

# MEETING TODAY'S DESIGN CHALLENGE

BY LINDA  
NOVOTNEY-KEMP

In the August 1978 issue of the *Training and Development Journal*, Herbert Gabora wrote:

*"It is critical that management training professionals question their strategies and re-examine their methodologies to provide products and services with a visible payoff."*

At the 1978 ASTD National Conference in Chicago, a similar challenge was presented by Norman Hill in his session, "New Concepts in Manager Development." In his presentation, Hill outlined major pitfalls in some management development programs. These included programs that:

1. Teach *about* management instead of what, why and how to manage.
2. Fail to establish a need for change.
3. Do not represent an explicit managerial philosophy.
4. Take a shotgun approach to development.
5. Don't bridge the gap between classroom and workplace.

These kinds of pitfalls have served as stimuli (for people like Gabora and Hill) to challenge management developers today.

The challenge to question strategies, methodologies and program design was met head on several months ago in Detroit at the J.L. Hudson Co.

Hudson's is a major department store chain in the midwest with a sales volume of over \$½ billion. In an attempt to update, integrate and redesign an already existing management training program, an end product emerged that has been highly acclaimed within the company as practical and relevant to the job. Analyzing the reason for the program's success, it became apparent that the success is largely due to the fact that those recommendations that have been spelled out and published by such authorities as Gabora and Hill have worked in Hudson's newly redesigned management seminar (S.O.S.).

Norman Hill, Herbert Gabora and Hudson's S.O.S. program all share some very common goals and

philosophies.

Gabora's strategies and tactics include:

- integration of management development with corporate objectives
- linking management development with an internal consulting service
- questioning the training plan
- plan program interfacing
- use of realistic learning activities
- involving the boss
- limiting participation
- providing reinforcement
- finding out if it works

Norman Hill detailed principles of adult development to use as criteria in program design. These criteria are:

- people are more likely to believe their own experiences rather than someone else's.
- people learn better from colleagues than they do from experts who are unfamiliar to them.
- people want to know *why*, before they will be interested in *how to*.
- people learn the most when they are able to reinterpret past

experiences, assisted by new knowledge, in a setting that rewards innovation.

- the reinterpretation of past experiences is most likely to occur when a person has the chance to see the consequences of a solution he/she has come up with to a *real* problem in *real* time in the *real* world.

- the reflective examination of experience is a necessary ingredient in the learning process.

Norman Hill's criteria and Herbert Gabora's strategies served as a well-defined measuring device for Hudson's S.O.S. program and reinforced the direction, design, content, approach and underlying beliefs that permeate that program.

#### Why Hudson's Program Exists

In the following paragraphs I will describe why Hudson's program exists; how it was redesigned and what it is now; some unique features of the program; current feedback from the organization and recommendations for further improvements.

The Management and Organizational Development Department was established as a separate department from its counterpart, Corporate Training, for the purpose of designing and implementing manager development systems that were to be identified as needs based on performance analysis throughout the company. Because such systems are not highly visible initially, something was needed to let the company know that this new department existed. A program was designed for this purpose called *Supervisory Orientation Seminar: S.O.S.* Besides serving as an exposure tool, S.O.S. also addressed the need to provide new supervisors with the basic skills of supervision. A year and a half, and several S.O.S. sessions later, the Management Development Department had completely changed hands. Continued requests were made of the new staff to conduct more S.O.S. seminars. The new staff, in an attempt to familiarize themselves with the program, found it appropriate to reexamine why it existed and to define its purpose.

An analysis was conducted to:

1. identify the target population
2. describe current and future organizational needs and
3. specify objectives of the program

Based on the results of the analysis and research on those current management principles that are relevant to today's managers, a newly designed S.O.S. emerged. Since the acronym was known in the company, the title was simply changed to read: *Seminar on Supervision*. The redesign of the program was shaped around two basic beliefs: (1) Trainees are adult learners, therefore they have a wealth of valid learnings from their life's experience, can learn from and teach each other, want to learn because they have identified the need to know, and want practical skills and techniques to use in their own setting that will increase their effectiveness as supervisors and managers; and (2) Attitudes take a lot longer to change than behaviors.

As a seminar-workshop leader, one can provide the participant with an environment where new concepts or theories are presented, followed by experiential learning and/or application sessions that will teach and provide practice of how to behave differently. Simply put, it is easier to change behaviors than attitudes. This underlying philosophy led to the following approach:

Make the session:

- Practical - minimizing theory
- Experiential - minimizing lecture technique
- Workshop environment - extinguishing the passive listening role
- Current management principles - deleting "the same old stuff."

#### Program Content Design

This approach based upon the analysis and research which was conducted, led to the following three day S.O.S. program-content design (page 44):

Videotapes and films from Chrysler Learning

## NOW...TAP THE SOURCE OF THE ASTONISHING SUCCESS OF JAPANESE BUSINESS...



Prof. Bill Ouchi, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University

What is the secret that has made Japan the second greatest commercial power in the world? What message is there in this success that can help you?

Dr. Ouchi reveals the Japanese management style, why productivity is so high in Japan, why workers have such a great sense of responsibility for what they

produce. And he explains why the American management style is also successful, though it operates in a completely different way.

Can you combine the best of both worlds? Dr. Ouchi explains it has been done in the new Type Z Management Style, now available for the first time in a 95-minute tape or film presentation.

Order today. Whether you're a company president, a manager, a trainer, a professor or student, Dr. Ouchi has a message you will think about, talk about, and very likely act upon!



### Send me the Z Management Program

- Videotape, 3/4" cassette or  Film, 16 mm.  
 Purchase: \$875     Preview: \$75, 28 minutes.  
Specify tape or film.

Please order using your organization letterhead. Include your name and title. Make check payable to Chrysler Learning, Inc., and include state or local taxes or customs tariff. Send to Type Z Management, Chrysler Learning, Inc., 7650 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48202. Telephone (313) 876-9711.

Circle No. 132 on Reader Service Card





**PI and DI may  
be Greek to you  
but they're  
workshops  
to us. . . . .**

## **Programmed Instruction Workshop**

5 days for trainers who must  
prepare self-paced instructional  
materials.

Feb. 19-23  
Apr. 23-27  
June 4-8

## **Designing Instruction Workshop**

5 days for trainers who must  
research, develop, and imple-  
ment cost-effective training  
programs.

Jan. 29-Feb. 2  
Mar. 26-30  
May 14-18

For details:

FKA, P.O. BOX 11005  
OTTAWA, ONTARIO K2H 7T8  
(613) 829-3412



**FRIESEN, KAYE & ASSOCIATES**  
"Specialists in training the trainer"

Circle No. 144 on Reader Service Card

### **DAY 1 - a.m.**

#### **Welcome and Introduction**

- Specific expectations of the seminar defined by participants

#### **Situational Leadership**

- Film: "Situational Leadership" (Learning Resources Corp.)
- How to assess appropriate leadership styles based on the situation and subordinate/group
- Lecturette on what and why of Situational Leadership

### **DAY 1 - p.m.**

#### **Permutations**

- A "hands-on" simulation using Tinkertoys, which emphasizes giving clear-specific directions, providing effective feedback, use of positive reinforcement resulting in high productivity and how management actions influence performance. (Creative Universal)

### **DAY 2 - a.m.**

#### **Performance Analysis/ Problem-Solving**

- Film: "Business, Behaviorism, and the Bottom Line" (McGraw-Hill)
- How to analyze performance problems
- Application session based on real-world problems

### **DAY 2 - p.m.**

#### **Communication Module**

- Film: "Non-Verbal Agenda" (McGraw-Hill)
- Video: "You are What You Were When" (magnetic video)
- Problem-solving with subordinates
- Role-plays and actual case studies

### **DAY 3 - a.m.**

#### **Meetings**

- How to plan efficient and effective meetings
- Practice session

#### **Orientation of New Employees**

- Film: "Welcome Aboard" (Roundtable)
- Design your own Department Orientation System

### **DAY 3 - p.m.**

#### **Stress Management**

- "Understanding Stress" sound/slide presentation by Greater S.E. Community Hospital Foundation, Inc. (1976)

### **Time Management**

- Film: "Time of Your Life" (Cally Curtis)

#### **Evaluation (Written and Oral)**

#### **Cocktail Hour with Top Management**

Besides the program content and approach, other unique features contribute to the program's success. These are:

- *Client-Centered Training:* At Hudson's, training is designed and implemented based on "client" request. For example, a decree does not come out from Personnel that all managers must go through a designated program. Rather, a client organization, such as the Stores, Financial Operations or Merchandising, make a request of Management Development, which then responds by conducting an analysis and developing a proposal. Once the client agrees, the appropriate action is designed and implemented.

- *A systems approach to training:* S.O.S.'s philosophy is reinforced by other training efforts taking place in the company. The training trend at Hudson's focuses on performance improvement based on positive reinforcement; feedback systems; application of models and systems to solve problems.

- *Modular format:* S.O.S. is the nucleus for several follow-up modules that are available once a participant has completed the basic course. The three-day program touches on several topic areas, each of which can be expanded into a one or two-day follow-up workshop.

- *Company Goals and Objectives are understood by Management Development Staff:* The Management Development Department is involved in assisting and reviewing management performance plans and goals, therefore the session leaders are in tune with the participants' concerns regarding company business and policy.

- *Management Consultant Rule:* Those running the seminars are not career trainers, but rather have been sought out as counselors after the sessions. They are involved in the design and imple-

"Looking critically at how and why a program is designed is the major step in the right direction of producing programs that hopefully will gross a return on investment, along with gaining department credibility, client respect and participant approval and ownership."

mentation of other management systems in the organization, and the manpower planning effort.

#### Program Merits and Flaws

Since the S.O.S. program was reinstated in April, 1978, 10 sessions have been conducted for approximately 160 management-level people (16 per class) at Hudson's. This includes first and middle-line managers from several of Hudson's 15 stores, the Financial Operations and Planning Area, Food Management and Personnel. The practicality of the sessions has established such credibility within the organization that plans are underway to make the program available to all supervisory level employees throughout the entire company.

It is both reinforcing and encouraging to note that all of Hudson's unique features addressed some aspect of Herbert Gabora's tactics that were stated earlier in this article. Likewise, the redesigned S.O.S. program embodies all of Norman Hill's design strategies for Management Development Programs. Using their criteria for the development of Management Training Programs, Hudson's S.O.S. program measures up 100 per cent. In three short days of enthusiastic learning situations, supervisors and managers are exposed to current management development theories and practical techniques and skills to apply on the job that will result in a more effective style of management.

Though the program has its merits, it is not without flaws. Further development and attention needs to be given to the following areas:

- Continue to evaluate the program by developing a more systematic measure of behavior change "back on the job."

- Institute a plan to develop ad-

ditional people in the organization to conduct the session.

There are, of course, other facets of the program itself to continually re-evaluate and change, just as there are other valuable pieces of the program to elaborate on; but in summary, Hudson's Management Development Department has met a challenge that every large corporation is faced with today. Looking critically at how and why a program is designed is the major step in the right direction of producing programs that hopefully will gross a return on investment, along with gaining department credibility, client respect and participant ap-

proval and ownership.

#### REFERENCES

1. Gabora, Herbert, "Making Management Development Pay Off," *Training and Development Journal*, August 1978, pages 64-67.
2. Hill, Norman, ASTD National Conference, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1978, Session 25: "New Concepts in Manager Development."

Linda Novotney-Kemp has been with Hudson's for over three years. She was recently promoted from the Management Development Department to her current position: manager, Corporate Training. Ms. Novotney-Kemp has her Masters Degree in Behavioral Psychology from Wayne State University in Detroit.

## PMA'S "Fundamentals of Supervision" Series

3 Courses in Audio-Cassette/Workbook Format

- ... a complete curriculum on the basics of Supervision
- ... available in full courses or individual modules
- ... each module contains boss-integrated assignments to assure follow-up and application

↓  
↓  
**SUPERVISORY SKILLS** Course (8 2-hour modules)

↓  
**FACE-to-FACE HUMAN RELATIONS & COMMUNICATION**  
Course (10 2-hour modules)

↓  
**ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE OF SUPERVISORS**  
Course (10 2-hour modules)

*(Completion of all three leads toward a "Diplomate in Supervision")*

DESIGNED FOR:

—**SELF STUDY** (One Supervisor at a time) . . . instantaneous help for new Supervisors who might otherwise wait months for their first class.

—**GROUP STUDY** (Moderated by a non-Trainer) . . . reach outlying sites your professional staff can't cover economically.

—**INSTRUCTED CLASSES** (Live presentation by your trainers)

For details call or write to one of our offices closest to you:  
**Corporate Office**

**PMA Practical Management Associates Inc.**  
P.O. Box 751 Woodland Hills, CA 91365

OR Canadian Branch: 3461 Dixie Rd., Suite 306, Mississauga, Ont. L4Y 2L8 (416) 625-3468

Regional Branch: 1813 Reynolds Dr., Charleston, IL 61920 (217) 345-7302

Regional Office: 8221 Rensselaer Way, Sacramento, CA 95826 (916) 383-7907

Circle No. 137 on Reader Service Card