

What is IT Management?

Information is essential to everyone in an organisation including customers and suppliers to enable them to do their jobs.

It is the role of the IT Director to ensure that systems utilising the most appropriate technology are in place to satisfy all of the information needs of the company the customers and the suppliers.

The importance of your role in the company

It is your job to contribute to the planning and running of the Company with particular emphasis on information systems at the following levels:

Strategic Level - Work with and advise the management team on the most appropriate ways to exploit existing technology available to you, and to source and use new technology that you need.

Operational Level - Provide high quality, reliable IT services to the organisation through training, development, implementation, application and by monitoring usage and effectiveness of systems. Support and deliver IT related projects, where appropriate, within agreed costs and timescales.

The IT Director's role should emphasise the importance of information technology in businesses today, and more specifically the market opportunities available via the internet.

The IT Director's role includes responsibility for creating your Company Web Site to assist with the marketing of your products/services.

As IT Director you should be aware of the Data Protection Act (consult with your Adviser over this matter)

Planning

This section refers to Stage 2 of the company cycle, Planning.

Before you start

Assess existing technology available to you. Pay particular attention to:

- ? Computer equipment available
- ? Access to the internet
- ? E-mail facility
- ? Computer software available
- ? IT training needs of the company

Assess the IT needs of your company

Carry out an audit of your company's IT needs (See form IT1)

- ? Ensure that all company members are able to access the company programme website and understand how to use all of its features. See Guide to Using this Site for more information.
- ? Talk to the other Directors about their requirements e.g. Advertising your company and its products via the internet may require a web site.

Form IT1 is available through the IT Resources page.

Prepare a plan for your Company's IT needs

Agree with the other Directors in your Company which areas you are going to provide systems for, and how much money you can spend (your IT Budget).

Develop implementation plans with timescales and methods of reporting progress.

Ensure other Directors who have actions to carry out within the plan understand what is required of them.

Up and Running

This section refers to Stage 3 of the company cycle, Up and Running.

Implement your plans

Implement your specific IT plan including the following:

- ? Support company members to use the company programme website and virtual desk
- ? Create your web site with input from your Marketing and Sales Directors. Ensure this is linked in from your company profile.
- ? Look for opportunities to increase your trading capability - the International Links section on the Young Enterprise UK web site will be of assistance to you here.
- ? Train staff to ensure those who will need to use specific software packages have the knowledge to do so.
- ? You may wish to develop computer-based systems to complement the existing Function Director's forms.

Monthly review - operation of your systems

- ? Is information being kept up to date?
- ? Is the company using the company programme website and virtual desk effectively?
- ? Are the users making effective use of systems?
- ? Are third parties meeting their service level agreement?
- ? Are any systems not being used and should be terminated or improved?
- ? Have any changes taken place in equipment availability which could be used to improve or further develop your systems?

Process improvement

- ? From your monthly review of information systems have you identified possible improvements?
- ? Have any of the Directors in your Company changed and are there any new IT training requirements?
- ? Have any of the Directors in your Company identified additional IT requirements?
- ? Revise implementation plans with costs and timescales and agree with other Directors.
- ? Implement your revised plans.

Ending the Year

This refers to Stage 5 of the company cycle, Ending the Year.

Prepare to cease trading

If you have a web site ensure that the site has a date for last orders and that the system will not accept orders after that date.

Cease trading

When the last order date has been processed close down the web site.

Some Skills and Qualities You Will Need to Develop

- ? Computer Literacy.
- ? Web-based knowledge.
- ? Planning and organisation.
- ? Knowledge of business processes.
- ? Creative flair.
- ? Influencing others.