

## Book Reviews

BARGAINING IN GRIEVANCE  
SETTLEMENT; The Power of  
Industrial Work Groups

James Wesley Kuhn

Columbia University Press, 1961  
\$4.50 206 pp.

Reviewed by SAMUEL B. MAGILL

Professor Kuhn's book is a study of the contrast between the orthodox theory of collective bargaining and the industrial realities. Instead of being a fairly simple relationship, as the philosophers of labor have assumed, the interactions between worker and group, worker and union, and with the union steward, are complex and unclassifiable, and bargaining often becomes a very different thing than the contract says it should be.

Most labor contracts spell out the grievance machinery quite fully and clearly. In spite of this, however, more time is spent in interpreting the grievance section than any other part of the contract. The union steward who doesn't agitate for his people is in danger of being overthrown. The merits of a particular grievance are less important than the number of members who will be affected. One steward, at his own expense, published at intervals a sheet in which he tabulated how much his grievance efforts had benefited his members in dollars and cents.

Union officials are less interested in cooperative efforts, such as participation in labor-management committees, than is generally supposed. These activities do not generate votes in union elections, as aggressive grievance tactics do.

There are two goals with which both unions, and corporations must contend. One is the preservation of the organization, the other, defense of the rights of the individual. Because aims differ even within the parties, there are strong pressures at work to reinterpret the contract. "The Contract is like a rubber bag—you probe it this way and that," explained a union official. "The successful leader finds new ways to put the pressure on when the company has learned how to block the old." At the other end of the organization line, Management, in its desire to maintain production, will sometimes nullify the work of the industrial relations staff.

Agreements and settlements outside of the contract are common. A widespread practice is to grant favors to individuals or small groups which are not intended to be applied to the entire bargaining unit. The book calls this practice, "Fractional Bargaining," and has much to say about it.

One chapter is devoted to a step-by-step narration of a grievance in a tire shop. This "Hot Tread Case" might well become a classic in the field of practical negotiating. It has all of the qualities needed for a case study for supervisors, industrial relations people, and their opposite numbers in the ranks of organized labor.

Another chapter reads like a catalog of the tricks and chicaneries which can be practiced within the grievance procedure.

Regarding training, the book has much to say. The average labor steward is

well informed on labor law, in contrast to his counterpart in management. The task of the industrial training department is clearly outlined. Not all of the fault rests with the trainer, however. A foreman is quoted, "I don't study the grievances and arbitration cases at home at night like I guess I could." In one plant the department foreman asked his steward to fill out the examination paper at the end of his training course.

The unique contribution of this book is that it brings a judicial viewpoint to bear upon an inflammatory subject. While neither management or labor will find much comfort herein, they can at least read it without feeling that the author is a pamphleteer for the other side.

This is the kind of book which can be used profitably by those who write contracts, train supervisors, or have a part in the endless maneuverings between representatives of management and the workers in industry.

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## HANDBOOK FOR TECHNICAL WRITERS

R. C. Tracy and H. L. Jennings

American Technical Society: Chicago  
\$3.50 134 pages

Reviewed by ROBERT M. BOLTWOOD  
Applied Management and Technology Center  
Wayne State University

This is the volume to hand a speed-reading executive who wonders what "they" do in technical publications. It covers organization and describes the writing, art, and printing processes. Figures and tables present an organiza-

tion chart, cost estimates, the Greek alphabet, mathematical symbols, proof-reading marks, and sample page formats. A chapter outlines security requirements.

The authors say this book is for technical writers. I question that. The writing advice is superficial. The approach is do-this, do-that, with great reliance on "should" and "must."

As in so many books on technical writing, the authors fall into the do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do trap. They have made an abundance of unforgivable errors. For example, we are told not to do something; then the authors do it elsewhere in their text. We find inconsistencies of all sorts; words added or omitted in cross-references; incorrect words; faulty punctuation; misspelled words. Sentences and paragraphs are poorly written, often to the point of confusion.

In short, when your executive examines the book, pray that he speed-reads.

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## BASIC RADIO

by Marvin Tepper

John F. Rider Publisher  
New York

776 pages for 6 volume set

\$13.85 (Soft Covers) \$14.85 (Cloth)

Basic Radio combines the final development of the author's notes as an instructor in radio and television with the Rider "pictured-text" technique of one idea to a page reinforced by at least one teaching picture. The course, written at the technical institute level, endeavors to present the subject in a manner that anyone can grasp regardless of previous

education. The text is reinforced by more than 700 illustrations.

While the six-volume "pictured text" course collectively offers a complete and comprehensive course in radio communications, the course may be purchased in individual volumes so that the student, technician or hobbyist can update or improve his knowledge in any one area of communications covered by the course.

- Vol. 1—DC Electricity
- Vol. 2—AC Electricity
- Vol. 3—Electron Tube Circuits
- Vol. 4—AM and FM Receivers
- Vol. 5—Transistors
- Vol. 6—AM and FM Transmitters

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**THE PLAYSRIPT PROCEDURE:**

A new Tool of Administration

by Leslie H. Matthies

Office Publications, Inc., New York

Price \$5.95 183 pp.

If one has ever searched through the book lists for a good text on procedure writing, he will probably agree that there are few to choose from, and that most of these seem to be written for non-industrial readers, such as students or research scientists.

Even if you came across this title you might not recognize it as a textbook on procedure writing. The term, "Playscript" refers to the recommended method for putting procedures into clear and readable form. Like scripts which are prepared for stage plays, cues, directions, and operative's name are put in a wide margin, and the procedural material is in a column by itself. Once one has be-

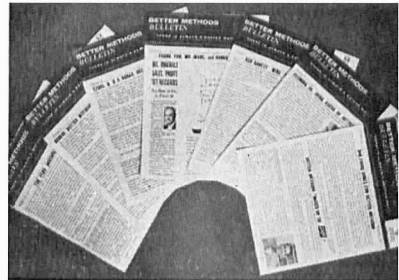
come used to the format, it becomes very easy to pick out the necessary information.

Older trainers will recognize this as a variant of the Job Breakdown technique. The book includes a lot of very helpful material on writing such as word lists, ways to route and file procedures, how to write with clarity, and how to rate a finished performance. It is intended for use in plant training courses as well as for straight reading.

This is a good-humored book, pleasantly written and amusingly illustrated. One feels that both author and artist had fun while working on it.

Better make a note of the name and where this fine little text can be obtained, for possible future use.

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