

# Training the New Hire

## How Big is the Big Picture?

J. E. Griggs

**T**he "Big Picture" often has a small frame—the frame of reference formed by the new employee's initial impression. Picture the new man standing in front of a wall map of the operation, or before graphs and charts that, while reflecting the pulsebeat of the operation, mean very little to the man newly arrived.

It is much more effective if you give him just a brief glimpse of good things to come than it is to overwhelm him with a score of quickly mumbled names, departments, operations, scope, responsibilities, etc., so rapidly enumerated that he cannot grasp them. Tell him this: "I want you to meet Mr. Jones who will in the next few days help you to get acquainted. For right now, why don't you just look us over, try to get the feel of the operation and ask any questions you might have."

It is not wise to tell the new employee what you want him to know in one big dose of indoctrination. Let him assimilate as he goes along.

For instance: "You're new here aren't you," John Hanner says as he

hoists himself up to the seat of the forklift. "We have to fork these pallet loads of canned goods down the main aisle to the storage area where they're tier stacked. Later we'll break them out by case lots and truck them to different stores."

Not this: "The Acme Company does a six million dollar yearly gross. It serves as central distributor for seventy-two retail outlets across the central part of the state."

When the new employee goes home tonight he can relate his new company with a specific product. "My company furnished these peaches we're eating to the store you brought them from."

On-the-job training very often pursues a monotonous, boring route of chair-to-chair explanations, document exhibition, reports that have no significance for the new employee.

### Increment Indoctrination

The best way to train is by *Increment Indoctrination*. First, the *basic* things: restrooms, water fountain, lockers, break periods. The increments

J. E. Griggs

*Aerospace Services Division, Pan American World Airways, Eastern Test Range, Cape Kennedy, Florida. Author of numerous articles on management.*

should be arranged something like this:

Foreman  
Co-worker  
Co-workers  
Unit  
Section  
Department  
Operation  
Company

The foreman, of course, is the person responsible for the new worker's settling in, and his work assignment.

### "Buddy" System

Where possible, the "buddy system" should be used. A worker familiar with the job shows the new employee what it's all about. (Avoid the chronic grumbler—he'll leave a bad taste in the new employee's mouth.)

The co-worker "buddy" will introduce the new employee to other workers. As the employee enlarges his skein of acquaintances he will gradually become aware of the operational structure within which he works. He will learn its confines and its responsibility.

From the smaller, closely integrated unit composed of those workmen doing similar tasks, the new employee will evolve into the section; and from there, in more confident, more quickly assimilated steps, to the department, the overall operation, and finally the reason for the company's existence.

The new employee's frame of reference will expand gradually, the rate of expansion dependent upon the employee. He will eventually be ready for the "big picture" presentation. In fact, he will probably already have determined it himself.

### Train Within Capabilities

You can teach a batter how to stand and how to swing at a baseball. But you cannot teach him to hit. That requires natural ability.

The problem of industrial training involves politics, social needs, and economics. Practical managers train the employee so that he may realize his full potential on jobs that are within the scope of his power and skills.

The supervisor's most important job is to determine the capabilities of the new hire and then train toward the full utilization of these capabilities.

## The executive development program

(A Behavioral Approach to Management Science)

### 4 color/sound filmstrips

- Evaluation: A new integration of management theory
- Self analysis for executive success
- Your inner dynamics as a communicator
- New frontiers in the motivation of others



Descriptive data available

**Training Services, Inc.**

P.O. Box 388, Rutherford, N.J. 07070.  
(201) 933-5880

