

# Japanese Government Training

## A Report from the National Personnel Authority

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**T**raining and education of government employees in Japan may be traced as far back as the 1870's. It was a period when the nation was riding on the surge of modern civilization, while taking over the heritages of the defunct Shogunate era, and along with other numerous new institutions, training institutes for government employees began to make their appearances. For example, in 1869 a system of training naval officers was established at the newly-created "Naval Officers' Training Center" and in 1871 employee training was introduced by the then Ministry of Engineering, the predecessor of the present Japan National Railways and Japan Telegraph and Telephone Corporations, in the form of "telegraphic

student-trainee system." Later on, the Ministries of Engineering and Home Affairs established training centers of their own, and exerted every effort for the training of their employees.

The training of this type, however, was confined to the specific ministries cited and training was aimed at improving only those employees handling specialized or technical jobs. Training administrative employees had never been conducted systematically on a government-wide scale in those days, although a sort of on-the-job-training for top management candidates (a group consisted of graduates of the law department of certain universities) had been given since 1887 through what might be termed "management apprenticeship."

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An important epoch was ushered in for administrative employee training by the National Public Service Law in the post war year of 1947. Article 75 of this Law provides for employee training and education as an efficiency-improvement program in public service. The National Personnel Authority was created as the central personnel agency of the Japanese Government in compliance with the National Public Service Law. The Authority is composed of three commissioners. It has a Secretariat under its jurisdiction.

### The National Personnel Authority

The Authority is charged not only with the responsibility for over-all planning and coordination of employee training and education, but also with surveillance of such activities. The Authority, therefore, has been doing its utmost to promote government employee training and education through such activities as outlined below:

1. *Meetings of the Council of Training Directors.* The Council consists of training directors of appropriate agencies and of training instructors of training institutes. Its membership in March 1964 was 56, including 5 observers. The purpose of the Council is to maintain close contact and exchange information between the Authority and the appropriate agencies and to study problems in employee training.

2. *Annual Report on Employee*

*Training and Education in the Japanese Government.* Annually, the Authority investigates the training activities conducted by the agencies during the preceding year and prepares a "Report on Employee Training and Education in the Japanese Government" after careful analysis and study of their results.

3. *Provision of Incentives to Certain Training Courses.* To tie training activities closely with other devices used in personnel administration, the Authority has been giving thoughtful consideration in a variety of ways. The Authority has left no stone unturned in ensuring the improvement of training courses and the enhancement of trainee morale by approving certain training courses for a special award. Those trainees who have satisfactorily completed such courses are qualified to receive a special within-grade salary increase. The number of such approved courses reached 25 as of the end of March 1964.

4. *Conduct of Certain Government-wide Training Programs.* In a way, the Authority is imbued with the character of a central training institute. It is therefore desirable that employee training on such matters as are common to all the ministries and agencies be conducted by the Authority. At present, Jinji-In (Japanese for the Authority)-developed Supervisory Training (JST)<sup>1</sup> and "Administrative Training," etc., are training programs of this category.

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1. A training method devised by the Authority in 1951. JST consists of the following three courses: The standard course consisting of five parts in which instruction is given on the relationship between organization and supervisors, management of work, improvement of work, education and training of subordinates, and the handling of subordinates; the advanced course dealing with ten selected cases by case-method; and the supplementary course treating specific problems concerning the tasks of supervisors. The total number of JST leaders as of the end of March 1964 is about 7,000. JST is being widely administered not only by national and local government agencies, but also by private industries, and some 200,000 supervisors have already participated in this training program.

5. *Assistance to Other Agencies.* Although training is originally aimed at meeting the need of a specific ministry or agency, its administration is sometimes far beyond the ability of the ministry or agency concerned. The Authority, as the central training institute, has been extending its assistance if asked for by the ministries or agencies.

6. *The Training Management Study Meeting.* There are many common problems in the area of public employee training. To solve these problems, the Authority, co-sponsoring with the Public Service Training Council,<sup>2</sup> holds a Training Management Study Meeting twice a year.

### **Employee Training in Perspective**

Outlines of training programs are determined by the central organization, usually the organizational unit in charge of personnel affairs. But it is by no means rare that concrete and small-scale programs are planned independently by local establishments or training institutes of each ministry or agency. Government departments, such as the Ministry of Postal Services, the Tax Administration Agency and the Police Agency, which have many employees, conduct training for their own needs and have a long history of employee training.

According to a 1962 survey by the Authority, the number of training courses given on a systematic basis for 20 or more hours was approximately 2,400. The total number of trainees who attended these courses was about 101,000, representing some 13.5 per cent of the total work force of the National Government, including government-managed enterprise work-

ers. These figures show an increase of some 24 per cent in courses and some 13 per cent in trainees as compared with the previous year.

### **Present State of Government Training**

Taking a broad view of training activities in every ministry and agency, we note that the activities in comparatively large ministries and agencies have at last begun to run on the right track and they conduct their training courses in a positive manner to cope with changing conditions of society. In some small ministries and agencies, the training activities are still far from brisk.

Owing to various obstacles, the training activities in local establishments are undeniably less active than those of their central organizations.

Although the 1962 survey showed 13.5 per cent of the employees in training of 20 or more hours careful examination of the training activities by ministry and agency shows a fairly significant difference. Generally speaking, the ministry or agency with a government-managed enterprise under its jurisdiction and, many opportunities to come into contact with the general public, enjoys a high percentage of the trainees. This percentage becomes lower in the case of agencies engaged primarily in planning or research work.

The various types of training courses for government employees may be divided into several categories.

### **Newly Appointed Employees**

Training for new entrants, mostly college graduates who have passed the Senior Entrance Examination, has

2. The Council is an organization aimed at promoting public employee training, and its membership is comprised of both agency and individual members.

been enthusiastically conducted by each ministry and agency as part of its program for future executives. This type of training has been administered systematically by the central personnel office at the beginning of each fiscal year. The period of training is a maximum of six months in the Police Agency, etc., but it is usually about one month or so in other cases. The total number of trainees in all ministries and agencies is 600 to 700 in a normal year.

About 800 successful candidates of the Intermediate Entrance Examination for the level of junior college graduates have been employed annually by the ministries and agencies and trained without exception, at least in principle. These trainees, however, are often mixed with the successful candidates of the Senior or the Junior Entrance Examination due to the fact that they are usually appointed sporadically by local establishments.

Training for successful candidates of the Junior Entrance Examination has penetrated into every ministry and every establishment throughout Japan and has become the most popular course. The total number of trainees in a normal year is about 8,000. The period of training is usually about one week for the category of general clerk, but it sometimes extends from three months to one year for such specific categories as taxation and postal employees.

Training for new entrants covers, at least in principle, all new appointees, but it usually consists of an orientation course, and there is a considerable difference among the ministries and agencies.

### **Managerial and Supervisory Training**

Management training for managers and supervisors responsible for the first-line operation of governmental ad-

ministration is encouraged, since democratic and efficient administration of public affairs is nowadays the overriding requirement.

This type of training may be divided into two groups.

The first is JST which is conducted in a considerable number of government departments, such as the Board of Audit, the National Personnel Authority, the Procurement Agency, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Construction. The second is managerial and highly-specialized professional training which is conducted by the lectures or seminars in government departments like the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Postal Services and the Ministry of Labor. Furthermore, there are executive development programs intended as refresher courses for higher-level officials with positions of a section chief or above. This indicates that the need for development of top management has been recognized in Japan.

### **Senior Executive Development**

Training programs for senior executives (section chiefs and above) have not been active enough in the past, but recently some ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Welfare, and the Printing Bureau of the Ministry of Finance, have begun to carry out this type of training in real earnest.

In view of the significant role that senior executives play in governmental administration, the Authority has been devoting its efforts to development of a training course for improvement of their abilities. In 1962, a "Management Training Course," limited to the section chiefs of the Authority, was

held for a pre-test purpose. After scrutinizing the results of this trial session, the Authority worked out a "Management Conference," and invited 17 section chiefs from other agencies. It was a residential training course which had never been held before in this country for such senior officials. The Authority is now holding a similar conference twice a year.

The purpose of this Conference is to develop, by self-improvement or by mutual improvement, the broader vision and better knowledge necessary for senior government officials to meet the demands of the time; to further mutual understanding among management staffs of various ministries and agencies; and to cultivate a sense of joint responsibility in governmental administration. Participants include up to 20 section chiefs or equivalent senior officials in the central offices of ministries and agencies who are recommended by their authorities. The period is approximately one week (residential for all). These conferences are held at some quiet beauty spot not too far away from Tokyo.

The major subjects are administrative practices and procedures, organization control, human relations, labor-management relations, and international problems. The conference is conducted by group discussion, research on the topics presented by the lecturers, actual cases submitted by the participants, case-study and symposium-forum.

### Training for Future Executives

Ever since the Meiji Restoration of 1868, much thought has been given by the Japanese Government to the bringing up of a corps of officers who are

expected to assume an eventual leading role in governmental administration. An open competitive examination system for recruiting candidates for future executives had been rigorously enforced since 1893 when the Imperial Ordinance No. 197, entitled "The Regulations on Civil Service Examination," was put into effect. But the training of such officers before the promulgation of the National Public Service Law in 1947 had been conducted under the Higher Civil Service Entrance Examination System which was considered to bear a strong relationship with the special privileged status enjoyed as the "Emperor's official." This was replaced by a new scheme of training more in consonance with the changing conditions of society after the enactment of the National Public Service Law. The new "Administrative Training" scheme was begun by the Authority in 1956 and recently has been managed by the Institute of Public Administration under the Authority. Development of future executives has been being promoted vigorously through this program.

The purpose of Administrative Training is to equip young, capable officers of government departments with a broad administrative vision, high-level managerial abilities and a sound insight into social problems, and to develop a corps of public employees truly worthy to be servants of all of the people.

After consultation with departmental officials, about 100 trainees are selected from among those recommended according to these criteria:

1. Persons generally holding a position of Grade 5 of the Salary Schedule for the Administrative Service<sup>3</sup>

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3. Equivalent to the position of branch chief in the central office of each ministry, the branch being part of a subsection.

- or a position of similar level in other salary schedule, who have an outstanding record in their work performance;
2. Persons under 35 years of age;
  3. Persons who are physically fit to receive the training;
  4. Persons majoring chiefly in one of the social sciences such as the economics for the Course "A", and those majoring in one of the natural sciences such as physics and engineering for the Course "B" (about 50 persons each for both courses).

The training period is three months (13 weeks) and the session is held three times a year, April to July for Spring, September to December for Autumn, and December to March for Winter, respectively. Beginning in 1964, a one-week-long residential program was included.

The program is composed mainly of lectures and seminars on major subjects. In addition, it includes recreation, observation and study of installations and so forth considered useful for the purpose of the training, and writing of an essay.

*Lectures* are divided into two categories: general and special. General lectures are designed to enable the trainees to obtain an understanding of fundamental state policies and governmental administration in action, to comprehend managerial techniques, and to increase their knowledge of administrative practices. Special lectures are intended to provide a broader common sense on social problems by dealing with general culture, current topics and the like.

*Seminars* are conducted by group discussion and consist of three stages: study of the tasks set, preliminary discussion and discussion by all trainees. Tasks are presented by a lecturer or by the Institute on matters related to the major subjects of general lectures,

some examples of which are: various problems of planning and coordination with departments; review of local autonomy under the present Constitution of Japan; financial policy during the period of recession; employment of middle-aged and old workers; and training of scientists and engineers. The trainees are divided into syndicates of about 15. Each syndicate has two to four members who act as watch-leaders per task, who, by turns, preside over the discussion.

*Observation and Study of Installations.* In addition to visiting laboratories, plants, cultural properties, etc., study tours, one of which lasts a week, are undertaken.

*Essay.* Based on the discussion during the seminars and in connection with the theme of a particular task in which they have acted as watch-leaders, the trainees are required to collaborate in writing an essay on the task they have taken up. In effect, they sum up the results achieved in their study and submit it to the Institute. The themes of the essays are the same as those of the seminars.

Since the start of Administrative Training in October 1956, 1,444 persons have completed their training by the end of March 1964. In recent years, some 250 persons have finished the course annually. Some employees who attended the first session of this training have already been promoted to the level of section chiefs in the central offices of a ministry. Therefore, it will not be long before those who have received this training will make up the nucleus of higher administrators in government departments.

There are some training programs such as the regular course of the Police College, the higher course of Taxation Training Center, the study course of the Central Postal Service Training Institute, which have a tradition of

their own and are institutionally established on a firm basis. However, such a program has in view only those employees who have acquired the qualifications for executives through day-to-day operations of their work, and, consequently, is characterized by a job-oriented curriculum.

Those who have successfully passed the Senior Entrance Examination and have acquired several years' experience in the service are trained on the subjects related to the activities of each ministry and agency. For example, this program includes seminars on the "White Paper on the Japanese Economy" conducted by the Economic Planning Agency and training on economic theories by the Ministry of Finance. Overseas study and employee training consigned to outside organizations like colleges may be classified as special programs falling under this category.

### Other Training Programs

Training courses other than those described above comprise approximately 80 per cent of all the training courses, and a greater number of trainees also are covered by those programs. But the training programs are so diverse in their purposes, contents, periods, methods and so forth that they may be more conveniently reviewed by classifying them into two groups.

*Junior Employee Training.* This type of training is given to those employees who hold a position a grade higher than those covered by the training for new appointees. Most of the training periods are about 50 hours and are based on the particular need of the ministry or agency concerned. The purpose of this training is to provide the trainees with some basic knowledges and skills related to their work, to enable them to form an attitude of mind desirable as public

employees and cultivate a broad vision necessary as group members, and to raise their morale.

*Professional and Technical Employee Training.* To cope with the growing specialization and complexity of public services, professional and technical training is conducted for a fairly long period as the next step to the junior employee training, and its trainees are chiefly composed of middle-grade employees. This type of training includes a higher professional and technical training program designed to keep pace with technological innovation and economic growth, and has been steadily conducted very actively in recent years.

### Conclusion

It will be appropriate to conclude by dividing all training programs into three groups: Government-wide training; training in a specific ministry or agency; and training in an outside institute or college.

*Government-wide Training.* Training on such matters as are common to the whole ministries and agencies are more efficient and effective if conducted on a government-wide basis. The number of trainees of this type of training represents only 1.5 per cent of the whole trainees but tends to increase rapidly. The tabulation on the next page shows some particulars of the training programs conducted during fiscal 1962.

*Training in a Specific Ministry or Agency.* This type of training is conducted by a specific ministry or agency to its own employees. The total number of trainees who attended a more-than-20-hour course of such training is about 100,000, representing 98.2 per cent of the whole trainees.

*Training in an Outside Institute or College.* Judging from the number of trainees, only 927 persons received training under this program during

<i>Title</i>	<i>Administering Agency</i>	<i>No. of trainees</i>
Administrative Training	National Personnel Authority	219
JST Leader Training	National Personnel Authority	113
Training on Statistics	Prime Minister's Office	51
Administrative Management Seminar	Administrative Management Agency	128
Office Management Mechanization Seminar	Administrative Management Agency	56
Training on Protection from Radiation Damage (Domestic Course)	Science & Technology Agency	22
Training on Utilization of Radiation in Medicine (Short Course)	Science & Technology Agency	32
Training on Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	32
Training for Government Accounts Staff	Ministry of Finance	339
Training on the Businesses of the Mutual Aid Association	Ministry of Finance	38
Total		1,052

1962, but with the growing specialization of public services, a greater recognition has been being given to its importance. The outside organs accepting government trainees include colleges, laboratories of various kinds and private organizations concerned with employee training.

Turning to training facilities, 23 ministries and agencies out of 47 are provided with special training facilities for their own employees. The total number of such facilities in the whole government is 97, which are operated by some 2,400 employees and 1,300 full-time training instructors.

While it is true that the employee training activity in the Japanese Government has seen a very rapid development in recent years, it still has some weaknesses. For example, not only

a considerable disparity exists among the ministries and agencies or between the central offices and local establishments, but also a training program like one for top management has just begun functioning. Again, it is observed that too great emphasis on an assembled type of off-the-job training has a tendency to devalue the significance of self-development and on-the-job training. Moreover, there still remain some crucial problems requiring a further study in the future, including an all-round improvement of training facilities, intensification of relationships between training and other devices used in personnel administration, and furtherance of cooperative relations between public and private organizations.