

MODULE 3

INFORMATION GATHERING

WORKED EXAMPLES

3.1) Describe the general strategy an analyst should use to gather information.

Strategy consists of

- i) identifying information sources.
- ii) evolving a method of obtaining information from the identified source.
- iii) using an information flow model of the organization

3.2) What are the main sources of information of an organization.

- i) Users of systems.
- ii) Forms and documents used in the organization.
- iii) Procedure manuals and rule books (if any).
- iv) Internal reports.
- v) Any computer program of existing system.

3.3) How should an analyst prepare before an interview?

- i) Make prior appointment with the person to be interviewed and inform the purpose of the interview, and how much time you would require.
- ii) An interview should be brief and not exceed 40 minutes.
- iii) read the background material and go prepared with a checklist.

3.4) Are there some guidelines for good interviewing? Give reasons.

Yes. The guidelines for good interviewing are like

- i) system analyst should state the purpose of the interview again to brush of the problem.
- ii) He should try to avoid using computer jargon because the person may not be conversant with the technical terms.
- iii) He should present good manners and introduce himself before taking interview. If any thing is not understood it should be asked immediately to avoid later confusion

3.5) When should questionnaires be used?

When quantitative data from number of persons is to be collected. Short Questionnaires elicit quick response. Follow up needed to get questionnaires back.

3.6) Before interviewing the chief warden, what checklist did the system analyst make?

The checklist made by the system analyst before interviewing is

- i) Find out what aspects of hostel operations he wants to analyze and improve.
- ii) Find out why he wants this and what benefits he foresees.
- iii) Find out his priorities.
- iv) Find out how early he wants the system.
- v) Find out about organization of the hostel administration.
- vi) Find out with whom else he wants me to talk.
- vii) Find out if any documentation on existing procedure exist.

5.8 What are the initial two steps followed by a systems analyst when he is requested to design an information system?

Step 1: Find out what are the information requirements of the users of the system.

Step 2: Find out how these are at least partially met by the current systems used in the organization.

3.9 What graphical tools are useful to a systems analyst to understand user's requirements?

- Document flow diagram
- Data flow diagram

3.10A hostel warden states the following requirements for a hostel information system:

“Our hostel has 500 rooms and 4 messes. Currently, there are 1000 students in all in 2-seated rooms. They eat in any one of the messes but can get a rebate if they inform and do not eat for at least 4 consecutive days. Besides normal menu, extra items are entered in the extras book. At the end of the month a bill is prepared based on the normal daily rate and extras and given to each student. We find that bill preparation is delayed. We are also not able to keep proper track of payments and billing for extras. We need a system to streamline this.”

Obtain a document flow diagram for the problem described above.

a, b, c, d, represent students' attendance and extras record.

Fig. 3.10 Figure for Solution 3.10

3.11 What are operational, tactical, and strategic information needed for Exercise 3.10?

Operational

- Regular billing
- Find if bills paid within specified period
- Total earnings
- Daily rate

Tactical

- Habitual late payments by students
- Predict days with large absentees and adjust food cooked
- Most popular extras

Strategic

- Extras pricing to reduce daily rates
- Whether to give rebate for absence
- Closing down mess on some days