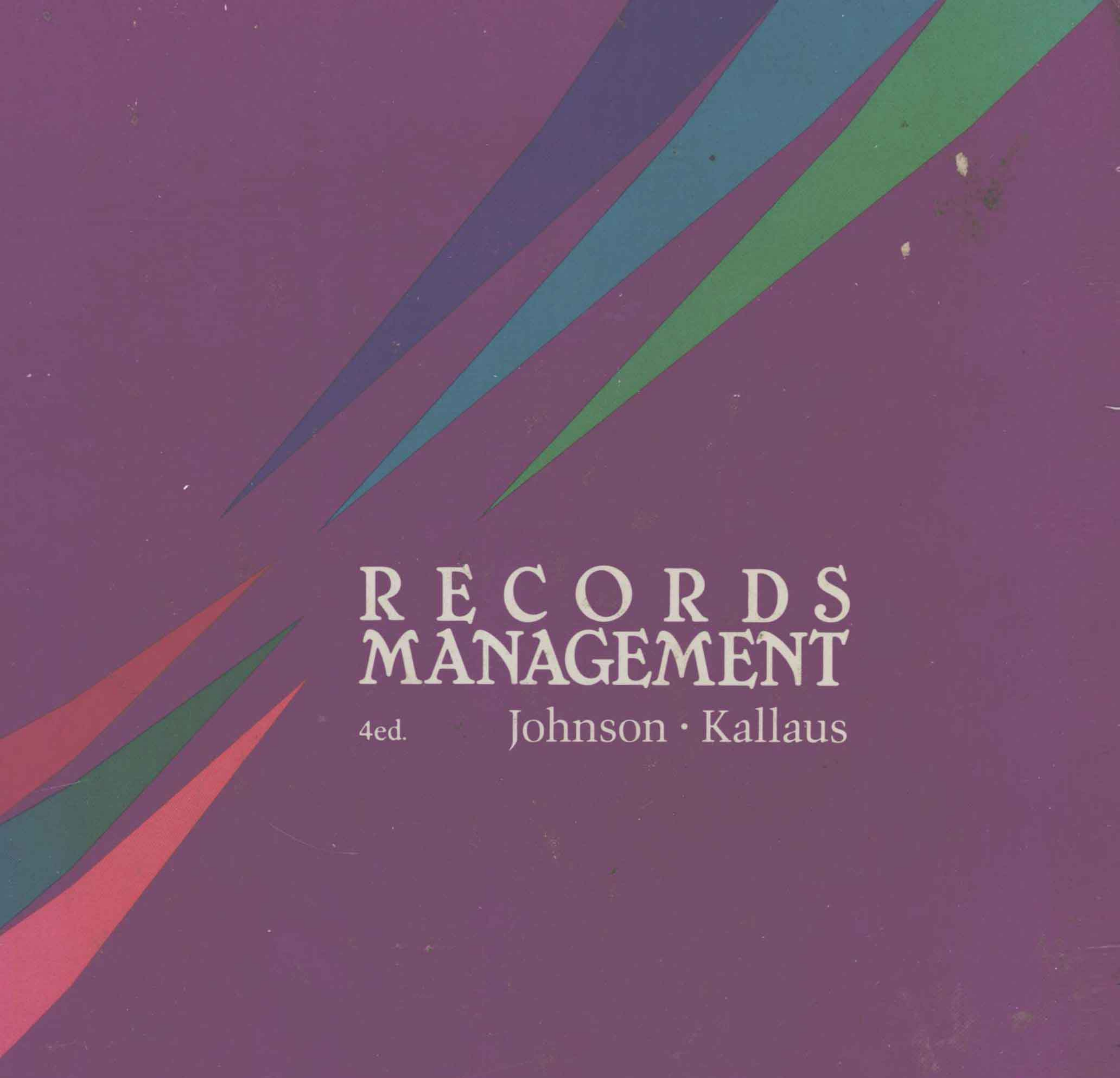

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

4ed.

Johnson · Kallaus

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PREFACE

RECORDS MANAGEMENT, Fourth Edition, continues the strong tradition of serving as a basic introduction to the increasingly comprehensive field of records management. As such, the Fourth Edition emphasizes principles and practices of effective records management for all types of records systems. This approach offers practical information to students as well as to professionals at managerial, supervisory, and operative levels.

The experiences and basic philosophies of the authors are clearly presented in this latest revision. Emphasis is given to the need to understand the cycle within which information functions in the office as well as the systems that are developed for managing and using information. Even though increasing attention is also given to automation in today's offices, the authors stress the overall importance of understanding how paper records systems function before undertaking the more complex task of studying automated records systems.

As a text for students in postsecondary institutions, RECORDS MANAGEMENT, Fourth Edition, may be used for: (1) short courses or seminars emphasizing either broad views of records management or filing systems, or (2) longer courses, such as quarter or semester plans. Basic information systems concepts and new storage methods are offered within a management context built upon a framework of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling records systems, both manual and automated.

As a reference book, this latest edition of RECORDS MANAGEMENT serves several purposes. It presents sound principles of records management that include the entire range of records—paper, microrecords, and magnetic media used in automated systems. It also includes expanded coverage of management principles and practices and of job opportunities and career paths in records management. Professionals who direct the operation of records systems will find the Fourth Edition to be especially valuable since it includes new simplified filing rules plus a discussion of the latest information technology and its impact on records systems.

The text consists of five parts and 15 chapters. Part I is an introduction to the field of records management and to the broad management programs available for solving records problems. The information cycle and the systems that are created to process information are highlighted here. Part 2 centers on alphabetic storage and retrieval systems using filing rules that are in compliance with the filing rules of the Association for Records Managers and Administrators, Inc. Part 3 presents a detailed description of adaptations of the alphabetic storage and retrieval method; namely, subject, numeric, and geographic storage methods.

Part 4 covers special records storage and retrieval and includes updated material on card records systems. It also presents a thorough update of microrecords systems and the emerging technology that integrates micrographics and the computer. Chapter 14 is a completely new chapter explaining the principles of mechanized and automated records systems with emphasis on computer and word processing systems. This chapter also stresses the continuing need to understand basic records management principles before delving into the complexities of automated systems. To complete the textbook from a systems perspective, Part 5 offers a comprehensive view of the role of control in records systems. In addition, it reviews many practical procedures for controlling paperwork problems in both large and small offices.

Learning objectives are included at the beginning of each chapter in the new Fourth Edition. Important terms are printed in bold type throughout each chapter and are listed at the end of each chapter for easy review. New questions for review and discussion are provided. Decision-Making Opportunities (DMO), new tools for developing management thinking, are provided at the end of each chapter. Two new Comprehensive Cases, each of which provides broad coverage of major sections of the textbook, are included in this Fourth Edition.

The filing practice set that accompanies RECORDS MANAGEMENT, entitled RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROJECTS, Fourth Edition, is completely new. This set of practical learning materials consists of 13 manual filing jobs. Students will practice card filing and correspondence filing in alphabetic, subject, consecutive numeric, terminal digit numeric, and geographic filing systems. In addition, students will practice requisition/charge-out and transfer procedures. The learning materials in the text and the set of projects used together give practice in storage and retrieval problem solving under conditions similar to those in the office.

The testing package that accompanies RECORDS MANAGEMENT, Fourth Edition, includes a Placement Test, four Achievement Tests, and a Final Examination.

The Instructor's Manual that accompanies RECORDS MANAGEMENT, Fourth Edition, provides instructors with suggested methods of instruction, teaching aids, suggested readings, a listing of professional associations, and time schedules that apply to different teaching situations. Teaching suggestions are also provided for each chapter as well as the answers to the review and discussion questions, solutions to the DMOs, the Comprehensive Cases, and the Checking Your Knowledge of the Rules activities that appear in Chapters 5 and 6. Detailed solutions for all of the practice set jobs are also included in the Instructor's

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Manual, in addition to finding tests to be used with the practice set. Answers to the Placement, Achievement, and Final tests are provided. An important new feature in the Manual for this Fourth Edition is the inclusion of 15 transparency masters. These transparency masters will provide additional teaching tools for classroom use.

The authors are grateful to many firms and individuals who assisted in completing this extensive revision of RECORDS MANAGEMENT. We appreciate the filing equipment and supply manufacturers and vendors who gave time and information to the authors in their efforts to update this edition effectively. Special thanks are given to Lois M. Garrett, Southwest Missouri State University; Carolyn E. Karnes, Macomb Community College; Lillian Lenhoff, Hillsborough Community College; Jack L. Nelson, Ferris State College; and Rita Jane Van Pevenage, Everett Community College, whose critical reviews provided helpful guidance to the authors. In addition, special appreciation is extended to our families, friends, and each other, as well as to the editorial staff of the publisher, whose encouragement and direction have been invaluable in completing this revision. The result, we believe, is an easily readable, instructive, up-to-date, and comprehensive introduction to the field of records management.

Mina M. Johnson

Norman F. Kallaus

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1 – The Nature of Records Management

1 – An Overview of Records Management
2 – Establishing a Records Management Program

Part 1 introduces you to the field of records management and the growing career opportunities available. In this first Part, the nature and purpose of records are explored, and the development of management programs to solve records problems is discussed. A highlight of the Part is the presentation of a set of principles for managing records at all stages in the life cycle of a record.

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1

AN OVERVIEW OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Objectives

After you have completed this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Describe the role of information in the modern organization.
2. List the steps in the information cycle.
3. Define the terms *record* and *records management*.
4. Classify records found in an office.
5. List the steps in the record cycle.
6. Identify problems involved in the use of records.
7. Summarize the main features of early and modern records management programs.
8. Discuss systems concepts used in managing a records program.
9. Describe various levels of records management positions and qualifications needed to attain a position at each level.
10. Understand the continuing role of paper records in organizations with computer facilities and equipment.

The present time is often called the Age of Information. The management of all types and sizes of organizations, including those of business, government, education, and health care, have come to realize that their success depends totally upon having the right information to make the decisions needed to manage their firms.

Generally, information is placed on records of various types; and, in turn, records are organized into complex systems. This chapter introduces important concepts of information and records management and discusses the growing opportunities for careers in this important field.

THE ROLE OF INFORMATION

The office is an information-production factory. From the earliest days to the present time, offices have taken raw material **(data)** and changed or processed it into **information**. In the earlier offices, all of this work was done by hand. Today, by contrast, an increasing amount of office work is done by machine, especially the computer. In either case, however, information is the office product that is stored on records, as discussed in this chapter.

The Information Cycle

The lives of people as well as organizations follow a set of steps that are repeated on a regular basis. When combined into a sequence, these steps are called a **cycle**. Examples are the economic cycle, the human life cycle, the production cycle in an automotive firm, or the registration-through-graduation cycle in your school. In a similar way, there is such a cycle for processing information in the office.

An **information cycle** consists of the following general steps:

1. *Collecting* the information needed for management decision making.
2. *Retaining* the information needed for future use. All other collected information is discarded.
3. *Storing* the information for later use.
4. *Retrieving* the information from storage when such information is needed.
5. *Transporting* the retrieved information to the requesting person for use.
6. *Using* the information.
7. *Returning* the information to storage. (In automated systems, this step is not required, as explained in Chapter 14.)
8. *Destroying* the information when it is no longer of any value.

Managing Information

Because information has value, it must be managed. To handle this important responsibility, a growing number of information specialists are needed. In large firms, data and word processing departments require managers to supervise computer and computer-related systems; telecommunication departments need managers to supervise the linkage of the computer and the telephone; and controlling the firm's records requires a records management specialist. In small offices, the managing of information may be centered in the office manager, the owner, or the senior person in charge.

All such managers, to be effective, must be skilled problem solvers and must be able to make decisions about business operations based on a clear understanding of not only the *costs* but the *benefits* to be realized from such decisions. In turn, such decisions must be based on reliable information.

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF RECORDS

As you begin a study of records management, several basic concepts need to be understood. These include definitions of key terms, classifications of records, the record cycle, and an understanding of important records problems.

The Nature of Records

A **record** is written or oral evidence of information that has been collected for use by people or machines. The most common records, such as correspondence, forms, and books, are written and appear on paper. Oral records capture the human voice and appear on cassettes and other magnetic media. Less obvious to the human eye are records that appear on film, such as movies, photographs, and microfilm. Even less obvious are the records produced by the computer, which are discussed in Chapter 14.

All resources used by the firm must be managed; and records as information resources are no exception. Thus, the term **records management** refers to the process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling all the steps involved in the life of a record, from the time a record is created until its final destruction or permanent storage.

To manage records effectively, a clear understanding of the composition of the record is necessary. Prior to the time of computers, office managers thought of records as paper documents on which information was placed with little or no thought given to the organization of the information on the records. However, since computer systems require a far deeper study of records as they are processed and used throughout an entire firm, computer specialists studied the basic nature of all records, looking for features common to all of them. From their studies, a set of basic characteristics found in all records has been identified.

All records are composed of fundamental units that are organized into a structure called a *hierarchy*. Figure 1-1 (beginning at the bottom and continuing to the top) shows the place of a record in the information hierarchy. The most basic unit is the *character*, the alphabetic, numeric, and related symbols ($, %, and #, for example) used in business communications. The combination of characters into words or numbers results in a higher level of the hierarchy called the *field*. In the human resource department, for example, the name of an employee would be entered into a name field on the form, a field that is made up of many characters.

A group of related fields constitutes a **record**. (Note that this definition in the hierarchy does not contradict the more general definition given earlier in this section but rather describes an additional characteristic of a record—its place in the total organization or structure of information.) Thus, the name field, the address field, the sex of employee field, and the date of employment field on one form are defined as a record. And a collection of related records, in turn, is called a **file**. All of the human resource employment forms relating to one employee could be grouped together in one folder and the contents of that folder would represent the file. A collection of files—the highest level in the hierarchy—is known as the **library** (or **database** in automated systems, or in everyday language in the office, the *files*). This last category is usually

Level in Hierarchy	Definition	Example of Contents of Each Level
5. Library (database)	A collection of related files	All files related to the human resource department, the sales department, and so on.
4. File	A collection of related records	All completed applications for the position of records clerk.
3. Record	A collection of related fields	Record Name Field Day J D Address Field 12 A St City Soc Sec Field 484-14-4563
2. Field	A collection of related characters	Field 1 Day J D Field 2 12 A St City
1. Character	One alphabetic, numeric, or equivalent symbol	Character 1 D Character 2 A Character 3 Y

FIGURE 1-1 — The Role of a Record in the Information Hierarchy

what is found in the contents of file cabinets or in an equivalent form in automated systems.

Purposes of Records

Records serve as the "memory" of a business. They "remember" the information needed for operating the firm from day to day, month to month, and year to year. For example, policies are developed and recorded in order to furnish broad guidelines for operation. Each department (finance, marketing, accounting, and human resources) bases its entire mode of operations upon records. In addition, records have widespread legal value and must be retained as specified by law. Tax records are a prominent example of this type of record. Many records, too, have historical value which increases with the passage of time. Original copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address are well-known examples, as is the original drawing of Ford's first Model T automobile.

Classification of Records

Records can be classified in two basic ways: (1) according to their *use*; and (2) according to the principal *place or destination of use*. These two classifications are discussed in this section.

Classification by Use.

This classification includes transaction documents and reference documents. **Transaction documents** are paper records of day-to-day operations of an organization. These documents, the most common and largest category of records maintained in an office, consist primarily of business forms. Examples are invoices, requisitions, purchase and sales orders, bank checks, statements, contracts, shipping documents, and personnel records such as employment applications and attendance reports. **Reference documents**, on the other hand, contain information needed to carry on the operations of the firm over extended periods of time. Such records are referenced for information about previous decisions, quotations on items to purchase, statements of administrative policy, and plans for running the organization. Typical reference documents are business letters, reports, and interoffice memorandums. Other examples are catalogs, price lists, brochures, and pamphlets.

Classification by Destination. This classification is divided into external and internal records. An **external record** is created for use outside the firm. Examples of such records are letters sent to a customer or client, to an organization's suppliers, or to the various branches of the government. The largest group of records classified by their destination is that of internal records. An **internal record** contains information needed to operate the organization and may be created inside or outside the organization. Examples are communications between the organization and its employees (payroll records, bulletins, and government regulations) and communications among an organization's departments (inventory control records, interoffice memorandums, purchase requisitions, and reports). Critically important internal records are maintained by the accounting department regarding the presence and use of assets and debts owed and local, state, and federal taxing information.

The Record Cycle

The life span of a record from creation to final disposition (or from "birth" to "death") is called the **record cycle**, as shown in Figure 1-2. All types of records follow these steps.

A brief explanation of the terms used in Figure 1-2 should be of help at this point in understanding the record cycle. Whenever a letter is typed,

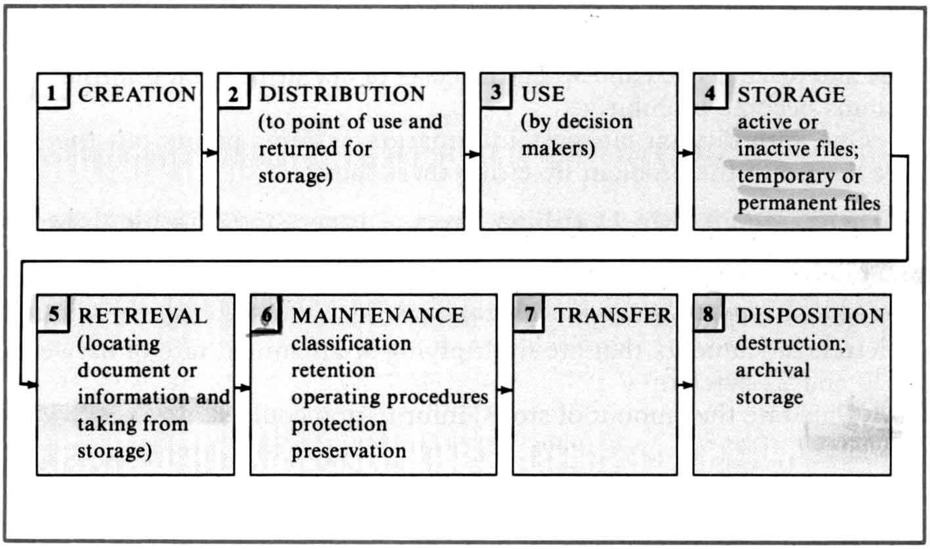
1 CREATION
2 DISTRIBUTION (to point of use and returned for storage)
3 USE (by decision makers)
4 STORAGE active or inactive files; temporary or permanent files
5 RETRIEVAL (locating document or information and taking from storage)
6 MAINTENANCE classification retention operating procedures protection preservation
7 TRANSFER
8 DISPOSITION destruction; archival storage

FIGURE 1-2 — The Record Cycle

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