

From Eastman Kodak . . .

A Business Game In Orientation

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A business game can be a powerful tool in getting an orientation program off to a good start.

For the past three years a business game has been one of the real interest highlights as well as a potent motivator in a 15-session orientation program for newly hired college graduates. The game, a non-computer type, developed by G. R. Andlinger was described in the March-April, 1958, *Harvard Business Review*. It is broad enough in scope to test the abilities of the players but is not complex and can be played in a half day.

The annual enrollment in this orientation program is upwards of 200 young college trained people. They have come from colleges and universities in all parts of the country and have degrees in almost anything you might mention. They are currently working in all kinds of research, business, and technical assignments.

As a matter of necessity, these people learn rather quickly the organization, methods of operation, and goals of their immediate working units. In time the scope of this kind of knowledge is in-

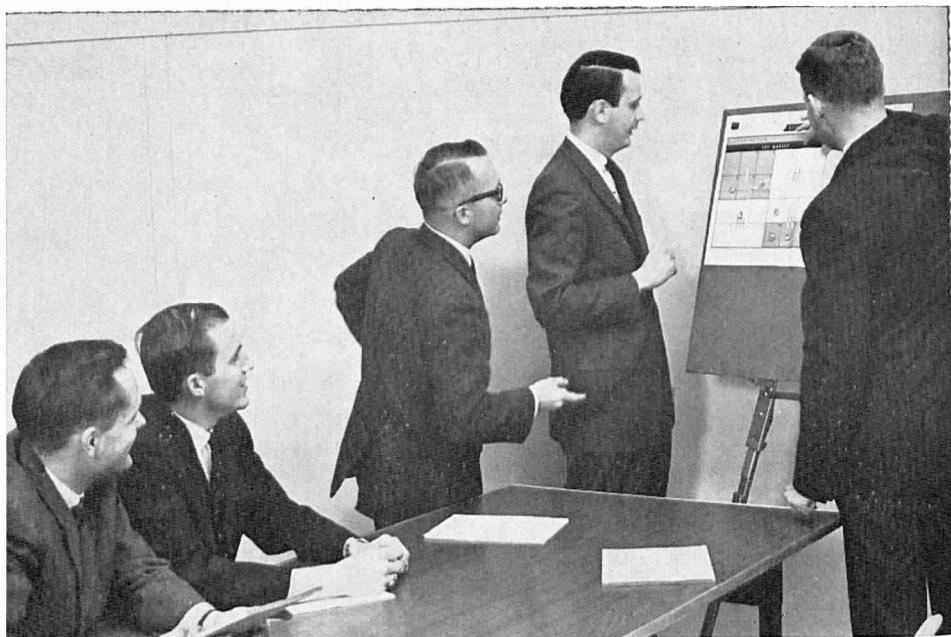
creased to include adjacent departments. However, unless some assistance is given, the succeeding steps leading ultimately to an understanding of the operations, goals, and philosophies of the company take a number of years to acquire. The prime objective of the orientation program is to provide ways and means which will enable these people to acquire more of this kind of knowledge earlier in their employment.

Game Objectives

The game was made a part of the orientation program because it was felt that there was a real need to acquaint these ambitious, eager young people with (a) the complexities of the job of management; (b) the need for close coordination of all functions of a business; and (c) an appreciation of the problems faced by management people in each of the business functions.

Most people, somewhere in their education or business experience, either hear or are told of these things and they usually accept them without question. This

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Eastman Kodak employees participate in Orientation Game.

doesn't mean that they really understand them. The personal involvement which a business game provides leads to a better understanding of these factors. A participant in a business game is actually experiencing the feel of the management job. He has to make decisions which almost immediately are reflected as either profit or loss by his company. He develops a healthy respect for the danger of high fixed costs, a respect which may well stay with him throughout his business career. He participates in financial decisions, advertising policy matters, scheduling of production, hiring salesmen, and constructing plants. The charted results show him how well or how poorly he performed.

Participant Reactions

The questionnaires which the participants have filled out over the past

years contain evidence that lessons have been learned and experience has been broadened. Here are some verbatim comments taken from these unsigned questionnaires.

"Gained an over-all concept of management. It was a very stimulating session—brief glimpse of problems of planning, financing, researching, and making a profit."

"I thought the business game was definitely worthwhile. It is valuable in giving an over-all viewpoint of the problems involved in running a company. I felt that I picked up some valuable pointers as well as some broad general information."

"The business game drove home very clearly some basic fundamentals of economics and business in general. More important though was the fact that since people make the business decisions, any person desiring to further his progress in the business world must learn to deal effectively with all types of people."

"The necessity of taking calculated risks. In order to spend your money wisely you must spend it."

There have been some comments which were neutral or negative but the

preponderance — over 94 percent — of favorable comments indicates that most of the participants think they have had a worthwhile experience.

The game has been scheduled as the second session in the orientation program. The participants, having had the game experience, seem to be more receptive to the other sessions in the program. At first glance it might appear that a business game is somewhat out of place in an orientation program but our experience demonstrates that it is

the most successful motivator we have used. Having had the business game experience, participants seem to really want to learn more about the operation of all of the functions of business. But possibly even more important, they are learning more quickly about the scope and complexity of the manager's job, the need for close coordination of business functions, and they are gaining an appreciation of the problems which confront those people who are in other business functions.



DEPT. OF LABOR AWARD TO ASTD

As part of the ceremonies celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the National Apprenticeship Program, ASTD received a Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Service. The award certificate (photo) was presented by Dept. of Labor Administrative Assistant Secretary Leo Wertz to George Koenig, Vice President, ASTD Region III, who accepted it for Robert Sale, ASTD President.