

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT - TODAY AND TOMORROW

"In a competitive economy, above all, the quality and performance of the managers determine the success of a business, indeed they determine its survival. For the quality and performance of its managers is the only effective advantage an enterprise in a competitive economy can have."

PETER DRUCKER,
"The Practice of Management"

During the past decade, management development has at last received some of the publicity and recognition it has long deserved. ASTD and those who have participated in the function deserve considerable credit. But there's still much work to be done.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT - TODAY

Today management development is a little like apple pie and motherhood. Everyone is for it, and hardly anyone against it. To some degree, it has become another management fad and almost everyone connected with it has jumped on the bandwagon.

Packaged programs of all shapes and sizes are flooding the market. Hardly a day passes without someone announcing seminars, workshops and keynote speakers with some "new" slant or approach to management development. Trade journals carry more and more essays and articles, and the subject is finding its way into an increasing number of textbooks. Consultants, producing organizations and publishers of syndicated materials are all ready to "help" by applying their particular specialty to the problem. Top management continues to authorize the building of impressive training centers, and asks us to provide curricula on management development subjects.

Part of the reason for this "patchwork" approach is due to a lack of in-depth understanding by top management of what effective management development really is and how it can be brought about. As a result, top management often limits our involvement to the specific elements of management development which they choose to delegate to us.

Almost inevitably we have found ourselves increasingly knowledgeable about the methods and media of management development - sensitivity training, business games, simulated models, in-basket case histories, computer-assisted programmed learning and videotaping, to mention but a few of those in vogue

today.

We should, of course, continue to learn all about these approaches, and to apply them professionally as they fit. But - despite the limitations imposed upon us - we should be careful not to confuse fads, methods and the new and exciting media with the *process* which they fractionally represent - the process of total manpower planning and development.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT - TOMORROW

Fortunately, there are signs that many top managements are beginning to hear what Peter Drucker, George S. Odiorne and others like them have been saying for years about "managing for results" and "managing by objectives." Perhaps slowly, but I believe surely, they are beginning to relate the need for precise job definitions and the establishment of specific, co-authored performance standards to the process of developing effective management teams.

Soon top management will recognize the inevitable interrelationships between the *selection* of potential managers, their initial, pre-management *training*, and their continuing *development*. Greater emphasis will be placed on training managers *before* they are made managers. Greater line management involvement will be sought and supported. Ultimately top management will understand that even a completely integrated management development program is but a portion of a continuum much larger than itself - the process of total manpower planning and development.

If we who are now involved in management development activities wish to take fuller advantage of the opportunities which this function offers, perhaps we should explore ways and means whereby we can play an even more active, catalytic and dynamic role in expediting top management acceptance of what management development will be tomorrow.

Suppose, then, that we approach this by

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reviewing the structure of total manpower planning and development to see where management development *itself* fits in.

THE PROCESS OF TOTAL MANPOWER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The process of manpower planning and development, as many of you know, is merely a systematic approach designed to help line management deal continuously and effectively with *all the factors* which affect the performance of *all* personnel — including, of course, managers.

The first thing you will notice as we re-examine the framework of this process is that none of the elements which comprise it are new. In some form or another, most of them already exist in most organizations. What *is* different is the concept of integrating, coordinating and applying these elements so as to create and maintain a more effective, self-energizing and continuously growing organization.

THE STARTING POINT — OBJECTIVES

A company's manpower resources, including managers at all levels, must, of course, exist in relationship to something which is to be achieved. Each manager, each manpower group, each individual must have goals which tie into total corporate objectives.

These goals must be established, communicated and understood by everyone who can do something to help reach them.

Though I realize that staff people may not be responsible for or involved in actually setting goals, it is important that line management understand the importance of consultation with staff people and the need to communicate established goals to them to guide them in their part of the total management development plan.

CORPORATE PLANNING

Objectives tell us where we want to go. But we also need specific *plans* to tell us

how to get there. Here again communication between line and staff is essential.

JOB FUNCTION ANALYSIS

Having our goals and our plans, we should next define and organize the work to be done by everyone — including, of course, the management team.

This may well call for analyzing each job to see whether, as now structured, it fits our goals and plans — and, if not, to modify it accordingly.

MANPOWER INVENTORY AND PLANNING

Now that we have a better idea of what we want our people to do, the next logical step would be to find out how many people we now have who are capable of doing what is required.

This implies an inventory of our people to provide answers to such questions as:

- How *many* managers do we have? How many *should* we have, and by when, to meet our short- and long-range objectives?
- What *kinds* of managers are they? What kinds *should* they be?
- How *good* are they? How good do they need to be — and is it possible to effect that improvement?
- How *much* do they cost us? How much should they cost — including the cost of training them up to agreed-upon standards?

The answers to these and other related questions will not come easily, but they can be gained through a careful and thorough manpower inventory; and they are basic to manpower planning.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Job analysis often begins with a study of what the incumbent is supposed to be doing at the time the analysis is made.

Too many job descriptions are prepared either by the personnel department or by some consulting organization, both often remote from actual operations.

Such descriptions are used primarily for wage and salary administration — which is about all they *can* be used for because they frequently bear little resemblance to what the describee actually does for a living.

There is, therefore, in many organizations a great need for a different kind of a job description — an up-to-date, living document, preferably developed cooperatively by each employee and his immediate superior so that both share the same understanding of what that man is to do, including:

- The overall nature and purposes of his job.
- His reporting and working relationships with other people and departments.
- The specific activities which he is to perform.
- The limits of his authority to act on his own initiative.
- The measures of his accountability to his superiors—in other words, the standards by which his bosses will evaluate his performance.

This type of job description is essential to *real* management development. It represents a blueprint to guide the recruitment, selection, initial training, continuing development, supervision and appraisal of each manager.

JOB PROCEDURES

The job description details *what* a person must know and do — but not *how* it should be done. Thus, a carefully-prepared policy and procedures manual is needed to increase the incumbent's knowledge of his job and help him translate his responsibilities into action.

Such a document has, time and again, proved a lifesaver to newly-appointed managers who did not benefit from management training before being promoted or transferred. As a bonus such a guide often clarifies problems for those who have already been working at the job.

MANPOWER SPECIFICATIONS

As we well know (though often ignore), the specifications for a person who is charged with "getting results *through* others" are far different from those of a person who is actually doing the work himself. In addition, different levels of management often demand different characteristics.

Thus, there is a continuing need to examine not only the *content* of the job, but the *characteristics* which the job holder should have.

If this precaution is taken, management will be in the far sounder position of being able to select managers who really fit a well-defined job, as opposed to the common practice of selecting people on the basis of seniority, experience in an unrelated assignment or personality — and then trying to warp the job to fit the man.

RECRUITING AND SELECTION

Once established, the preceding elements serve to make the task of identifying and recruiting managers (either from within or from outside of the organization) far more scientific and efficient.

If the manpower inventory has been done with care, it should reveal managerial needs well in advance so that selection need not be made on a crash basis.

Without these elements, recruiting too often turns into an emergency, conceived in crisis and born in panic.

ORIENTATION

One of the most critical times in anyone's career is when he steps into a new position, and this is as true of managers as it is of people going to work for the first time.

We know that most of us inherently resist change. A change in thinking, a change in home, a change in job — even when the change is for the better — is likely to be uncomfortable or even painful.

Thus, it is extremely important that,

wherever a man is hired, transferred or promoted, extra effort — planned effort — be made to insure that he will feel that he is welcome, that his superiors and peers are glad to have him there and that he has made the right decision in accepting that position.

It is especially important for the new manager to know how his new responsibilities relate to the goals and plans of the enterprise, and what relationships he is to maintain with the people with and through whom he is to perform his new assignment.

INITIAL MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The single element most often missing or slighted in the rubric of management development is the *training* of managers *before* they are made managers. This deserves stressing because this is the best time we'll *ever* have to insure that this person will operate productively.

We advocate use of the job description as the blueprint for a man's training — an approach which encourages job-oriented training methods and procedures, rather than academic training, oriented toward "subject" areas.

By exposing a manager-to-be to the job description for his next position, we sometimes help him discover for himself that he doesn't really want the job — or that he is not suited to it. If this is destined to be the case, better he should find it out in advance.

In addition, this approach permits us to utilize all three of our basic training methods — on-the-job, self-development and discussion or classroom work — in the most effective combination. This results in a much more tightly-controlled program, which involves line management, and will thus serve, not only as a training ground, but also as a "proving" ground for potential managers. Finally, not only does such an approach help us screen out a potential manager who is pre-destined to fail, but it helps to reduce the errors (and resulting frustration) which almost any newly-appointed manager makes.

SUPERVISION

The concept of manpower planning and development is predicated on the involvement of line management at all levels. In fact, this is probably the key to a truly practical, resultful and self-energizing management development program.

A man's immediate boss automatically has (or should have) the closest relationship with him, and the greatest influence, for better or worse, on his development.

To capitalize on this potentially valuable relationship, top management should be persuaded to initiate four important steps:

1. Incorporate in *every* manager's job description the responsibility for the development of subordinates.
2. Train each manager to discharge this responsibility before he is made a manager.
3. Weigh the skill required to discharge this responsibility in the selection of managerial applicants.
4. Energize and supervise this requirement continuously, not only by dictum, but by example.

Does this reduce the importance of staff in management development? In our opinion, it does *not*. Rather, it *enhances it* by blending the expertise which both line and staff can contribute.

In our opinion, one of the weaknesses with management development programs has been that staff (forced by circumstances) has attempted to do too much and has, as a consequence, accomplished less than would have been achieved had line contributed its share.

Staff has its proper functions: to persuade line management to *accept* its share of the total responsibility for management development; to plan, prepare and help line management assume its responsibilities; and to support line management with methods, tools, facilities and manpower.

INCENTIVES

Incentives are an integral part of any management development activity.

Unfortunately, many people place too much emphasis on extra dollars or fringe benefits. While these *are* important, we must remember that "motivation" is something which comes from within a man, and cannot be "bought" with cash alone.

Every individual is different. Each of us has his own distinctive "hot-buttons" to which he responds in his own way. We also know from experience that one of the best incentives to superior performance is for a man to *feel* that he is in the right job — a job that fits him creatively, emotionally, physically, socially, spiritually and yes, financially, too, because money is still an important factor. When a man feels that his job fits him in these ways, there is no need to "manipulate" him to get him to do his best. He will *want* to do it without artificial stimulants.

All of this, of course, puts a burden, first, on proper selection, second, on initial training, and last, but very important, on the supervision he receives from his immediate superior.

CONTINUING TRAINING

Many management development departments have concentrated their efforts on continuing training. Before exploring it further, however, we'd like to clear up some implications of the term "continuing training." We consider it a misnomer. We contend that you don't "train" a man in a job he has already been doing for some time.

We prefer to use the word "train" somewhat selectively — and use it only in conjunction with the word "new." If there is a "new" person who aspires to be a manager, we can train him. If a manager is to be promoted into a "new" management job, we can train him, too. Or, if there is "new" information which will help a manager do his present job better, we can train him. And in each of these situations, the man will accept the

concept of being "trained." Otherwise, we feel that the word "development," with all that it implies, offers the correct approach.

Unfortunately, however, because of the separation between line and staff, too many management development activities have had to virtually ignore the specifics of a manager's job and concentrate on the academic aspects of managerial responsibility and know-how.

This may be why business has resorted to sending so many managers to the conferences and workshops offered by universities, associations, and consulting organizations, or has conducted its own in-house seminars featuring scholarly subjects such as "Decision Making," "Managerial Styles," "Human Relations," "Motivation and Leadership" and the like.

Many of these activities prove fruitful despite the fact that they are often too general to fit the specific needs of the participants, and that, as a rule, there is little if any acceptance by the manager's superiors, and therefore even less support and follow-through.

In the main, however, this "patchwork" has not proved overly rewarding, not because some of the "pieces" weren't useful, but because they had not been designed as an integral part of the total concept of management development.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

This brings us to what is often called "performance review," although we prefer to call it "performance planning." To us, the word "review" implies emphasis on the past (which is more often than not fruitless), while "planning" implies emphasis on the future, which seems a more constructive approach.

In our concept, performance planning involves each manager sitting down with each of the managers who report to him, and working out (using the job description as a guide) *precise* targets for that person's continuing improvement and development, together with *precise* methods and schedules for reaching those targets.

Through involvement in this activity the management development department can receive inputs from line management about the areas in which the managers can develop their people individually, and the areas which require programs of group exposure and interaction.

Thus, performance *review* might be considered the end of a process: it tells us how well our managers have been doing. Performance *planning* might be regarded as the beginning, since it tells us where we go from here with the development of our people.

From a top management point of view, this concept has an added benefit: properly organized, it provides continuous feedback on the state of the company's manpower resources. With this kind of feedback, management can recruit, select, train and develop the necessary number of people, and move forward in an orderly and intelligent fashion.

ESTABLISHING THE FRAMEWORK

As stated earlier, all or most of the elements of the manpower planning and development process already exist in many of our country's professionally-managed companies. They are not new.

But — are they being administered with continuity and balance? Are they being done with adequate understanding of the interrelationship of these elements? Are they being done with centralized and enlightened leadership and direction? And *who* is responsible for providing that guidance? Answers to these questions must be resolved.

TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

We have left for last the element which must really come first.

The process of manpower development is, in reality, a way of life which, once it has been soundly established, will continue of its own momentum. Yet, it will never get off the ground until and unless top corporate management recognizes it at all times as a major corporate function.

Management development is, in turn, dependent upon the recognition that top management gives to the system or concept of which it is such an important sub-structure.

If you agree with the premises we have tried to establish, and if your organization *has* a system which permits you to perform as we have suggested, your major task is to apply sound judgment and techniques within the limits of your job.

If, however, *you* agree, and yet your organization does not have a compatible system, then you have a selling job on your hands.

Now we are talking about change and, as we have suggested, change comes hard for people – and even more so for organizations.

You have several choices:

- You can maintain the status quo and mark time until the climate is better.
- You can work to improve results

within your existing limitations.

- You can seek some other organization which is already endorsing the management development thinking of *tomorrow*.
- Or you can help plan an activity which will permit you to perform as you think you should.

If you choose the latter alternative, you might have to seek and find the people in your organization, who share your convictions, and who are willing to help you sell top management on an approach which will enhance your company's opportunity for growth.

You have plenty of authoritative support – men like Peter Drucker, George Odiorne, Rensis Rickert, the late Douglas MacGregor, Robert McMurry. Name your own expert. You'll find, as we have indicated, that they are all preaching the doctrines of managing for results and managing by objectives. You'll find that they are all urging the development of more precise and useful job defini-

tions and job standards as the means for achieving objectives.

No, this concept is not new or revolutionary. But it *is* a concept whose completely integrated application is still foreign to many organizations. As such, it represents a tremendous opportunity for any member of a management development group.

If your own organization does not now benefit from this approach, we suggest you sell it, then test it – even in a small way – perhaps in just one department or division. Then, when you can show concrete results, expand it until it becomes a way of life throughout your organization.

Then you will have helped to establish the management development function of tomorrow within your own organization. Then you will have helped to insure for your company the continuously improving competitive thrust needed to survive and grow in our increasingly competitive economy.

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