindset of Theory X (work is distasteful by its very nature) and Theory Y (work is like play when conditions are favourable).

3) Making decisions at the wrong time.

Making decisions before one needs to may be a situation of making hasty decisions which are usually wrong. This is because making premature decisions does not give the manager or leader time to judge and understand changes or potential changes in the environment and changing circumstances. Being aloof to changes inevitably results in making poor decisions. So instead of looking impressive or bold with an astute, early decision, the manager or leader runs the risk of making an incorrect decision that is not alive to the environment in which he or she operates.

4) Excluding the Maverick

By excluding the independent thinker, managers or leaders shoot themselves in the foot as they are limiting the outcomes that a creative thinker can bring to a situation. A Maverick can be included yet, effectively managed, by allowing them flexibility of action, space to fly, by listening to their ideas, responding and giving them room to blossom. Of course, tactful management of the Maverick is important to ensure that they don't move a team from the plan of action as they are willfully different and given the chance, may dance to the beat of their own drum, which can be dysfunctional to efforts towards the accomplishment of a shared desired goal.

5) Poor Delegation

Another mistake that managers and leaders make is poor delegation which often happens when they hold internal fears. Such fears include the fear of losing authority,

of delegated work being done poorly or even better, which may cause reframing themselves in a weaker light. Sometimes such managers and leaders have the fear of depending on others or run the fear of wasting time. Some hold time as a precious resource and are unwilling to take the necessary time to delegate which involves, briefing the individual being delegated to about the task, what outcomes are expected and the manager and leader may doubt whether the task incumbent will have the required training or experience. Some negative reasons for poor delegation include being disorganised, having something to hide, or just simply being a poor communicator. In addition, an egotist will be reluctant to delegate.

Then there are managers or leaders that do delegate but do so incorrectly because:

- they fail to share the task effectively or to identify competent people to share it with.
- they fail to set out accountability points.
- they fail to explain and provide clear and unambiguous expectations about the finished work.
- they do not listen effectively nor actively consider feedback.
- they are often too hasty and steadfast and do not allow for mistakes to be corrected.
- when they hold a different view or decision, they often fail to provide reasons supported with research.
- they fail to take the appropriate action once the work is suitably finished. they fail to take the process of delegation to completion by affirming the participants for their implementation.
- They tend to interfere in the delegated person's work process as soon as the route is different from their's even though the end result may be what was required.
- they fail to relax and they get stuck into the obsession that it has to be done their way. This reaction stifles the potential for creativity.
- They lack patience and want to interfere to do it faster by themselves.
- They fail to allow others to share the vision and grow and develop.

6) Poor communication

Some managers and leaders make the mistake of poor communication. This results in the lack of providing direction to others and may ultimately, result in chaos. Poor communication has the potential to brew arguments over priorities, and can cause duplication of work which is an unnecessary waste of valuable time and resources. Poor communication festers low employee morale.

Poor communication occurs when managers and leaders:

- assume that people know something and hence, fails to communicate it. It is important as a basic operating principle to 'never assume that anyone knows anything'.
- circulate lengthy memos and reports.
- fail to encourage good communication in all, thereby allowing the occurrence of Chinese whispers which only distort the message.
- fail to request and provide feedback and fail to check that people understand the message.

7) Misreading the corporate culture

The corporate culture can be easily misled if the manager or leader is not alert as the corporate culture is implied and not explicitly defined. The corporate culture is reflected in the dress code, business operating hours, office setup, employee benefits, recruitment and selection decisions, the way in which clients are treated, client satisfaction and all aspects of operations. Each of these on their own are easy to misinterpret as they are based on perceptions which then can give rise to misinterpreting the organisational culture.

8) The lack of planning for succession

Some managers do not plan for succession as they have an innate difficulty in letting go or because there is the lack of an obvious successor. Another reason for failed succession planning, is that the manager or leader may be planning for succession but fails to even evaluate or inform the potential successor. Succession also fails when the manager or leader:

- fails to equip the successor with the necessary, knowledge, skills, desire, experience, authority and dry runs.
- fails to give the successor permission to succeed or even allow them to fail, and rise again.
- fails to show and build confidence in the successor and encourage the successor with positive feedback.
- fails to allow the successor to develop at his/her own pace and within his/her capabilities.
- fails to recognize the successor's efforts with rewards and to affirm them at the right time.

9) Dropping the vision

Without vision, the people perish and this holds true for the leader or manager too. Managers or leaders also drop the vision when they operate in a vacuum. They get consumed and obsessed in the vision of the overall direction of the organization and are no longer alive to the day-to-day occurrences and circumstances that prevail. Sometimes managers and leaders are of the misperception that changing or adjusting the vision will lead them to be seen as a poor leader; hence, they take caution in changing 'with the times' or as situations demand.

10) Being dogmatic

Managers and leaders make the mistake of believing that there is only one way to lead successfully. They perceive bipolar characteristics without the possibility of a continuum. They are of the view that successful leadership is defined by either or:

- Being introverted/extroverted.
- Being dictatorial/consensual.
- leading by example/leading from behind.
- being one of the team/standing aloof.

The managers or leaders needs to realize that if they have been at the helm for more than 10 years, there are good possibilities that there are many people who can do the job better than them!

4) Engage in effective Time Management

We need effective time management to:

- Achieve better results.
- Achieve quality of work.
- Reduce stress.
- Reduce errors.
- Improve satisfaction with job.
- Improve quality of private life.

NOTE: There is no forgiveness for the killing of time.

There are important tools for effective time management that leaders can learn and implement (Max Neeman International, cited in CALM, 2024). These include:

Prioritisation

A manager's work day is always characterized by more activities than can be handled at the same time, thereby necessitating the prioritization of tasks such that the manager plans which activities are important and need to be dealt with before lower value activities. This means that the manager will first focus on and engage in accomplishing tasks that have a greater impact on long-term, strategic goals or those that have greater consequences if not accomplished timeously. Completing priority activities first will ensure that the manager is effectively fulfilling his/her managerial functions towards organizational effectiveness and survival.

Urgent/important matrix

The urgent/important matrix helps one to order tasks in accordance with their urgency and importance. Urgent is that which needs immediate attention. One may order tasks into an array of what is 'urgent' and must be done immediately and then move on to tasks which are important but not necessarily urgent and then proceed to those tasks which are important but not urgent. This helps to filter tasks across the work day. The tasks will still get accomplished but in a more defined order that ensures that urgent tasks are not delayed. It is very much like working through an 'in-basket for the day.

Fight procrastination

Do not delay any work that you should be attending to right now. When it comes to important work, follow the DIN principle and 'Do It Now'. This means that instead of waiting for the mood, create the mood. This will enable you to achieve task outcomes constantly, which will inherently create the motivation to weed through all other tasks to be done. To facilitate the process to DIN, understand why you procrastinate, when you procrastinate and suppress the habit. Practicing DIN brings satisfaction and motivates one to continue to work with this momentum. The benefits of DIN ultimately has the potential to eradicate the desire to procrastinate.

Time planning

Engage in time planning to position your activity in time to achieve results when they should be achieved and matter the most. It is helpful to track and monitor the implementation of time planning. Write an action plan. This may be effectively done by clarifying your goals, formulating a list of actions, analyzing, prioritizing and pruning the list and organizing the list into plan. As you progress, be sure to monitor the execution of the plan and review the plan as required.

Do a 'to do' list

Compile a ‘things to do’ list. This will ensure that you do not forget any activity while progressing through the demands of your work day. Instead of doing this first thing in the morning that will set you back in time, you may compile your ‘to do’ list in the last 5 minutes of each day. In this way, you know exactly what you will be doing on the next day. This will enable you to plan accordingly and prepare yourself psychologically. In your ‘things to do’ list include both daily tasks as well as long-term tasks as this helps to balance out the thought-provoking and stressful work. In the ‘to do’ list reflect on tasks that may be delegated and estimate the time that will be needed to complete each task. This will guide you in the number of items to include in your ‘to do’ list for the work day. Be sure not to procrastinate when working through your ‘to do’ list.

- 5) **Engage in effective mentoring and coaching** but be sure to know the difference between them, as already tabulated.

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results of the study will be discussed under the key themes of the study.

In this study, planning is found to be a systematic approach to achieving organizational goals. Similarly, taking cognizance of both strategic and operational planning, Tavo and Rasmus (2024) view planning as a critical basis for achieving organizational goals. Likewise, Fayomi and Akanazu (2024) highlight that successful planning is connected with realizing organizational goals and attracting target customers. However, Nqobile, Adrino, Norman and Tyanai (2019) do acknowledge that challenges to strategic planning exist in public institutions. The paper highlights the importance of proactively identifying potential internal and external risks taking corrective action timeously and formulating strategies for recovery and resilience. Duchek (2020, p. 215) describes organizational resilience as a “complex and embedded construct” from which one understands the importance of organizing in the three successive resilience stages of “anticipation, coping and adaptation”. This paper also highlights the importance of staffing, directing and controlling as functions of management to ensure organizational resilience. In a succinctly synthesized manner, The MBAs (2023, p. 215) maintain that “through effective planning, organizing, directing and controlling organisations can achieve their objectives, optimize resources, foster a motivated workforce, and adapt to evolving challenges”.

To be able to achieve this in smooth transition certainly requires competent and effective leadership. This paper has identified 12 essential leadership qualities (integrity, courage, self-awareness, respect, compassion, vision, communication, learning agility, collaboration, influence, gratitude and resilience). A resilient leader adapts to changes and capitalizes on opportunities. Action Strategies by design (2024) also adds further important leadership skills to include being flexible, realistic and optimistic, emotionally intelligent with locus of control focusing on what can be controlled rather than on what cannot. They also identify essential practices to upgrade organizational resilience as including:

- building leaders, not followers
- building resilience into team structures.
- Focusing on skill development.
- Improving communication
- Nurturing a growth mindset.

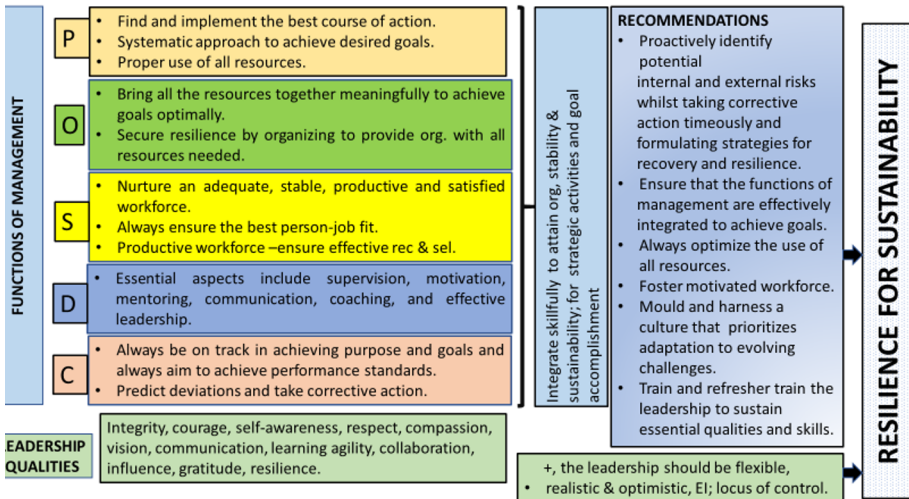
6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study and integrated material, the following recommendations are generated:

- In order to be resilient, proactively identify potential internal and external risks whilst taking corrective action timeously and formulating strategies for recovery and resilience.
- Ensure that the functions of management (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling) are effectively integrated to achieve goals.
- Always optimize the use of all resources (financial, human, physical).
- Foster a motivated workforce.
- Mould and harness a culture that prioritizes adaptation to evolving challenges.
- Train and refresher train the leadership to sustain essential qualities and skills.

The flowchart (Figure 2) synthesizes the contents of the paper and presents the recommendations needed to attain resilience for sustainability.

FIGURE 2: A SYNTHESIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACHIEVE RESILIENCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY



7. CONCLUSION

Achieving organizational goals optimally, having a strategic leadership cadre and being resilient are nice to haves. However, with skillful and strategic integration of the functions of management supported by a strong foundation of resilient leadership, these ‘nice to haves’ become organizational reality. Taking cognizance of and implementing the practices suggested in the flowchart in Figure 1 can assist organisations in building the institution in resilient preparedness for sustainability which is more a necessity now than ever before as we tread with diligence in the era of 4IR.

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