UNIT 10 : OFFICE STATIONERY

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Introduction

10.3 Concept and meaning of office stationery

10.4 Types of office stationery

10.5 Control over office stationary and supplies

10.6 Standardization of Office supplies

10.7 Purchasing Office Stationaries and Supplies

10.8 Storage

10.9 Office Manager and Stationary control

10.10 Let Us Sum Up

10.11 Further Reading

10.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

10.13 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to :

- discuss the concept office stationary
- describe the types of ofice stationary
- discuss the selection of supplies and its control
- learn the standardization of office supplies
- discuss about office manager and stationary control

10.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we are going to discuss the various concepts related to office stationary. The office stationeries, is a group of commodity which is used to, or which is needed to, do the office job for completing the office job, as per the requirement and specification.

Every office has to maintain certain records, both in the form of filings, and in the way and method of information technology.These records which

has to be filed for a longer duration of time, has to be typed and preserved for a longer duration of time. Thus,the need of office stationeries came into place.

At the end of this unit you will be able to know about types of office stationary, selection of supplies,control of office stationary and supplies,standardization of Office supplies and office manager and stationary control.

10.3 CONCEPT AND MEANING OF OFFICE STATIONARY

Every modern office whether big or small requires a large variety of stationary and other articles in connection with its day-to-day work. Stationery and office supplies are described as “those expendable items which are consumed in daily operations and are usually thought of as items obtained from a stationer”. These includes items like paper, carbon papers , fax rolls, computer sheets and rolls, pens , pencils, erasers, sharpeners, ink, gum, adhesives tape, pins and paperclips, file fasteners, file boards and file boxes, ball pens and refills, paper rolls, cello tape, folders and labels, correction fluid and diluter, type calendar, stencils, paperknife, tags, sealing wax, stamps and stamp pads, envelope, Letterheads, writing pads, registers, file covers and so on. Office stationary and supplies are used by every employee throughout the organisation.

Every office work is performed with the help of office stationery and supplies. In modern office, computer is also used to reduce the need and importance of office stationery and supplies.

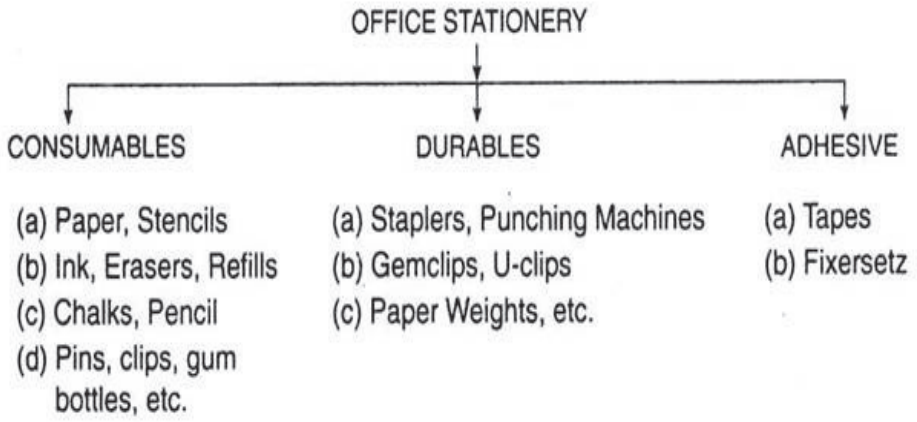
Office stationery and supplies occupies a significant place in office management from cost point of view. Generally, the value of office stationery and supplies is very small but used regularly in any office. As discussed above these includes paper, envelope, latter heads, paper pads, printed forms, rubber, carbon papers, ink, stencil, typewriter ribbons, pencils, correcting fluid, pens, gums, stamp pad, pins, duplicating paper, paper weight, file covers, duplicating ink, tag, clips, sealing wax, glue, and the like.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the office is based on the adequate availability of office stationery and forms. Every office staff must be provided with the best tools of right type in order to enable them to produce the best possible results.

A separate person is appointed to store the stationery and supplies and issue the same to the office employees. He has to determine the standards of supplies, purchase of supplies, storage of supplies; departmental control over supplies etc. Each of the stationery is manufactured by-different firms in different qualities. Each of the stationery is procured according to the needs of an office.

10.4 TYPES OF OFFICE STATIONERY

Office stationeries, broadly, can be divided into three categories:Cosumables, durables and adhesive.



Let us now discuss the types in the following ways:

Paper: Probably more paper is used in an office than any other single items of stationery. Papers are of various types: A4, A3, B4, B3. A4 and A3 paper are mostly used by every office.

Stencils: Stencils are of two types: (a) The back cover stencils (b) Without front cover stencils paper

The back cover stencil has a cover at the back. It has the main

paper, in which certain dimensions are inscribed on the front page, and is supported by a carbon paper in the middle. If any matter has to be duplicated the stencil is inserted into the type-writer for typing. While typing, if there is any mistake of words that has occurred, it can be corrected with a correction fluid and the spelling or the words can be corrected easily.

Once the entire matter is typed then the back cover is torn off and the stencil is put or inserted into the duplicator to get the duplicated copies, The other form of stencil paper is the without front cover stencil. In this the front cover is not there at all and a carbon paper is affixed to the back cover.

This is inserted in a scanning machine to scan the matter of duplication, so that the matter to be duplicated is seen on the paper. After the matter is scanned, the carbon paper is inserted into the duplicating machine, so that the duplicating matters are into our hand. The back cover here is torn off before inserting the paper into the duplicating machines.

Carbons: These are basically a paper which is black in color or blue in color at one side and a silver screen forming layer in the other side. The silver screen side of the paper is inserted into the typewriter, facing the characters of the typewriter, along with the paper in which the impression of the type-writer or the matter to be printed is obtained.

Erasers: Erasers are obtained in two forms:

1. Fluids for correction
2. Whiteners for covering the spelling or words.

Fluids are liquids, made of chemicals, which are sprayed over the stencils, while typing a matter on stencils duplicating.The fluid used over a spelling or a word typed by mistake forms a very thin layer of screen and the layer is microscopic. This cannot be seen by an ordinary eye.

After the fluid dries up, the screen formed used on the word or the spelling typed wrongly also dries up. Then the correct words are typed which are inscribed on the screen. This is how the fluid helps in correction on a stencil paper.

Whiteners are commonly known as “Erax”. These come along with a thinner, which is used to liquidity the whitener, if it solidifies when in contact with the air.Whiteners are spread on the characters wrongly typed, or on

the spelling wrongly typed, and it is allowed to dry. Once dried, the same space is reset in the typewriter for retyping the words or the character correctly.

Durables: In the durables, the commodities like stapler, punching machines, paper weights etc. needs neither any description nor any introduction.These commodities, if seen once, are good enough to understand what are they and what is the mechanism.These commodities are stored, used and maintained for a very longer duration of time, hence they are known as durables.

Adhesives: Adhesive are items like the tapes, quick-fix, etc. These are also made of chemicals and they are used in the office for fixing certain envelopes, parcels etc. which have to go out of the office

10.5 CONTROL OVER OFFICE STATIONARY AND SUPPLIES

One can-not think of running an office without stationeries and office supplies. Office stationeries are those expendable items which are necessary for and consumed in the daily operations but do not generally enter into finished product. Office stationeries and supplies comprise of office forms, letter-heads pads, rough-work pads, envelopes, pencils, pens, erasers, pins, tags, files and folders.

Office stationeries occupy a key position in the office activity because proper and efficient use of stationeries and supplies brings the following advantages to the firm.

(a) It provides better service at lowest cost.

(b) It occupies 30-40% of the non-salary cost and therefore is viewed seriously by the management.

(c) It facilitates smooth functioning of office work. The need for proper control of stationeries arise because it will cause the following difficulties. to the firm.

Control over stationery in stores may be exercised in the following ways:

1. **Fixation of Levels:** The simplest method of ensuring continuous supply of all stationery items is to determine the minimum, maximum and reorder levels of the stationary items. These levels may be fixed on the basis of past experience of the rate if consumption, the time taken for placing an order and arrival of fresh supplies etc.
2. **Two-Bin System:** The two bin system may be employed to keep in Bin-B some quantity of stock to be used to avoid the stock-out position. When the supplies of Bin-A have been exhausted, an order for the fresh supplies may be placed for its replenishment before the "reserved" stock in Bin-B is completely used up.
3. **Stock-Taking:** There are three methods of stock taking, they are: perpetual, continuous and periodic. Under perpetual stock-taking, the continuing of the quantities in stock is made at the time of receipts and issues. The system may be adopted for costly items and for those which are stored in large quantities so that pilferage may be avoided. Under the continuous stock-taking system, a fixed number of items are counted and checked daily so that the whole stock is checked in a fixed period of time. Under the periodic stock-taking system, all the items in stock are checked and counted only at the end of the financial year. Any or a combination of the three methods may be adopted in accordance with the firms requirement.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 : Define Carbons

.....

.....

Q.2 : State the three methods of Stock-Taking

.....

.....

10.6 STANDARDIZATION OF OFFICE SUPPLIES

Standardisation of office supplies is an important job in any big office. Here, it means that stationery items should be identical in terms of quality, size and description. Standards can be laid down for almost every kind of stationery. The process of standardization involves the laying down of the exact size, quality, dimensions and other specification of each item of supplies. Standardisation has the following advantages:

i. It helps the office buyer to know the requirements of his/her office exactly and precisely
ii. It ensures uniformity in the specifications of the items required by the various departments.
iii. It encourages simplicity by eliminating unusual and complicated articles.
iv. It discourages the purchases of substandard supplies which lead to economies in usage and storage.
v. It makes bulk purchases possible, and the economy that flows from bulk purchases.

The criteria for selection of the various items of stationery should be clearly laid down. Due care should be taken before changing from one brand of supply to another. In an item is satisfactory, no purpose will be served by changing it for the sake of trying out a new brand. However, in some cases, a new product may be superior or better in quality. Hence, samples of those products should be tested from time to time under similar conditions; the service and efficiency claimed for them should be analysed; and if the price is higher, an attempt should be made to determine whether the difference in price is justified. This would give an idea whether a particular product should be replaces or continued.

10.7 PURCHASING OFFICE STATIONARIES AND SUPPLIES

Westing, Fine and Zene have enumerated six principles for the purchasing of stationaery and office supplies.Known as the six R's, these principles are:

a. Purchasing of the right quantity
b. Purchasing of the right quality
c. Purchasing from the right source
d. Purchasing at the right time
e. Purchasing at the right place and
f. Purchasing at the right price

While purchasing stationery, the following factors should be borne in mind:

a. The quantity should be sufficiently large to merit a lower price (quantity discount)
b. The cost of storage space
c. The usage of particular items ordered
d. The price in relation to the quantity of the material
e. The availability of funds; and
f. The possible obsolescence of any item that is proposed to be purchased.

A purchase of stationeries is generally done by two methods:

(1) Centralised Purchase or
(2) Decentralised Purchase.

Let us now discuss about the centralised and decentralised purchasing systems.

Under the centralized purchasing system, supplies are purchased by the central purchasing department located in one place, usually in Head Office or Registered office of the organisation. It is an arrangement by which the selection, ordering, receipt, inspection etc, of the supplies are centralised. This method offers the following advantages:

a. Centralized buying means bulk buying which means lower cost.
b. Centralization makes for the specialization of the purchasing function, better utilization of storage equipment and better utilization of stock
c. Centralized purchasing enables the management to have a better budgetary control, for all the purchases are supervised at one point.
d. It helps in the standardisation of supplies, forms and procedures.

Under decentralized purchasing, each branch, division or department of the organisation is allowed to make its own arrangement for the purchase of the office supplies by having its own separate purchase section.

A decentralised purchasing set up has the following advantages:

a. It has flexibility and cuts delays in the procurement of office supplies
b. Purchasing may be made according to the exact quality specifications and requirements of each department
c. The overheads of the centralized system are eliminated
d. The purchasing procedure can be shortened.

10.8 STORAGE

Stationery and supplies are no less important than cash. Therefore adequate attention should be paid to their storage. However, in most office, stationery is often placed on open shelves or in dark and gloomy cupboards; and it may be so badly stocked that it may be difficult to find an item. This attitude may prove very costly. Proper storage should ensure:

a. Minimum losses on account of pilferage, moisture, heat;
b. Issue of stores without any loss of time in searching for them
c. Ease in taking stock; and
d. Instant availability of the stock position and other facts and figures about the stores.

The principal factors to be kept in view with regard to storage are:

a. Location of the storeroom
b. Physical arrangement of the stationery in stock
c. Classification system
d. Storage equipment

Let us discuss these points in following ways:

1. **Location of the storeroom:** The location of a storeroom should be in a central place of the office and within easy reach of the various departments. It should be in a place which is lighted up by daylight; otherwise costly artificial lighting should be installed and used. All the

stocks should be concentrated in one room to save space, travel and labour and to facilitate supervision and control.

2. **Physical arrangement of stationery in stock:** stocks which are well arranged are not likely to suffer loss. A proper arrangement of stationery and supplies is necessary to facilitate easy access, instant issue, and eliminate delay. Stationery may be stored on open shelves, on rocks, in cabinets or almirahs, or in sealed and packed boxes or containers, depending on the value and nature of the items to be stored. In small offices, where the stocks are stored in the main office room cabinets or almirahs with doors should be provided; but in all enclosed stock rooms separated from the office, open shelves should be used because they are less expensive, more readily accessible and offer a larger storage space.
3. **Classification System:** To facilitate the location of any single item, the shelves should be numbered consecutively, and a loose leaf or card index should be kept up to date, from which the relative shelf number of any items may be obtained.
4. **Storage Equipment:** storage equipment includes cupboards, almirahs, bins, shelves, racks, ladders etc. It may be remembered that centralization ensures a better utilization of storage equipment. When stationery is stored in a department , a better looking and consequently more expensive set of shelves has to be provided; and there is some inevitable loss of shelf space.

10.9 OFFICE MANAGER AND STATIONARY CONTROL

The control of office stationery and supplies the office manager includes three things: quality, quantity and cost. Quality is secured through standard specifications, tests and inspection of materials before they are accepted. Only experience can determine the quantities which are to be stored and the quantities which should be ordered. The supplies should be made only on receipt of written requisition, from departments or sections with a view to avoiding waste of the company's property at all levels.

Sometimes it may cost more to put through the requisition for a pencil than the pencil s worth; but if the requisition is not asked for, it is quite possible that half a dozen or a dozen pencil may be taken. At the same time the office manager should keep a check to ensure that the stationery and supplies are purchased at a favorable price.

Since the office work is basically a service function, office manager performs a significant role in the performance of office work. The main functions of an office manager are explained below.

1. **Staffing:** An office manager is requested to recruit and select the office staff by the top management. For this purpose, he determines the number of staff required, their qualification and experience if any, decide the sources of recruitment, receiving applications, conduct the interviews and tests and finally select the right personnel.
2. **Leadership:** He has complete control over the work done in an office. An office manager is necessary for smooth, efficient and performance of office work economically in an organization. Being a leader of office, he is in charge of public relations and helps other departments to achieve their goals set forth.
3. **Training:**The need of training has been decided by office manager. Besides, the training programmes are also devised and imparted to the new recruits as well as existing staff. Orientation training programme has been provided to new staff and refresher course programme is provided to existing staff.
4. **Coordination:** The various activities of office staff are coordinate by the office manager. He has to bring coordination between the top management and the workers. He must please both the parties.
5. **Work Measurement:** An office manager devices method of work measurement in terms of the output of the staff. It is a difficult task. The reason is that the office work cannot be measured in physical terms. Hence, it is the duty of office manager to decide the accepted norms of work measurement.
6. **Motivation:** The efficiency of staff is increased by providing proper motivation. The type of motivation can be decided by the office manager.

The right type of motivation ensures effective and economical performance of work and lead to the promotion of the staff.

7. **Discipline:** The implementation of rules and regulation of office is in the hands of office manager. There should not be personal bias while implementing rules and regulations. He also attends to the grievances of office staff. In this way discipline is maintained.
8. **Accounting:** He/she has thorough knowledge on accounting. Every figure should be kept in finger tips.
9. **Stationery Control:** Office manager has to exercise proper control on stationery purchase and issue. For this purpose, he has to frame clear cut procedure for the purchase, for the issue and storage of office stationery.
10. **Secretarial Services:** All the accounts books are kept under the custody of office manager. An officer manager is responsible to conduct meetings, drafts reports and minutes etc. on behalf of secretary. In this way, he does the functions of secretary.
11. **Costing:** In small organization, an office manager is responsible to maintain costing records and do the costing work.
12. **Organizer:** The office work has been assessed and assigned to office staff according to their knowledge, ability, experience, qualification and the like by the office manager.
13. **Supervisor:** An office manager is head of office. Hence, it is the duty of office manager to supervise the office correspondences, procedures, policy implementation, record maintenance, filing, indexing and the like.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.3 : Write the methods of purchase of stationeries

.....

.....

Q.4 : State the principal factors to be kept in view with regard to storage

.....

.....



10.10 LET US SUM UP

- Stationery and office supplies are described as "those expendable items which are consumed in daily operations and are usually thought of as items obtained from a stationer". These includes items like paper, carbon papers, fax rolls, computer sheets and rolls, pens, pencils, erasers, sharpeners, ink, gum, adhesives tape, pins and paperclips, file fasteners, file boards and file boxes, ball pens and refills, paper rolls, cello tape, folders and labels, correction fluid and diluter, type calendar, stencils, paperknife, tags, sealing wax, stamps and stamp pads, envelope, Letterheads, writing pads, registers, file covers and so on.
- Office stationeries, broadly, can be divided into three categories:Cosumables, durables and adhesive.
- Control over stationery in stores may be exercised in the following ways: Fixation of Levels, Two-Bin System and Stock-Taking.
- A purchase of stationeries is generally done by two methods:
  (1) Centralised Purchase or
  (2) Decentralised Purchase.
- Proper storage should ensure:
  a. Minimum losses on account of pilferage, moisture, heat;
  b. Issue of stores without any loss of time in searching for them;
  c. Ease in taking stock; and
  d. Instant availability of the stock position and other facts and figures about the stores.
- The principal factors to be kept in view with regard to storage are:
  a. Location of the storeroom
  b. Physical arrangement of the stationery in stock
  c. Classification system
  d. Storage equipment
- The main functions of an office manager are: Staffing, Leadership, Training,Coordination, Work Measurement, Motivation, Discipline, Accounting, Stationery Control, Secretarial Services, Supervisor, Organizer and Costing.

10.11 FURTHER READING

1) Balachandran (2009); *Office Management;* Tata McGraw-Hill Education, India.
2) Bhatia, Dr. R. C. (2005); *Principles of Office Management*; Lotus Press; India.
3) Bhatnagar, S. K. (2011); *Office Management*; Frank Brothers; India.
4) Chakravarti, B. K. (2006); *Concept of Front Office Management*, APH Publishing; India.
5) Dix, Colin and Baird, Chris (2006); *Front Office Operations,* Pearson Education India.
6) Dubey, N. B. (2009); *Office Management: Developing Skills for Smooth Functioning*, Global India Publications; India.

10.12 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1 : Carbons are basically a paper which is black in color or blue in color at one side and a silver screen forming layer in the other side.

Ans. to Q. No. 2 : The three methods of stock taking, they are: perpetual, continuous and periodic.

Ans. to Q. No. 3 : A purchase of stationeries is generally done by two methods:

(1) Centralised Purchase or

(2) Decentralised Purchase.

Ans. to Q. No. 4 : The principal factors to be kept in view with regard to storage are:

a. Location of the storeroom
b. Physical arrangement of the stationery in stock
c. Classification system
d. Storage equipment



10.13 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1 : Discuss the problems involved in the control of stationery.

Q 2 : Define office stationery.

Q 3 : Discuss the need for control over office stationery. Whether these should be centralised or decentralised.

Q 4 : Write the main functions of an office manager.

Q 5 : Write short note on :

a) Paper

b) stencils

c) centrlaised purchasing

*** ***** ***