

Revisiting Functional Areas for 21st Century Businesses

Traditional codification of functional business areas focuses on the operations of the organization or business. Thus, whether the business is a sole proprietorship or an international conglomerate, it had human resource, finance, production (product or service), administration, etc. type functions. An operational focus fails to account for the leading, guarding, and communicating functions of a business or organization in a technologically connected environment.

Organization		
<i>Leading</i>	<i>Operating</i>	<i>Guarding</i>
Leadership	Administration	Compliance
- Ethics	Sales	- Legal
- Strategic planning	Marketing	Risk Management
- Social responsibility	Research and Development	- Auditing
- Corporate citizen	Information Technology	- Quality assurance
- Vision/mission	Human Resources	- Competitive intelligence
- Signaling change	Production	
- Culture/values	Distribution	
	Customer Service	
	Finance	
<i>Communicating</i>		
	Communications	
	- Social media	
	- Public press	
	- Internal/external communications	

Leadership is the leading functional area of a business. Leadership is responsible for strategic planning, visioning, initiating change, setting the tone for ethical behavior and corporate citizenship; and the values of leaders establishes a foundation for the culture of the organization.

The guarding functional areas focus on actions that ensure the organization's continuance in the manner desired by leadership. Although communication occurs within and between all functional areas, the communications function is concerned with the quality and effectiveness of internal and external communications, the business' image, and alignment of the business with the values of its leaders.