

Business activity is focused around the achievement of appropriate business objectives.

Production objectives for a company like Coca-Cola will focus on quality and meeting particular targets and standards. Marketing objectives for a company like Kellogg's or Kraft will focus on identifying and meeting the needs of consumers. Customer service objectives for organisations like the Inland Revenue or Argos will focus on delighting customers. Business objectives, and functional objectives make it possible to set targets. These targets then create a direction for activities.

Objectives (ends to be achieved)

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Targets (translation of objectives into easy to communicate goals)

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Plans (means to achieve targets and Objectives)

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Activity (day-to-day operations designed to deliver plans)

The overarching objectives of an organisation can be translated into specific activity objectives. For example, a section head in a supermarket may have the objective at the end of each working day to make sure that there are enough employees scheduled to carry out the required work activities on the following day. Individual employees will have their own work objectives and schedules - e.g. to make sure that a particular section of shelves are filled by a given time. Objectives therefore provide a clear structure for all of the various activities that an organisation carries out.

Objectives within an organisation are established at a number of levels from top level corporate objectives, down to team objectives and individual objectives that create a framework for operational activities.