

POLICY REVIEW

Change is the one thing that we cannot all run from. Change is the one thing that is constant in our lives. Everything changes around us over time. The thing that was happening 4 or 5 years ago is not the same thing today.

In this context therefore what is a policy? It is a set of ideas or plans that is used as a basis for making decisions, especially in politics, economics, or business.

Then what is a review? This is a formal examination of a system or a situation by people in authority. This is usually done to see whether it can be improved or corrected.

So, what is a policy review? This is a procedure evaluating the effectiveness of a specific policy. When a policy is not working well it is reviewed and managed to improve its efficiency or effectiveness.

While the core elements of policies and procedures may stay the same the details should change according to industry standards, organizational needs, or legal requirements. In addition, policies should line up with the company's mission, vision, and values.

Policy reviews should be done to generally improve an organization's way of doing things. By knowing when to review the policies it would be in an organization's best interest to always improve the lives of everybody in the organization.

We are going to discuss when to know to make a policy review.

- ANNUAL POLICY REVIEWS, WHICH HR SPECIALISTS CAN HELP WITH, ARE A BEST PRACTICE.

With this procedure, HR can sit down and have a look at all the policies that have been formulated so far by the company, and look at whether employees have been sending reviews or complaints on certain policies in order for the

company to have a review annually. They can decide to change a certain policy entirely or improve on it.

- DON'T WAIT FOR AN INCIDENT TO OCCUR BEFORE REVIEWING AND UPDATING POLICIES.

A policy should be preventive of incidents. Incidents should not be a trigger for policies to change. Public policies should be constantly reviewed to avoid incidents that could harm people or the environment.

- WHEN YOUR ORGANIZATION GOES THROUGH LARGE-SCALE CHANGES.

When your organization goes through massive amounts of changes say, managerial, a large number of workers have been employed or if generally, the company is undergoing expansion, the way of doing things in the company has definitely got to change. This is when you do a policy change to a company.

An organization or a public entity can have different ways of approaching policy reviews. Some of the ways policy reviews can be approached may include *formal cost-benefit review, qualitative cost-benefit review, modified cost-benefit review, cost-effectiveness reviews, and the most common type of policy review, multi-goal policy review.*

- FORMAL COST-BENEFIT REVIEW

Formal cost-benefit review: this approach should be used if efficiency is the primary goal. This type of review reduces all the impacts of a proposed policy modification or alternative policy to monetary cost. Of course, it is difficult to quantify everything in terms of monetary value.

- **QUALITATIVE COST-BENEFIT REVIEW**

This approach, like the monetary cost-benefit review, begins by looking at the potential impacts of policy modifications or new policies. However, unlike the monetary cost-benefit review, the qualitative cost-benefit review attempts to assign values to qualitative factors such as ethics, political acceptability, and the like.

- **MODIFIED COST-BENEFITS REVIEW**

This approach involves scoring qualitative and monetary goals separately – the argument being that budgetary efficiency, for example, cannot be measured against political acceptability because these monetary and qualitative variables exist on different plains. In other words, since policies rarely seek to achieve efficiency as an exclusive goal, other policy goals need to be taken into account alongside considerations of efficiency. Each set of goals is thus weighted against similar quantitative or qualitative goals. This does not, however, absolve the analyst of the need to then make a determination as to the relative importance of the various policy goals.

- **COST-EFFECTIVENESS REVIEWS**

This approach is best used when both efficiency and another policy goal can be quantified but where the other goal cannot be monetized. Cost-effectiveness reviews can be approached in two ways: either via the Fixed Budget Approach or via the Fixed Effectiveness Approach. A cost-effectiveness review cannot tell the analyst whether a given policy modification or alternative policy is worth pursuing. It can, however, assist the analyst in determining which policy alternative will be most efficient in achieving a given goal once a decision has been made to try and achieve that goal.

- MULTI-GOAL POLICY REVIEW

This approach is most commonly used in policy review and policy options reviews because it is designed to deal with situations in which there are multiple possible policy goals and one or more of these cannot be quantified.

After knowing the approaches to making a policy review, we can look at how to make a policy review. There are a few steps one can do in order for a policy review to be of fruition.

- ✓ NEEDS ANALYSIS.

This is when people have to sit down and identify the kind of needs that the public or an organization needs.

- ✓ RESEARCH.

This is when research is done to determine what kind of policy needs to be reviewed. The policy custodian shall analyze the relevant information including data analysis, literature review, and best practice. The implications of the policy review should be determined with consideration to its impact on other policies, stakeholders, administration, and systems development.

- ✓ POLICY DRAFT.

After doing extensive research on the kind of policy to be reviewed, a draft is then drawn up. Depending upon the extent of change, urgency, and timing of the policy change, stakeholders will be consulted and have the opportunity to comment on the draft policy. The Policy Custodian may find that early

consultation with critical stakeholders will inform the drafting stage of the policy.

✓ CONSULTATION.

The stakeholders identified earlier must be consulted regarding the policy. Depending on the constraints operating on the policy, it may not always be possible to consult with all stakeholder groups, however, these constraints should be made clear.

✓ APPROVAL.

The final draft of the policy shall be submitted for final approval by the highest delegated authority and should be accompanied by a Communication and Implementation Plan.

✓ IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION.

The Policy Custodian is responsible for implementing the policy and should maintain a record of progress against the Communication and Implementation Plan. He should make sure the stakeholders are well-versed with the new policy and how to implement it.

✓ MAINTENANCE AND REVIEW

The Policy Issues Log should be maintained throughout the implementation of the policy.

To ensure the policy is being followed, it may be necessary to audit compliance with the policy or evaluate the policy.

Next, we are going to focus on how governments can do policy changes. We will highlight some of the ways they can use-

- ✓ History & Originating Dynamics of the Policy
- ✓ Purpose & Objectives
- ✓ Leadership & Management
- ✓ Outcomes and Effects
- ✓ Conditions Shaping Policy Outcomes

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO REVIEW POLICIES?

Policies as earlier identified are important as they elevate an organization or the public to better do things. We are going to discuss some of the importance's of policy reviews-

➤ OUTDATED POLICIES PUT YOUR ORGANIZATION AT RISK.

The ever-changing times and phenomena all around us mean that if an organization does not review its policies, it may be in danger of being overrun or worst-case scenario to close shop.

➤ OLD POLICIES MAY BE NON-COMPLIANT WITH NEW LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

Times have become so dynamic even laws keep changing almost every other day and most of the time we make policies in accordance with what the law stipulates. If a law changes, then policies have to change too.

➤ REGULAR REVIEW KEEPS YOUR ORGANIZATION UP TO DATE WITH REGULATIONS, TECHNOLOGY, AND INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES.

Ensuring your policies are up to date means one can put up with the changes that industries are morphing to. Industries keep changing to conform to the various needs of the market.

➤ ENSURES YOUR POLICIES ARE CONSISTENT AND EFFECTIVE.

Policies are not always effective when we put them out for the first time. This is the main reason we need to constantly review policies. Policies are only effective if they have been refined and have been well communicated by the policyholders.

Policies have been done over the years and have been done by various governments and organizations. Policies have been done to generally improve the lives of people working in organizations and also to make procedures of doing things easier. Most policies done by organizations are also to make their own profits and also to conform to market norms.

Governments also make policies to benefit whoever is in power or to align with the government of the day's manifesto. Governments also have their own unique way of reviewing policies.

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