

TEACHING MANAGERS TO MANAGE

*an organized, conceptual
approach to management
development replaces
haphazard training*

How should a business go about teaching managers to manage? Businessmen have struggled with this question for years. A great deal has been written about general training principles and about specific training courses. Relatively little has been written about total programs for the development of managerial personnel. The purpose of this article is to describe one conceptual approach to teaching managers to manage.

Business organizations must find better ways of teaching managers to manage for two reasons. First, the rapid "knowledge explosion" means that managers in competitive businesses must continue to learn during their entire careers. Secondly, business is investing more and more dollars in *people* and, to get the proper return on investment, it has to manage this resource as efficiently as it handles the other factors of production.

THREE OTHER APPROACHES

In spite of this need, what business organizations are actually doing in the education of managerial personnel hardly suggests an organized approach to the problem. An observer might well conclude that business has adopted the "topsy," the "bandwagon" or the "eureka" approaches to the development of managerial personnel. Let's take a look at these three approaches, before we suggest a conceptual approach, in order to demonstrate why the latter is so important.

1. The "topsy" approach assumes that a manager can learn all he needs to know by managing under the direction of more experienced managers. There is no substitute, of course, for learning by managing. There are two reasons, however, why the "topsy" approach cannot be relied upon exclusively. First, simply doing a job does not keep a manager abreast of theoretical advances. It is the unusual professional who keeps current through his own courses of study. Second, most managers are not effective trainers or educators of their own subordinates. Few are sufficiently capable and unselfish to find

the time and energy to devote to the needs of their subordinates for continuous learning.

In the field of sports, no one would suggest that a professional football team should limit its learning to actual competitive contests. None would eliminate practice sessions. None would deny the head coach the use of defensive coaches, line coaches, backfield coaches. And yet, in the much more complex world of business, the "topsy" approach would leave the continuous education of managers to the on-the-job process.

2. The "bandwagon" approach deserves less respect. The "bandwagon" approach attests that practical, intelligent businessmen are not and never will be fully rational managers. The "bandwagon" approach leads business organizations to shift their training efforts to whatever is new and fashionable. As a result, teaching managers to manage has changed from teaching them "human relations" to teaching them "communications," to teaching them "motivation." The tendency to follow the crowd is as irresistible for rational managers as it is for the young to adopt hippy clothes.
3. The "eureka" approach also has its problems. Like Archimedes in the bathtub, the representatives of the "eureka" school discover the one and only solution to training needs. Typical of this school are the devotees of sensitivity training, decision making, business games, management styles, computer concepts and many others. Usually there is value in the particular training concept that is embraced. Probably no devotee would actually claim that his solution completely satisfies all training needs. But most talk and act as if they had the complete answer. It is inconceivable that any single training course could fill the knowledge requirements of a complex managerial world. The "eureka" school offers no help as a realistic guide to continuous business education.

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Managers need some conceptual guide to help them in their own development and in recommending plans for their subordinates. Companies also need some conceptual guide of how and where to spend their available resources for training purposes. Under present conditions, any observer can quickly spot the economic waste that occurs as companies waste valuable resources on "topsy," "bandwagon" and "eureka" assumptions.

THE BASIC QUESTIONS

What might be a more useful conceptual approach to managerial and professional training? In developing such a conceptual approach, it is helpful to consider three questions. One, what does a manager actually do when he manages? Two, what does he need to know to manage more effectively? Three, how can he learn what he needs to know?

1. *What does a manager do when he*

manages? A manager is commonly defined as one who plans, organizes, staffs, directs and controls people and work. We might further ask what a manager does specifically when he plans, organizes, staffs, directs and controls? In what specific activities does a manager engage? The general answer to this question might be best presented in Chart I.

These specific activities are not absolutely discrete. Many activities, such as reading, listening, communicating, innovating, problem-solving, occur in all steps of the managing process. We are not concerned here with a table that is cut in stone. We are only interested in developing a general framework which will help us in determining the kind of training that will teach managers how to manage.

2. If, then, these are the specific activities which a manager performs, we are now ready to ask our next question. *What does a manager need to know to manage effectively?* A manager needs to know how to perform all the specific activities which we have outlined above. His ability to perform these activities will improve his ability to handle effectively the managing process of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling.

Can a business or other organization expect that its potential managers will bring this managerial knowledge from their college studies? This is unlikely. Business administration graduates may bring a knowledge of theory but will not bring a knowledge of practice. Most managers are usually graduates of studies ranging from engineering to liberal arts. Generally, they lack knowledge of both the theory and practice of management. In any event, both business and non-business graduates need continuous education and experiences in the business world in order to integrate theory and practice into an effective pattern of managerial behavior.

3. If a manager needs to learn the management process in the actual business world, *how can we best teach him?* Here is a conceptual framework to answer this question. We present this framework neither as a complete answer nor as the only answer. Rather, this conceptual framework represents a useful point of departure for a total development program. The specifics can and should be tailored to individual companies and situations. We are concerned here with the framework as a means of providing a logical basis for a long-term course of action.

CHART I

<u>Managerial Process</u>	<u>Managerial Activities</u>
Planning	Making long-range plans Setting annual objectives Establishing budgets and cost standards Making decisions
Organizing	Reading Listening Innovating
Staffing	Defining an organization and jobs
Directing	Selecting, transferring and promoting people Developing methods and procedures Directing people Training Communicating Motivating Appraising Disciplining Rewarding
Controlling	Evaluating results and taking corrective action

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Our conceptual framework is in Chart II.

CHART II

<u>Management Process</u>	<u>Management Activities</u>	<u>Courses</u>
Planning	Making long-range plans	Management process
	Setting annual objectives	Objective setting
	Establishing budgets and cost standards	Financial analysis and control
	Making decisions	Reading improvement
	Reading	Organization planning
	Listening	Comprehensive interviewing
	Innovating	Work simplification
	Defining an organization and jobs	Basic supervision
	Staffing	Job Instruction training
	Directing	Writing improvement
Organizing	Training	Motivation seminar
	Communicating	Sensitivity training
	Motivating	Performance appraisal
	Appraising	Salary administration
	Disciplining	
Staffing	Rewarding	
Directing		
Controlling	Evaluating results and taking corrective action	Objective setting

In addition, this conceptual framework suggests a reading program for managerial development such as the one in Chart III.

The purpose of such a list is to suggest general reading to expand the know-how and vision of managers who want to learn. The most effective list is one that is tailored to represent the points of view of a specific organization and to meet the learning needs of a particular manager.

At this point, several questions may be asked. Isn't this proposed concept too ambitious and too expensive for the economic resources of most businesses? Isn't the proposed concept excessively

oriented toward in-company training? Doesn't it neglect the academic and other educational facilities that are available?

EXCESSIVE SCOPE?

First, isn't this proposed concept too ambitious and too expensive? We think the answer is no. The concept does not propose that a company should embark on an expensive "crash" program to provide all these courses to all its managers within a few years. Rather, we are proposing that a total concept be developed and tailored to provide a consistent frame of reference to meet the training needs of managers over the en-

tire span of their careers. Just as the series-winning Mets can never stop training and learning, neither can senior managers ever stop learning during a twenty- or thirty-year career. With this long-range frame of reference, it becomes obvious the costs will be spread similarly.

Furthermore, all of the training would not be necessary for all levels of management. Foremen and supervisors are more concerned with handling practical, immediate concerns. Higher-level managers are more concerned with longer-range matters such as planning and organizing. An organization should analyze and divide its total program into smaller segments. A simple breakdown,

		CHART III		
Management Process	General Reading			
Planning	The Practice of Management	Peter F. Drucker		
	The Effective Executive	Peter F. Drucker		
	Management By Objectives	George S. Odiorne		
	The Will To Manage	Marvin Bower		
	The Rational Manager	Charles H. Kepner and Benjamin B. Tregoe	Robert N. Anthony	
Organizing	Management Accounting	J. D. Mooney		
	The Principles of Organization	Donald M. Bowman		
	Management: Organization and Planning			
Staffing	The Evaluation Interview	Richard A. Fear		
Directing	Psychology In Management	Mason Haire		
	The Managerial Grid	Robert Blake		
	What Every Supervisor Should Know	Lester R. Bittel		
	Faster Reading For Business	George D. Spache and Paul C. Berg	Robert Gunning	
	The Technique of Clear Writing	Rudolf Flesch		
	The Art of Plain Talk	John S. Morgan		
	Guide to Conference Leadership	Frederick Herzberg		
	The Motivation To Work	Alex Osborne		
	Applied Imagination	William J. Gordon		
	Synetics	Marion S. Kellogg		
	What To Do About Performance Appraisal			
	Wages and Salaries	Robert E. Sibson		
	Controlling	Executive Control	William T. Jerome III	

way of getting a perspective on the costs involved for a training schedule for a single year.

Assuming 100 foremen . (see Chart IV.)

Based on an assumed total foremen payroll of \$800,000, the training cost of \$6900 is eight-tenths of one per cent of payroll cost. When we consider the costs caused by untrained foremen, such a cost is minimal and represents an investment in improved results.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Isn't the proposed concept oriented excessively toward in-company training? Doesn't it fail to take advantage of education programs offered by universities and professional organizations. This is not intended. Once a specific company program has been developed, a company training department, universities or professional organizations can be used depending upon which is best able to provide the specific training of the highest quality and at the least cost. The right answer will vary, of course, by size of company, by availability of university facilities and by cost considerations.

for example, might be into three parts, one for supervisory personnel, one for middle managers and one for upper management levels. While this is being done, a beginning can be made in establishing the costs of each course and establishing the annual investment that can be made by a specific organization.

What we are suggesting can be accomplished in a great variety of ways. As one example, the following outline illustrates what might be developed for the foreman level.

Illustrative Concept of Foreman Training

Function	Course
Planning	Objective setting
Staffing	Interviewing
Directing	Basic interviewing
	Work simplification
	Job Instruction Training
Controlling	Objective setting

COST IN PERSPECTIVE

Is the concept too costly? Obviously, each company must reach its own answer. Usually this is done on the basis of some emotional hunch. We are either for training or against it. Here is one suggestion of a more rational approach. If we assume that a company has a workforce of 100 foremen, here is one

AVOID THE HAPHAZARD

In conclusion, then, the purpose of this article was to describe one conceptual approach to teaching managers to manage. It was not to present a completely developed, unchangeable formula but to develop a general concept. Such a concept would need to be tailored to meet

CHART IV				
Function	Course	Training Cost Per Man	Number of Students	Total Annual Cost
Planning	Objective setting	\$100	10	\$100
Staffing	Interviewing	75	8	600
Directing	Basic supervision	75	6	450
	Work simplification	50	8	400
	Job Instruction Training	25	10	250
				\$2700
Plus foremen salaries for time in training at \$100 per course				4200
				\$6900

the needs of a specific company and to provide a unifying direction for its management development efforts. A primary intent was to find some logical replacement for the haphazard approaches which were described as "topsy," "bandwagon" and "eureka."

In developing this conceptual approach, we suggested that the primary manager-

ial functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling would provide a logical starting point. This led us to analyze what does a manager do when he manages and, then, to suggest a list of training courses which would help managers to manage more effectively.

The need of American business and society for better managers is generally

acknowledged. The increasing size of business and political organizations calls for many managers at all levels. The increasing complexity of business and political problems will require better trained and more knowledgeable managers. Our conceptual approach for teaching managers to manage suggests one, long-term approach for meeting the managerial needs of business and society.

BRIGHTER PICTURE CONCERNING STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD SALES CAREERS

Selling careers lack status and prestige, and many students view the "typical" salesman in an unfavorable light, according to Dr. David L. Kurtz, associate professor of marketing, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.

Dr. Kurtz is the author of "Student Attitudes Toward Sales Careers," an article which is appearing in the current issue of the *Journal of College Placement*, published by the College Placement Council, Inc., Bethlehem, Pa., the non-profit service organization representing approximately 1,300 colleges and 2,100 employers in the United States and Canada.

The article is an update of previous studies and raises the question, "How receptive are students toward selling as a career?" A survey made in 1966 found that only 6% of the college students queried would consider selling as a career.

This study paints a somewhat brighter picture. The findings indicate, however, that college recruiters should reassess the appeals used in their recruiting programs and thereby increase the number of job-offer acceptances by college students.

A specialist in sales recruiting techniques, Dr. Kurtz points out that American business will require nearly 1.5 million new sales personnel in the next decade, or an annual sales force increase of about 10% for the "average" company.

Low prestige is not the only roadblock

to recruiting college-trained people for sales. Inadequate compensation and lack of stability in earnings and employment are also major objections of today's students.

Other factors adding to student disinterest include too much travel, lack of advancement opportunities, and the belief that selling does not contribute to the needs of society. Dr. Kurtz says that the validity of these criticisms may not be justified today, but they are significant "if the students believe that they are true."

Dr. Kurtz concentrated his study on business administration students, rather than a random cross-section of collegians. The study consisted of a questionnaire survey administered to 823 students enrolled in senior-level marketing classes at 12 Michigan colleges and universities.

Contrary to what had been reported in previous literature, this survey found there was no indication that these respondents would reject sales positions. Asked if they would consider employment in sales work, 67% of the marketing students responded affirmatively and only 16% said they would not consider sales. The remaining 17% had "no opinion."

The primary reason given for student consideration of sales employment, writes Dr. Kurtz, is that they liked the idea of "working with people to satisfy their needs." Next in preference was "high salary."