

# A Development Board That Really Works

## Mallinckrodt Chemical's Management Development Board

M. I. Gould

**O**ur Company is not number one in the chemical industry. We're not even number two. But we're committed to moving up the scale. So we figure we have to try extra hard to keep our growth rate ahead of our industry average. And this means trying to do everything we do in better than the normally acceptable fashion. It means getting the maximum mileage out of the dollars we spend for whatever purpose.

Our Company is organized along divisional lines. There are four income divisions (Industrial, Medicinal, Pharmaceutical and International), an Operations Division, two support divisions (Financial, Personnel) and several smaller staff groups. For a number of years there has been an Operating Committee comprised of the President and six division heads. Meet-

ing frequently, the members set operational policy, study special problems and provide coordination among the various divisions.

With progress has come an increasing awareness of the need to be sure that other managers, in the lower echelons, are going to be ready to assume greater responsibilities. These increased responsibilities are sure to come with continued growth. In fact, many of our people have already been called upon to take over higher positions resulting from our expansion. In addition to other steps taken to aid in self development we recently announced the formation of a Management Development Board.

### Membership

Management Development Boards, Junior Boards of Directors, or Junior

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Operating Committees, are not new. They've been established by many companies to provide special opportunities for middle management people. The membership of such groups generally represents a cross section of the company's line and staff functions. Meeting together these people gain broader outlooks on the company's overall activity. They can put their own jobs into better perspective and see more clearly, their relationship to the other functions in the Company. Our Management Development Board goes beyond this basic purpose and may be unique in some respects.

Our group is formed along traditional lines. Its ten members serve for two years, with five members leaving the MDB and five new ones coming on, each year. The members represent a cross section of the Company's divisions and of the various functions. Included, for example, are the Director of Public Relations, the Controller, the Director of Manufacturing and the Director of Purchases.

### Objectives

But groups of this type are not inexpensive and we want to get the maximum return for the Company, as well as for the individuals. So the objectives of our MDB, and the manner in which it works (and it really works), may be off the beaten path and of some general interest. The following objectives were announced:

1. Improve manager training and development and increase managerial skills.

The opportunity to form a new team and to establish effective working relationships can be a most valuable experience in self development. Incidentally all members have been through one of our in-company Phase I Managerial Grid sessions.

2. Provide for more effective use of the skills available in the organization in solving actual company problems involving more than one division.

This really means what it says. With reasonably free choice of projects to work on the MDB is expected to engage in studies and analyses, and to reach decisions yielding significant returns to the Company.

3. Provide the means by which action may be initiated or reviewed below the Operating Committee level.

The MDB is urged to review the activities of the Company's Operating Committee and to make observations and suggestions as it sees fit.

4. Improve communications both up and down and across divisional lines. In a growing concern, with everyone trying harder, concentration on one's own task can lead to breakdowns in communication. An important objective of the MDB is, therefore, to be sure that its activities and those of which it is informed are properly communicated. Members make particular use of their own staff meetings as a communications medium.

### Procedures

Orderly procedures have been established and changes are introduced as need arises. Rotating the chairmanship through the five second-year members as an aid to self development has given way to the election of a permanent chairman for a full year. This form of heirarchy was seen as an aid to task completion. Sub-committees have been found to be useful in conserving the time of the total group. Non-members of the Board have been invited to work with the sub-committees to bring additional

skills to bear on the problems being worked on and to increase commitment in general. Members who complete their terms are also involved in this fashion, thus preserving their talents for the Board's activity and helping to improve communications.

A representative of the Operating Committee may attend meetings of the MDB from time to time to transmit information or to observe. A representative of the MDB attends a meeting of the Operating Committee every few months to report on the activities of his group. The weekly meetings of the MDB have an agenda and a time schedule. The agenda includes brief reports on new developments in the company, actual work on selected

projects, with critique by the members following each meeting. This critique is directed toward evaluating how effective the group was in presenting facts, listening, contributing and, most importantly, in making progress.

### **Director of Training and Development**

Concerned, as it is, with accomplishing all four of its objectives, the MDB has invited the Director of Training and Development to attend its weekly meetings as an observer. His critique, following that of the individual members, is intended to provide maximum objectivity in pointing out ways and means to improve, both as a group and individually.

## **USOE Information Sciences Program**

A research program designed to devise better ways of coping with the information explosion—especially a body of scientific literature that doubles in size every 8 to 10 years—has been announced by the U. S. Office of Education.

In announcing the new \$3.5 million Library and Information Sciences Research Program, the Office pointed out that the information boom and greatly expanded use of libraries of all types had placed a demand on the Nation's library and information resources that could no longer be met efficiently with present methods and facilities.

The new research program is authorized under Title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Thirty-eight projects are being undertaken by edu-

cational institutions, libraries, and organizations in 19 States and the District of Columbia.

Examples of the projects are:

— Hampshire College, Amherst, Mass., which will open its doors to students in 1970, will attempt to design a program for its students that will use computers and "dial-access" communication systems to bring library services to their dormitory rooms.

— Researchers at the University of Maryland, College Park, Md., will explore future library manpower needs and attempt to devise methods of selection, recruitment, training and utilization of personnel to satisfy the increasing demands of information centers and libraries.

