



THE QUIET REVOLUTION

There's a revolution going on in the country now — quietly, without violence, without picket signs, without marches — but with a profound influence on the training and management development professional.

This revolution is in the education and training resources available to the trainer.

The most obvious of these revolutionary resources are the hardware-oriented instruction techniques. The availability of computers in most organizations has made computer assisted instruction a popular training tool — a tool unheard of ten years ago. Improved forms of non-computerized teaching machines have made programmed instruction an inexpensive and common educative tool — a tool which was in its experimental stage ten years ago. The exciting advances in closed circuit television production and videotape recording have made them very attractive tools for a great number of training professionals — tools which are still in their developmental stage.

In the software area, the revolution is less obvious but just as strong. New books appear almost daily on how to train one group or another, and many of these books contain theories on learning and teaching which have not been discussed before. As the number of consulting firms has increased, the number of “packaged” programs has multiplied. There are numerous directories listing thousands of courses being offered in adult education through universities, junior colleges, extension centers and professional societies.

This emphasis on continuing and adult education has been of fairly recent origin and has propelled the training and education specialist into the role of evaluator and selector of programs in addition to his historical role of designer of programs. In addition, the explosion of courses, seminars and institutes has accompanying it an intensified search for new and

better methods for teaching and training. This search means more study of human behavior and this is being done not only by traditional sources such as universities, but by organizations which are being created solely for that purpose. Within the last five years, the government has sponsored more research on human behavior than ever before. New theories are constantly being developed which revolutionize methods of teaching in a way never dreamed of ten years ago.

That a revolution in training and education resources is occurring is not disputable. Every training man is aware of it each time he looks at his mail and notices courses being offered for him, his fellow employees and his management; machines for use in his training room; and new books for his library.

To fully understand any revolution, however, it is not enough only to see *what* is happening — one must know *why* it is occurring and *where* it is leading.

One of the reasons for the revolution in resources is the *growth of the organization*. We can no longer afford the time it takes to train one individual at a time — carefully measuring his progress all along the way. But, at the same time, we have recognized that individuals learn at different rates and therefore training and education on a group basis is ineffective — we go too slowly for some and too rapidly for others. Thus, there has been a revolution in *individualized instruction techniques*. Programmed instruction and computer assisted instruction allow large numbers of people to be taught the same subject within the same given period of time, but *at the learner's own rate*.

Organization growth has also caused us to become more concerned about the individual in the organization. This concern has led to the concept of *individual fulfillment*. In the past, no one worried very much if Sam was unhappy at his job — as long as

he did it. Today we recognize that a happy Sam will do a better job for us than will an unhappy one. So we have books written on how to make Sam happy — through training for promotion — through training for self-awareness — through training for an understanding of his part in the company picture. We have new machines and materials which change attitudes as opposed to teaching skills. We have research which tells us how you influence behavior. The old methods of demonstration and practice won't work — *you can't illustrate happiness to a trainee and then have him practice it.*

In addition, in researching how to influence behavior, we have finally realized that *teaching adults is a different art from teaching children.* So we have more books for the trainer on adult learning theory. New methods of teaching adults are being developed and with new methods come new materials and equipment.

Organization growth and diversification has also led to the realization that we can no longer afford to train individuals for a specific function. First of all, in many cases the person performing this function will be replaced by a machine and will have to be *retrained.* Second, in other cases, the person will be promoted and will have to be *retrained.* Third, in still

other cases, the function itself will be *phased out* or *discontinued.* Often in the past, when a job was finished or a person replaced by a machine, the employee was dismissed. Today we must retrain that employee in accordance with union agreements. Therefore, to save constant retraining, we must initially train individuals to *adapt to change* and to *be able to move within the organization.* The result of this change in training purpose is that new books, new materials and new methods have to be developed.

One not-to-be-omitted cause of our revolution is related to the amazing capacity computers have of storing and retrieving information. With all this knowledge no further away than our computer console, we are now able to check on old theories and practices more thoroughly than ever before. And we are learning that a great many of our long-held assumptions are wrong — that many of our “tested” practices have worked *only in spite of themselves.* So new books, new methods, new materials have to be developed.

The above are some examples of the why and what of the revolution in education and training resources — and there are undoubtedly many others. However, it is now time to ask, “*Where is the revolution taking*

us?”

We have, or soon will have, the ability to determine *how* a given individual will *react* to many different situations. We have, or soon will have, the ability to allow the individual to learn *what* he wants to learn *as fast* as he is able to learn it. We know, or soon will know, how to control his working environment so that he is *happy* in it — by making him feel a part of the organization — by challenging him on his job — by giving him a sense of worth. This can lead to a nation of working people who are fulfilled, fully developed individuals, happy with themselves and their jobs. *It can also, however, lead to a nation of conditioned people who have been researched, tested and finally educated and trained to feel that they are fulfilled, fully developed individuals.* Do we dare let the latter happen?

With all of the new techniques and materials being developed in “The Quiet Revolution”, a new problem has developed for the trainer — “*Which resource do I use and how do I use it?*” The majority of the Wednesday sessions at the 25th National Conference are devoted to the revolution in education and training resources. For some guides in the use of these resources, and a better understanding of their advantages and disadvantages, plan to attend.

USOE SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL LABS

The U. S. Office of Education has announced allocation of funds to 20 regional educational laboratories which are helping to create an array of tested alternatives to existing educational practices.

The Office's Bureau of Research said that more than \$23 million had been allotted under the National Program of Educational Laboratories, as provided for under Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Awards to 15 laboratories will be for

one year starting December 1, 1968. Reductions in the appropriations that had been requested for fiscal year 1969 made it necessary for the Office of Education to withdraw support from five laboratories effective May 31, 1969.

Regional laboratories are independent, nonprofit organizations that encompass a broad array of educational interests within the regions they serve. They may seek financial support from State and local agencies as well as other institutions.