

# Mr. Training Director - His Job

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Happily, the *Journal* and other professional publications are less prone than in former years to carry articles which focus on establishing the position of the training director or deal with schemes for "selling" management on the value of training. Even though this may mean that the training function is coming of age, the training director must continue to be concerned with the meaning of his function and how well he is accomplishing his mission. He must ask himself constantly "How am I doing? What should I be doing?" This questioning attitude probably accomplishes most when the training director has a theory of training against which he can examine his activities.

Following are ten propositions or assumptions providing one way of looking at the training director's job:

## **Propositions**

### *Proposition 1*

We are all interested in who we are and to what purpose we are in this world.

### *Proposition 2*

The training job is changing (and we training directors had better change too).

### *Proposition 3*

The chief function of training is to effect change and the role of the training director should be that of a change agent.

### *Proposition 4*

The influence of the training director is increasing and will continue to increase in this age of change.

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From a talk given to a Northern California Training Directors meeting.

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*Proposition 5*

Training efforts should influence and assist in the understanding and implementation of organization, philosophy, and policy.

*Proposition 6*

Training should create in management an understanding of organization as a social system.

*Proposition 7*

We should aim for "organization development" as well as "management and employee development."

*Proposition 8*

The new role of the training director suggests that he, too, should strive to understand himself since much of his influence must proceed from example.

*Proposition 9*

The well-rounded training director will provide a well-rounded program.

*Proposition 10*

*The substance of this proposition will be supplied later.*

One by one then, let us examine these assumptions or propositions with a view to developing some ideas and attitudes concerning the training director's function. Our first assumption is that WE ARE ALL INTERESTED IN WHO WE ARE AND TO WHAT PURPOSE WE ARE IN THIS WORLD. It is significant, I think, that the dawn of the human mind also apparently saw the dawn of the search for the answer to the above question.

The existence of intelligence contributed to the rise of religion, the rise of the philosophies, and now within recent years, the rise of the study of psychology.

Each in its turn has contributed to this unending search which attempts to answer "Who am I?" It is not accident, I believe, that so much literature of the present and recent past deals with mankind and the relation of this organism to his environment. We have only to cite a few such as David Riesman's "The Lonely Crowd"; Sigmund Freud's works on psychoanalysis; the books of Erich Fromm, particularly "Man For Himself"; Gardner Murphy's "Human Potential"; and the very important and quite practical book by A. H. Maslow, "Motivation and Personality." Perhaps you, as many of the rest of us in training, have been intrigued with the chapter in Maslow's book in which he deals with the "ladder" of human needs. This is a scale of needs which are, in general, progressively filled in the following order:

1. Physiological or homeostatic.
2. Safety.
3. Belonging.
4. Esteem.
5. Self-actualization.

The fifth need, "self-actualization," is one to which training people can direct their attention with profit. We must recognize that all organisms are striving for self-enhancement and that human beings are constantly involved in filling their individual needs. But only when the lower orders of needs are filled is progress made in most cases toward self-actualization. When employees have physical security, acceptance by their work group, recognition of their abilities and individual worth, then the self-actualization is encouraged. Employees can then really begin to make the kinds of contributions which will have real and lasting meaning to themselves. This is

the fulfillment of the need to know at last that "I am an intelligent being, that I have value and worth to myself and others, I respect myself and so I can respect others and I am in this world in order that I can contribute something to its betterment and progress." The self-actualized person provides his own motivation. He is free to develop into a creative and effective producer. Such an employee can see the impact he has on his surroundings so that he can say "see what I have done—see what I have accomplished."

Those who know a great deal more about nuclear physics than I do (and I hope most people do) probably are intrigued by the repeating patterns of physical matter. As a parallel, I believe we can also find repeating patterns of behavior in the individual, in small face-to-face groups and which are likewise traceable in large organizations. A useful notion, it seems to me, is to view the mature or effective organization as a self-actualizing organization—an organization that feels the need to contribute something to the world and to the culture in which it operates, so that the organization takes care not only of its own survival needs but also takes care of its safety, its acceptance, its esteem (public image?). It seems to be a reasonable view that a self-actualized organization needs to be staffed with self-actualized people but perhaps also growing self-actualized people depends on operating a self-actualized organization.

So much for proposition 1.

In proposition 2 we stated THE TRAINING JOB IS CHANGING (AND WE TRAINING DIRECTORS HAD BETTER CHANGE TOO). I

hope you will pardon the understatement. Within the memory of most persons currently occupying the position, the training director's role has changed to the point where the resemblance between "Now" and "Then" is something for which we have to search. At one time the trainer was confined to the classroom. Now he does very little classroom teaching. We now find the line manager doing the teaching job more effectively. When from time to time classroom work is called for, the training director secures teachers or trains the manager to train his own employees. A book which I read with great interest as a beginning training director some years ago seems now to be almost a collector's item. In order to help people become trainers, the author outlined humorous little stereotypes of various kinds of teachers. He had such titles as the Teeter Totter, the Key Jangler, the Mush Mouth, the Mind Wanderer, and the Bird Dog. Today, such personal attributes seem to be of diminishing importance to the training director who, while he still certainly is interested in training methods and in effective teaching, spends his time in helping management people avoid these pitfalls. For himself, showmanship is somewhat out of place. Showmanship is giving away to the development on the part of the training director of integrity and wisdom.

I think this proposition can be best supported by a quotation from Carlos Efferson in which he said, "Surely there will be no need for training men to convince managers that their people need development, for this will be one of the major vehicles the good manager will use to run his business more competitively. The manager will not have

to be convinced because he will be carrying on that part of the development of his subordinates which he is in the best position to do. He will not rely on personnel people to define management or to explain the company's management standards; that, he will feel, is what he himself is paid to do. Training men, therefore, will become one of two types of employees; minor technicians who make and flip charts for development-conscious managers; or professionals, so able in the science of human behavior that they will command the respect and counsel of managers who, by today's standards, would themselves be professional."<sup>1</sup>

In proposition 3, we stated THE CHIEF FUNCTION OF TRAINING IS TO EFFECT CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF THE TRAINING DIRECTOR SHOULD BE THAT OF A CHANGE AGENT. Training implies bringing about a change in behavior. Unless such change occurs there is little point in expending effort in training. So, in effect, change is our business. We live in an age of change. I hope most of you have read the excellent article by Jerry Lewis Powell in the proceedings for the 14th Annual Conference of ASTD held in Washington, D. C. In his talk, Mr. Powell dramatically illustrated that we are not only living in an age of change we are living in an age of accelerated change. If all we do in our jobs is look around us, find out what is going on, and say

"me too" we have quite a job on our hands. If we try to keep ahead of the game, then the job becomes even more significant.

Every day we see the introduction of new ideas and new processes. Our employees must adjust to the introduction of these changes. There is no question but what people must somehow be trained in these new processes and procedures. It is the training director's job to facilitate this change.

My fourth proposition should be one that is popular with the readers of the *Journal*. THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRAINING DIRECTOR IS INCREASING AND WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE IN THIS AGE OF CHANGE. In this age of accelerated change, things are moving so rapidly, new ideas are introduced so quickly, processes are changing so dramatically that many people must expend a great deal of time and energy in learning new jobs and in adjusting to them. It is somewhat comforting to realize that in a dynamic and changing organization, "they" just can't live without us (or someone who will do this job of helping employees and organizations keep up with change) but every training director should take careful note of the fact that his organization can live without him and mine can live without me if we or any other individual training director cannot facilitate the change process. Either we must produce or our organizations will have to find someone who can.

1. Efferson, C. A. *Manager-Organization Planning*, Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Corporation, Oakland, California - Charting the course of personnel administration. AMA Management Report No. 24, "The Personnel Function." 1958. "A Progress Report, with a Section on the Problem Employee." pp. 22-30.

TRAINING EFFORTS SHOULD INFLUENCE AND ASSIST IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATION, PHILOSOPHY, AND POLICY. Accomplishment of this is a big, long, hard job. I hear my colleagues repeating and many managers faithfully responding to the litany "The only reason we are in business is to make a profit." And, of course, this simply is not true. In organizations where an effort is made to live up to this and this alone, we have an organization that certainly is not self-actualized and one which is unworthy of survival.

Survival—that is an interesting concept to examine in conjunction with organization objectives and policies. Suppose that a large and influential organization *were* only in business to make a profit, it is conceivable that it could accomplish this objective, it is conceivable that it could reward its stockholders with large dividends. If, however, it operated elbow to elbow with an entire national community of businesses so directed, it is within the realm of grim possibility that an unfriendly foreign power could come in and destroy not only that business but the nation and its people. The question is, would that business have met its real objectives? Or is the firm also obligated to contribute to the strength, the well being, and moral fiber of the culture in which it operates?

There are a number of people in the Department of Internal Revenue who believe the sole objective of that organization is to collect taxes. This is as narrow a view of organization direction as those in private industry who believe the major objective is to make a profit.

In public service, it is necessary to do more than render services or enforce laws. The service must contribute to the well-being of the political entity supporting the service. Lest these words be misunderstood, I realize that making a profit is the important and major purpose of a business. My point is that this purpose permits the organization to perpetuate itself and to grow. But this is no more justification for living than an individual who expends his entire effort in satisfying his physiological needs.

As I think about the next proposition, it seems to me that one of the chief functions of training is to CREATE IN MANAGEMENT AN UNDERSTANDING OF ORGANIZATION AS A SOCIAL SYSTEM. Starting, let us look at our individual, complex, human organism with his many kinds of needs ranging from the physiological up through the self-actualization needs, in a group situation. The same factors seem to prevail. Mr. Robert Gray, who heads the Industrial Relations Section at California Institute of Technology, said in a recent conference, that a good transaction is one from which all participants realize gain. Individuals must fill individual needs to survive. Companies must fill company needs to survive, but we would be unrealistic if we did not recognize that whenever one individual joins a group of other individuals we have opposite needs in action, in other words, we have conflict. Organization can smother these differences and indeed develop "men in gray flannel suits" and "organization men" or it can make effective use of these differences. Contrariwise, organizations can provide jobs

that recognize individual differences, and can take a bold look at the beneficial aspects of conflict. Gordon Hearn of the University of California states what seems to me to be a desirable goal for supervisors and managers when he states that we should try to "permit and encourage all individuals within our groups and organizations to go different directions together."

In our proposition 7, we declared WE SHOULD AIM FOR ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT. This calls for a definition of terms. In speaking of Organization Development, I am speaking of the same kinds of activities that are included in employee development and management development translated to the larger context of organization. Organization Development is a new concept in training. In most individual development, we take a look at what we believe to be the job that the person will be required to do, we evaluate the individual in terms of personal abilities, accomplishment, and potential; we evaluate performance in the light of objectives and we prepare plans for improving such performance. In carrying out these plans we train, we use job rotation, we read, we engage in all kinds of development activities. In other words, we develop criteria for change and then we attempt to bring about change. In Organization Development, the same processes prevail, but are applied to the organization. Here we look at the job the organization is expected to do (objectives). We evaluate the organization in terms of effectiveness, accomplishment, and potential (appraisal). We plan for

improvement and we execute these plans (development). Obviously Organization Development functions are management functions. The training director helps management organize for communication, development, and change with emphasis on human resources management. Training to accomplish this type of development must center on management. Generally, such training starts with the prime decision makers in the organization. Step one is to train these managers to appraise themselves and their organization in a critical but constructive way. Both individual leadership behavior and group behavior is evaluated. This kind of leadership training is designed to train managers to examine their own actions and to sense the impact that these actions have on others within the organization. The next step in Organization Development involves the establishment of the linking-pin concept in which a communications network is formed of interlocking groups up and down the organization hierarchy. Effective training of each successive level in leadership and membership skills is essential to development of an efficient face-to-face communications system. (This is much more comprehensive than traditional conference leadership training.)

Within such a structure, Organization Development can ready an organization for change. The training director makes it possible for training in management principles and practices to occur coincidentally with day-to-day decision making so that the trainer assists managers to develop methods, skills, and attitudes useful in making their own decisions. It makes it possible for managers to acquire skills in listening, and, believe it or not, in talking (learning to express

viewpoints without putting the burden for our actions on others).

A successful Organization Development process makes possible introducing, modifying, and understanding almost any new policy or program. Awareness of the reaction resulting from the introduction of such a program likewise is possible. In individual development, action must follow appraisal and development planning if the desired end is to be achieved. In Organization Development programs, an organization must be

willing to face up to the feedback it receives, to take action upon such information wherever possible (and to let all those affected know whenever action is impossible). This, in brief, is the concept of organization development, in which an organization evaluates itself, sets forth a plan of improvement, and then takes measures to bring this change or improvement about. Organization Development is an area in which the training director can function at his effective best.

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#### COMPARISON OF STEPS IN ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Organizational Development	Management Development
Organization Objectives	Job description and demands
Policies and procedures	Standards
Control and reporting	Inventory of abilities and potentials
Appraisal	Appraisal
Plan for improvement	Plan for improvement
Action steps to improve	Training and development
Evaluation of Organization Development Program	Evaluation of Management Development Program

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THE NEW ROLE OF THE TRAINING DIRECTOR SUGGESTS THAT HE TOO SHOULD STRIVE TO UNDERSTAND HIMSELF, SINCE MUCH OF HIS INFLUENCE MUST PROCEED FROM EXAMPLE. Awful, as this thought is, the Training Director needs to confront himself with his own behavior. This proposition implies, and I believe rightly,

that the Training Director teaches by example; that his own behavior, particularly when he is dealing in this area of change and interpersonal relations, needs to be such that he is discerned by all his colleagues, to be a well-integrated person who possesses great sensitivity and self-awareness. The psychiatrist who is "nuttier than a fruitcake" does not inspire great confidence in his patient, who may

be only mildly neurotic (even though there are legitimate reasons why a mentally disturbed person may be attracted to particular helping fields such as psychiatry, social work, or yes, even training).

In proposition 9, we said, **THE WELL-ROUNDED TRAINING DIRECTOR WILL PROVIDE A WELL-ROUNDED PROGRAM.** He will not sit around looking like a toad. He will not take the easiest course of action, for example, emphasizing human relations courses just because human relations is popular; he will certainly no longer attempt to be the personality kid or the schoolmaster. Rather, he will be a person who is extremely interested in pushing back the frontiers of training and contributing to the results achieved by his organization. He will, as well, be learning continually from his trials and experiments to increase the effectiveness of what he does. Not only will he explore new areas, but he will report them and "share the wealth" with other people in the training field. Even though he will be pushing back these frontiers, he is doing so with caution. He is making sure that he is getting acceptance for these proposals as he goes along. He is not running so far ahead that no one is with him. In addition to pushing back the frontiers of training, the well-rounded training director will also take pains to tenderly cultivate the great heritage of teaching, learning, and train-

ing that comes to him from the past and from experience. He will continue to be interested in skill training, in the common old-fashioned bread-and-butter training, to make sure that each person understands and knows how to do the job to which he is assigned (and who because of this kind of training receives the kind of security he deserves by knowing that he is doing what he has to do effectively and efficiently). So the training director will not subscribe to "either or" philosophies. The training director will embrace a philosophy that integrates "all he knows with all he can learn."

The foregoing propositions provide a frame of reference for examining the activity of a training director. Activities and developments in one training milieu have created the basis for these assumptions. Experience of other training directors may lead them to a quite different set of assumptions and a quite different set of propositions. It is desirable that this should be so, for by looking at our differences, we should be stimulated to further thought and progress.

There is still the matter of proposition 10. It may be the most valid of all. It sounds quite simple but seems to me to be extremely important.

**PROPOSITION 10 — AND WE WILL NEVER EVER GET WHERE WE ARE GOING.**

But we shall accomplish a tremendous amount along the way.

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"There is a very close relationship between good manners and good management."

(Dr. L. W. Wallace)