

Training Industry in America

By

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AS BUSINESS MEN I know that you are vitally interested in improving the effectiveness of your business operation. Our experience in America has demonstrated that training is able to help you do just that.

During the past ten years in America, supervisory training, to mention just one phase of the total training program, has almost doubled. A recent survey indicated that approximately 50% of the businesses contacted had some kind of a training program in effect. Of the types of training reported, Human Relations training ranked first (71% of the responders indicated that they had a training program in this field), conference leadership ranked next (49% of the replies) and speech training (40% of the replies) ranked third.*

All of these statistics tend to indicate one thing that American industry feels such training can "pay-off," in terms of increased effectiveness on the part of employees or through other dollar savings. Further, the figures noted above show us that this belief is spreading and embracing an ever-increasing number of businesses.

We all realize, of course, the reason for the spread of this type of program. There must be training in every work situation. New workers must learn their jobs and old workers must learn new jobs or new techniques. Since this learning process takes time (man-hours), and makes for waste and accidents, it is incumbent upon us, as efficient managers to use training to help our employees to learn correctly and quickly so they can produce a quality product efficiently and safely.

The training specialist in American industry decided long ago that training which would accomplish these objectives could not be of the "hit or miss" variety. To insure effectiveness, the methods of the educator and psychologist were called upon.

Granting that a well organized, scientifically designed, training program can make our learning process more effective, how should such a program be organized? Initially, of course, we must decide what the objectives of the program will be; what needs it will fill. The objectives might range from relatively simple on-the-job training for

*Zelko, H. P., Speech and Conference Leadership Training in American Industry, Personnel, September 1950.

assembly-line type jobs to the complex training needed to better prepare supervisors to handle their human relations problems.

Once the objective of the program is determined, the type of training which will best enable us to reach this objective must be selected. Some of the commonest types found in American industry to-day are:

1. Public and Private Vocational Training (often sponsored partially by the company concerned).
2. Correspondence courses (in many cases the company defrays part or all of the cost).
3. Apprenticeship Training.
4. Adult Education Programs (usually in conjunction with a local public or private schools and universities).
5. Company run schools.
6. On-the-job Training.
7. Conferences (particularly for supervisory or managerial groups).

The next step in the formulation of the training program is the selection of the people to be trained. Economically, this is an important point since we should only direct our program at those people who *need* training. Further, there should be some selection criteria since it is not feasible to attempt to train people who are not capable of assimilating the information presented.

The selection of persons to do the training is one of the key points of this entire process. Although a man may be highly efficient in his job, this is no

guarantee that he will be an effective trainer. Trainers should always be familiar with the techniques of instruction, although, of course, a comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the subject-matter is also a must.

In all cases, the training to be given must be scheduled so as to insure minimum interruption of the plant's production and maximum utilization of training personnel and facilities. A record of the results as far as each student is concerned is imperative to enable the program to be evaluated. Like every other company program, the training program requires constant evaluation to determine how successfully it is accomplishing its objective. One common method of evaluation is the correlation of the employee's training grades with his work performance following the training period. It is necessary, of course, to make any such appraisal as objective as possible to preclude the possibility of your conclusions being unduly influenced by extraneous factors.

In a majority of American concerns the training program is run by a Training Director under the general supervision of the head of the personnel department. This is a logical place for the training program since it is closely related to other personnel activities such as job classification, employee selection etc. and must turn to most of these activities for information and assistance.

To emphasize the scope of training programs which may be found in some of the more progressive American companies, I would like to outline for you the types of training offered by the Dan

River Mills, Inc., Danville, Virginia, (a textile firm employing some 12,500 persons.*) Their program is concerned with seven broad areas of training as follows:

1. Part-time trade extension training.
2. Trade preparatory training.
3. Adult education (all levels up to 2nd year college).
4. Commercial training.
5. Avocational training.

6. Supervisory training (through the media of correspondence courses).
7. Apprenticeship training.

Let me stress this point—in our American business system where competition is keen, management has discovered that it has vast, untapped resources in its employees—by encouraging them to develop properly these resources can be channeled into greater job effectiveness which insures a savings to the company and the public it serves, plus greater job security for the employees.

* Westbrook, Francis, Jr. "An Industrial Training Program Branches Out," *Mill and Factory*, November 1949.

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After each session we would coach the trainer in places where it was needed and, also, coach him on certain points of the next session so he would be on the alert for them. Their conference rooms in the factories were not generally as good as we are accustomed to, but were suitable for the occasion. There never was any heat in the room or in most of the factories.

When these sessions were over, we studied our notes on each trainer and after comparing them and discussing the general fitness of the person, we arrived at the point of qualifying him. Three of the first twenty were not qualified. We recommended that they do more studying and be rescheduled into another institute.

Of the seventeen qualified trainers in the JIT Institute, twelve were recommended to attend the Master Institute.

The JIT Master Institute trained these men to become Institute Conductors and the top ranking men as Master Institute Conductors. This plan was followed in JM and JR. They were also trained to be Follow-Through Institute Conductors in their particular program of JI, JM or JR. They were given considerable training here in Program Development but this phase of the overall program will be given later.

They were given special training in "Program Presentation," "Program Installation" and problems as near actual as possible where training was obviously needed. They did find the needs and worked out the training to meet the need.

Those who were certified as Master Institute Conductors were given a special certificate in an appropriate ceremony on the last day. It had taken two and a half months.

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SUPERVISORY DEVELOPMENT—

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We have no doubts in our minds but that these men can carry on the programs in which they were trained, and that they will install them in the industries of Japan in a creditable manner. Some of them are scheduled up for the rest of year. They have proved their knowledge and skill in the conference room and in the shops. These programs will have as much democratizing effect upon Japan as almost anything ever introduced into that country. The conference and discussion type of training was entirely new to them. They grasped it quickly and entered into discussions very spiritedly.

I have received several letters from my men and they all are doing their work. It is also being given in the government agencies and departments.

The Labor Minister of Japan insists that these programs be introduced in the industries as fast as they can and, also, that they be followed up for continuing use, for he expects a great effect upon the Japan economy.

The workers in the shops are fine hard-working men and women but their individual productivity is low. With these training programs introduced, this should be improved and with that their wages should improve as they are now very low according to our standard. Their shops are fair and the machines are fair; some being new. They will improve these when they can afford it.

As I see it, Japan and America must remain friends. We need them and they need us. The more we help them, the more they can help us and a strong Japan is necessary. These TWI programs will help very materially to do this.



Editor, *The Journal*

Dear Walter,

You will be interested in hearing that on June 1st I will become a senior member of the firm of N. Edward Hay and Associates, management consultants here in Philadelphia for the past thirty years. I am leaving SKF regretfully of my own choice for this splendid opportunity to extend my services a bit more broadly in the industrial field. George Brobyn will take over the work which I inaugurated and operated at SKF. A better man would be hard to find.

Sincerely yours,

Harry F. Gracey

May 16, 1951

Editor, *The Journal*

Dear Walter:

Just a short note to let you know that I think the March-April 1951 *Journal of Industrial Training* was the best issue yet. Keep them coming, articles such as were in this issue are pertinent to the times.

Very truly yours,

H. J. Helmer

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