New Horizons For Training Directors*

Or, You've Got To Know More Than the Dog

ROBERT T. LIVINGSTON

I personally have a gripe against training in general and training directors in particular. Because no matter what you call yourselves, you ought to be ashamed of permitting yourselves to be restricted to training. We train animals; we give babies toilet training, but actually only a small proportion of what you are doing or ought to be doing is training. No, you are or should be doing a number of things related to training, it is true, but not so limited and far more important.

What I am making a plea for is for you to forget your patron saint, Ichabod Crane; forget the limitations that the word "training" places upon your imagination and your preferment. Sure, training is important, so too is the janitor or the garbage collector. I say you have potentially one of the most important jobs in your company and what are you doing about it? Actually, I suppose that you are selling your customer—Manage-

ment, that is—what it will buy. Almost any company believes that a "training job" should be done on its employees—to this is usually added a few pious clichés. As I see your job, it is a fourfold one:

1. Training
2. Education
3. Developing
4. Intercommunication

It is the last of these which I wish to emphasize, but perhaps because semantics always rears its ugly head and because each of these, as I see it, is part of an important total function which is not usually perceived and seldom understood, I had better cover the others as I see them.

Training

Training means the learning of certain skills and abilities and growth of certain, perhaps minimum, proficiency

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in their use. It is specific and directed toward the requirements of certain jobs. It is the development of a mechanical ability. Even the ability to program a computor, paint a picture, write a book, or for that matter, manage, requires certain mechanical abilities, and in these a person can be trained to perform as adequately as his physical, mental, and psychological abilities will permit.

In distinguishing between education and training, it is important to realize that a person *can* be trained with little or no education but the level of education provides an ecology, a climate for understanding. However, in the basic sense, training does not demand education.

Everybody needs training and this goes all the way up to the top man in your company: — he should get training in interpersonal relations. You may find it hard to persuade him to take it. Whether you publicly admit it or not, I know that you know your own boss and doubtless others right up to the top would be much more effective if they had a little more understanding and appreciation of you and your job — if they had a little more finesse and skill in human interrelations. I know that basically you agree with me and so I want to widen your horizons and perhaps it will help you sell the brass the real job that you ought to be doing.

Education

Education means the exposure to and the acquiring of familiarity with and understanding of specified areas of human knowledge, experience and beliefs. The importance of education lies in the broadening of horizons, and the deepening of the appreciation of life in general or more obviously by definite

areas. Education is a determinant of the kind and amount of training required but most especially of the effective means available to use in training.

Education is related to the ability to comprehend, the instructions among other things, and is not directly related to a given task. It is a part of the natural process of growth. We learn other things than conditioned responses and skills. Education permits one to understand more things and form more viewpoints and perhaps most important, it expands one's sense of values.

Training is a recognized responsibility of any management but not so education. It can be argued, if it is assumed that education is learning facts, that some forms of education are a company responsibility. A course in, "Know Your Company," for example, is good on the assumption that if a person knows "Why," he will understand as well as know "How." I believe that knowing "why" is the key to being effective at every level from the worker's bench to the president's desk. The "why" at these different levels is of course different. This is the important thing that a person learns—sometimes with surprise—when he moves from level to level in an organization. Fundamentally, however, it is the same problem — an understanding of the special world in which a person lives and of the values he lives by. This is a justification for you to get into the field of education as distinguished from training.

Education's new set of values leads in many cases to a certain degree of discontent. It may be constructive discontent and can be channeled in two directions. One, making the training more effective, is done by the training department by

adapting the program to the educational level of the person being trained. But it is also used by the individual himself, for education can not only make him discontented but can make him sufficiently aware of the limitations he has set to his own progress, that he not only may be willing but anxious to be trained.

Development

Development is growth — growth in any dimension, but basically and properly we are concerned with the development of effective human beings. The word effective is the key as it applies to the situation as well as to the person. Development is something that a person does, it is not done to him. Where then does this come into a company program? It comes in two ways.

Development involves a change of behavior, not just a change of situation, audience or opportunity. True, all of these occur but because they do occur does not mean that there has been development. It would seem there is a four-dimensional aspect:
a. Change of horizons and perspective — thus more things are seen in relation to one another
b. A change of understanding, an appreciation that there are different sets of knowledge, appreciation, and understanding besides one's own
c. A change of value appreciation, a realization that the values of other people are to them as rational as ours to us
d. A greater acceptance of responsibility with a corresponding decrease of dependence. More freedom on the one hand from fears, greater readiness to stick one's neck out and accept the consequences

These are all things that a person has to accept unto himself and these acceptances do change his behavior and his overt personality.

It is a *social* responsibility of our modern corporation to provide the opportunity for a person to develop into an effective human being, but it is not the company's responsibility to provide unlimited opportunity. This has wide and deep significance as it means that the job itself must be designed so that the person may be effective in that job. A well designed training program may very well alter existing jobs.

It is the responsibility of the modern corporation *to itself* to develop managers as requisite at every level and this is a different matter from the first. The company must provide incentives and, if necessary, instill sufficient discontent so that people will strive to develop themselves to have the abilities and competencies to be effective in jobs other than their present ones. Thus, we see two apparently conflicting problems:
a. providing the means whereby each individual has the opportunity to develop into an effective individual where he now *is*
b. provide the means whereby some (not all) individuals may develop for larger or different responsibilities

These are different and there are some important problems in the incentives and stimuli to be applied and to whom and by whom. There is also the problem of those to whom these stimuli are not applied.

To consider development intelligently, it is important to ask the question, "Development for what?" Just as in rating programs when answering the question, "Promotable?" it is wise to consider:

"Promotable to where?" Development has to do with movement up within the company as well as development of the effective human being.

It is useful to consider a company as a sort of stepped pyramid, in which there are (at least) three distinct levels of behavioral change:

1. From direct supervision to the top of operative management.
2. Somewhere within middle management, where the individual moves from being a technician or a specialist to really becoming a manager — many never do.
3. The step from middle to top management when the individual assumes complete responsibility, with all that that implies.

There is a fourth step, the movement to principal executive, but this is so completely an individual matter and the situation by which the position is attained is so unique that this will not be discussed. The three steps require recognizably different behavioral changes:

1. The first step requires learning how to happily delegate physical accomplishment, to accept different ways of doing things, to have confidence in subordinates' technical ability.
2. The second step requires learning to plan in time, to evaluate men's potentials and to assign unspecifiable responsibilities for unforeseen contingencies and the ability to adjust to other equal and at times competing personalities and finally the recognition that the company's personality is dominant.
3. The third step requires the development of confidence in the honesty and intellectual, as well as technical,

competence of associates in fields in which you are uninformed, of the ability to see the consequences beyond the results, the patience to permit subordinates to make what appear to be errors and to assume the responsibility for such errors and finally the self-confidence to make ultimate judgments and to see them through with the recognition that there are times when retreat may be the best road to victory, in a word, to learn the true meaning of compromise.

Finally, there is the courage that flows from confidence. The courage to play the hand through to the end and if necessary to lay your cards face up on the table in assurance that what you have delegated will fill to a strong, even though not necessarily, the winning hand.

A moment's thought will show that one of the important elements is delegation. There is the old truism that "no matter what you delegate, you still remain responsible." Of course, this is true, but it isn't so categorical as it sounds. Delegation cannot be understood without also understanding the meaning of control. On these three steps, while there is delegation, the control changes.

Step one — There is complete control and little anticipated second degree delegation, and substantially zero time displacement. There is also anticipated detailed reporting, the reporting may be the communication which comes from job completion.

Step two — Control is incomplete. Second degree delegation is anticipated, consideration, corrective action and

time displacement are implicit. However, goals, resource use and time duration are specified as is required reporting.

Step three — is largely delegation without corrective control. Goals are largely general, resource use and time duration are judged not specified and reporting is usually only on request in the case of emergency or innovation in general terms.

Obviously, the path to making these behavioral changes is not identical. It follows that three necessary areas of manager development and the techniques used in each area cannot be the same. The first and third levels are generally recognized and there are means available for handling them. The second is seldom considered, or if considered, is not considered apart from the other two.

Basic Theses

My most basic thesis is that:

The training department should expand its horizons and its usefulness. Among the mechanisms by which this can be done, the most potentially fruitful, the most obvious, and the most important is to *PROVIDE THE MEANS FOR ADEQUATE INTERCOMMUNICATION WITHIN YOUR COMPANY.*

I shall discuss the necessity and importance of an intercommunication program, but first I think it important to lay some basic fundamentals and what such an expansion of your horizons and domains must mean to you. Let me return to the original sub-title:

"You've Got to Know More than the Dog"

You've got to *know.* As the agricultural expert said to the farmer — "I don't have to be able to lay eggs in order to tell you how you can make your hens lay more and better eggs." There is a world of difference between being able to do and knowing how to do and especially how to do better. As a matter of fact, you as trainers have learned that some of your best operators don't know how they do what they do do so well or if they do know they can't communicate it to someone else.

So my first point is that:

You've got to *know* how to do as distinct from being *able* to do.

My second point is based on two ideas:

    a. There is a reason for everything if you can but find it

    b. There is no one best way

which leads to the statement

If you know *why,* the know *how* is much easier.

But that raises the third point which is Know how to intercommunicate.

My basic concept is:

1. The more the subordinate can do, the better.

2. The more the subordinate knows the objectives (goals, restrictions, etc.), the better.

3. The more the subordinate *understands,* the better.

4. The more the subordinate does not disagree, the better.
    I don't mean keep quiet
    I don't mean slavish acceptance

5. The more the subordinate is personally involved with the group success, the better

6. The more the success of the group is dependent upon the success of the organization and vice versa, the better

and finally

7. The more the person who is training knows about training, the better.

An Intercommunication Program

Practical Justification

While the end result of a good intercommunication program is the improvement of the performance of the whole company, it can seldom be introduced as a whole at one time. This is not only because of the problem of selling management upon the necessity and the specific program but also because it represents a change of behavior of the whole company, it is difficult to gain understanding and acceptance all down the line. It must be justified first in terms of improvement in existing programs, the training program, among others. And then it can be extended.

The Basic Problem

Performance of a task depends upon the abilities of the person assigned to the task and better performance is possible if these abilities are developed and the task organized for most effective use of the individual's ability. Two aspects are apparent:

1. development of the individual's ability

2. organization of the task

Generally, the task is organized assuming certain generalized skills of the operator with a certain amount of individual training to perform a certain operation. The directions and orders given select the particular skills to be applied to the particular job. It is characteristic today, as distinguished from (say) fifty years ago, that the tool or process is *given* the individual who is selected and trained to service the tool.

This is probably a satisfactory method for routine and repetitive tasks, but it does not allow any psychological or creative satisfaction for the worker. Let us look beyond this and think about the performance of tasks which, while routine, are not identical and where the operator puts some of himself into the operation.

The operation is specified as to outcome, but the factors are not completely under the management's control. Problems or operations can only be screened through the operator; among the choices are the sequence of the applications of the skills that he has available, and this will depend upon the particular characteristics of the job that he is doing.

To some extent, problems can be foreseen and the operator can be trained to recognize situation "X," and from the "N" procedures in which he has been trained he can select particular procedures or skill applications to handle situation "X."

So let's start with the first two elements required:

1. Skill development

2. Cue (or situation) recognition

No matter how well the former is done, the second is equally important, but often overlooked because it is not considered a "training problem."

Let us assume that both of these are handled adequately. What is the end product? A group of operators who will

perform adequately as long as they are scheduled, programmed, the materials are available and the equipment is satisfactory.

Such a situation requires close supervision and all production responsibility is on the shoulders of supervision. This does not make adequate use of our great resource — the mind and the imagination of man. Also, men will be uninterested and they will find something to occupy themselves with, probably not company directed.

It is important that the operator have knowledge not only about his job but what it means and where it fits in. At a minimum and a starting point, every job should be related to other jobs that come before and after.

We may therefore add a third basic element of training:

3. Physical job relation comprehension

Ability and understanding of the job are not enough to assure good, let alone outstanding, performance. Performance is what a person does, not what he ought to do, can do, or what management wants him to do. Performance is what the operator contributes from himself and he does what *he* wants to do. It is the function of the company to provide the climate that the operators, at any level, will want to perform. I suggest that this is a basic element of good training. I will call it:

4. Craftmanship motivation

I find very few training programs maturely consider this, but it is the basic element that makes the training more effective.

Important though these four items are, even though done well, there is no guarantee that the total company job will be done well. Even if you have a good operating or production department, it is more by chance than design. Why? What do I mean and what to do about it?

The last item is motivation and is very complex. It depends upon several things.

Performance depends upon

a. competence

b. attitude — willingness

c. motivation — drive

Training directors have limited the future of training and their own growth and development by thinking training is confined to teaching competence. Actually, you can't teach anybody very much except a few simple responses. They have to learn. What you should think about is not so much *how* people learn as *why* people learn.

Attitude and motivation are as important as competence. What can training do about attitude and motivation? You have to create a situation in which a person wants to learn and produce and this can only be done successfully through a program of

Intercommunication

For years, there has been a plethora of articles about communication — "How to get your message to workers," but there is another point: "Is anybody listening?" and finally, "What real opportunity did he have to talk?" A lot of time and money has been spent on communication but little thought in intercommunication. After the recruitment and hiring, is there another opportunity for intercommunication? Sure, several mediums are used.

Suggestion Systems and Bulletin Boards

Formal Meetings of employees at various levels when they are talked at and a few carefully planted questions are asked.

Talks of superiors with subordinates as a part of the evaluation and rating procedure.

And others, but *this* is not intercommunication — there is no opportunity for the free exchange of ideas and for a person to get answers to what's bothering him. It is a great loss to the management and to the operators — all the way up. A training program provides an opportunity, perhaps the only opportunity, to establish a real program of intercommunication.

An Intercommunication Program

In Theory and Future

In any biological entity, certain functions have to be performed in order for the entity and indeed the species to persist. In any group of biological entities whose form is social life, there is a function known as socialization and that function includes training but it also includes a lot more. It is with that total function that you should be concerned. Thus function consists of adjusting or helping the members of the group to adjust to the needs, customs, and mores of the group. The entity has to live in a world and communicate with the world. The association persists, the individuals do not, hence people have to grow within the association and have to be replaced. Finally, to act effectively, an association has to communicate internally so that the individuals know what the company is, thinks and thinks it is. Similarly, the company, as repre-

sented by management, should know what the members think. This last function is not handled adequately.

Present employee communication is a one-way street. It has previously been said that people are not taught (much) but they can learn. People learn easily or with difficulty, willingly if at all, and most importantly, only what they want to learn. In any learning situation three aspects can be considered:

1. the climate or ecology
2. the situation
3. the technique

By and large we have confined our consideration to the latter with at best a casual and superficial consideration of the first two. Strange as it may seem, given the right first two, almost any technique will be successful. The first two basically result from top management's action, although the training department implements them and can greatly affect them both, especially situation. Learning is not a one-way process and the fact that the person learning must, psychologically must, give as well as take provides a great opportunity to change a training program into an intercommunication program.

It is important for the management to intercommunicate with the people who have to do the work of the company. It is important for several reasons, among the most obvious are:

to communicate the desired image of the company

to understand the minds, collective and individual, of the people.

One of the most important, but least suspected, functions of a training department is to create and maintain what is coming to be called the "Corporate

Image." Whether realized or not, every company exists in several dimensions.

1. As top management sees it
2. As various employees see it
3. As customers see it
4. As the public sees it
5. As it is

These images may be very different. None will be completely representative. This is true for two reasons:

1. Any company is a complex, does many different things, and to some extent it never *is* but is always becoming
2. Any image of a company exists in the mind of a person and that image is determined by
   a. The experience of the person, or an accepted witness, with that company
   b. The general social stereotype of that particular kind of company
   c. The specific image created by the effort of the company for that purpose.

The importance of the first point is that every company is not only in a process of change but also of necessity must mean different things to different people and it is therefore important to start with an attempt to discover how this complex which is the company impacts on the various groups.

There is little of immediacy that a given company can do about a stereotype. Thus, a bank is a bank; a railroad is a railroad; a supermarket is a supermarket, and this remains the frame of reference or comparison, reasonably fixed or, if it changes, it changes but slowly. A person seldom sees a company as an isolated entity but rather as an image compared with a stereotype.

The first class of image is very much within the company's competence to affect, but it is the hard way. One would like to have the customer have a good image of the company, but the only reasonably sure way is to have the product satisfy the customer's expectations.

Most companies feel that they not only should have but have a right to the employees' loyalty. Loyalty, like most things in life, has to be paid for, and few employees will remain loyal, nor executives for that matter, if the treatment they receive is not what the reported image says. So too with the stockholder, the supplier of materials and services. Thus the "basis of any program to improve the corporate image is to have good corporate performance" and it is not sufficient to judge the goodness of performance by what the officers think, it must be considered in basic terms and discovered by questionnaire or interviews.

It does not of necessity follow that good performance guarantees an equally good image. It isn't enough to do a thing, the public must not only know that you do it, but also know that what you do has that "little difference" in performance which makes the big difference in image — much as it is the little differences between men and women that often make the big differences.

Closing

What I am asking you to consider, to study and then do, is not an easy job. It is not easy for a variety of reasons.

1. The actual doing if badly done, can cause real troubles
2. It is difficult to sell management in part because it means that the train-

ing department not only rises in stature but it permeates the whole organization

The training department should permeate the whole organization in a similar though not identical manner to the way the accounting department enters all aspects of the organization. Training differs from accounting in two important ways.

1. The accounting function is a recognized externally-imposed function. Training is a derived internal function.

2. The accounting function is a continuous function. Training, even as I suggest it, is intermittent.

Accounting does not have to justify its existence, and while an economy wave may cause the department to pull in its belt, it is never suggested that the function be done away with or its basic function curtailed.

I have suggested several new or expanded activities. Among these are:

Job Study

The training department is expected to train. It must know *why* as well as *how* in order to train. Certain basic principles are usually considered under work-simplification. Certain other techniques are available by which paper work is decreased and the transmission of information is in the form of cues rather than orders and directions. These are generally considered to be Industrial Engineering. Even if Industrial Engineering or its equivalent are not attached to the training department there should be a close connection and the Training Director should be well informed in the field.

Education and Development

It is generally considered that both Education and Development are the responsibility of the individual. I have tried to persuade you that education is intimately related to training. In a similar manner while development is basically the responsibility of the very top executive, he of necessity delegates to each man within that man's domain the responsibility to develop subordinates and he in turn delegates. Development is related to selection and recruitment and hence is tied into the general personnel or employee relation department of which training is a part.

However, there are routines which must be carried out and if for no other reason than general centralization of similar activities, the training department has a real function at this point. I shan't attempt to spell out the details of this because each industry and company is sufficiently unique so that it is dangerous to deal with except in generalities.

Intercommunication

However, the training department is the only department whose contact is a a recognized non-line or production contact. The operators have a different attitude toward the training department than any other; there is generally an attitude of receptivity without any fear of direct retaliation. In a word, there is present the climate in which intercommunication can be best established. Policy, management attitudes and images can be transmitted and it is possible though not easy to build up eventually that upward flow of information that all managements say they want and so seldom do anything creative about.