

Management Ideas



FOR STILL BETTER

RESULTS

RELATIONS

REPUTATION

a monthly newsletter to key executive-leaders
on practices, possibilities and ideas generally
for stepped up performance

edited by

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on problem-solving and creative ideas

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MANAGING
FOR

EXCELLENCE:

We are glad to report that Dr.H.N. Nanjundiah (who is currently on a seminar tour abroad which includes a week with Dr.Peter F. Drucker) has agreed that his writings appear regularly in these columns.

Managing
the Human
Resource.

Managing the Human Resource is the "Mother Function" for managing all Business Functions of an enterprise. Things happen in nature. But they must be willed in the human domain; and hence managed. Everything that happens in socio-economic enterprises is the result of human behaviour, leading to planned or expected performance & results. It is common to take up Human Resource Development (HRD) activities, both internal and external to the organisation, for the purpose of developing people to bridge the gaps in their value-adding capabilities, in terms of skills, knowledge and attitudes. And that is the foundation upon which the superstructure of HRM comes to be imposed. And HRM is the line manager's task and not of the HRD personnel. It is much less the task of the Personnel Function, in its statutory role. It has to be an on-going activity, for assured daily performance & results, unlike the HRD work which occurs at infrequent intervals, or the Personnel activities which dominate at the recruitment & retirements phases of an employee's service life. Yet, the belief that the Personnel function fulfills the HRM needs; & that HRD activities meet in part the HRM purposes is

widespread. By so believing, the Personnel & HRD activities literally bypass HRM, and negate the line manager's accountability for his basic nondelegatable function of HRM. With the result, HRM suffers from benign neglect. With it, organisational performance & results rarely rise above the pedestrian level. No wonder the time is yet to come for the practice of HRM in India.

This organisational myopia can be overcome by making HRM strictly the job of every line manager through the Work Planning & Review (WPR) style of managing the human resource, to make managerial presence duly felt where and when it counts most. The issues and non-issues can be duly sorted out and prioritised for timely managerial action. WPR will thus come to be seen & practiced as if it were the Operating System in a Computer to be able to monitor and process all application programs. The hesitancy to see HRM as the rightful role of line managers is removed and credibility will be fully established among people in joint effort situations in all forms of human organisations.

Human Resource Development (HRD) is a human capital enhancement activity. Its aim is to develop and utilise the gift of mind, speech and skillful hands. Only the human beings on this terrestrial world are endowed with by nature in the whole known universe. Converting human talents into an economic resource with its unique characteristics of Time, Place and Form utilities is its basic purpose. Providing opportunities for the fullest possible development within the domain & reach of each person is its goal. Inputs to HRD come from the practice of HRM by line managers, together with the findings of periodic performance measurement and appraisals of each individual in the human organisation. HRD programmes create learning habits in people, to be later productified in turn through the practice of HRM at the place of work. The impact of DOING in the HRM phase and the learning effect of KNOWING in the HRD phase are interactive and hence to be sequentially scheduled in the life of every individual, to be able to enhance the Humanhood, eschew dysfunctional behaviour, make the most of available time, and prepare each person for progress on one's career path.

**Managing
The Human
Resource
Development
Process.**

In this setting, HRD of Managers for the unflinching practice of HRM is of primary and crucial importance if the development efforts of all others should not become an exercise in futility, in the spirit of the saying:

"One lights a candle to throw light in darkness, but not to snuff it out no sooner than it is lit!" The role of HRD and the practising managers is to not only light up, but also make the fullest possible use of this much-needed light.

Most businessmen tend to see HRD activities as a luxury, something to be indulged in when they can spare some time and money. They invariably hedge when looking for benefits from HRD efforts in the same way a nonbeliever prays: "Oh God, if you are

there true; Save my Soul if I have one!" Yet it is fashionable to have a budget for sending one's favorites to development programmes, especially the senior executives, as a sort of perquisite, to spend some time outside the place of work, preferably far far away. Most managers do nothing more than merely recycling whatever little they might have experienced through trial and error solutions to managing situations, HRD, anyway. Their errors only prove to be others' trials.

3562
WHO'S THE
BOSS:

For several reasons, even the smallest organization has gone in for computers. The computer has a tendency to become the boss; and if the boss is not alert, the computer does become the boss! One thinker (Mary Lou Besette in *Business Gazette*) has given thought to how to save yourself.

Too many small-business people work for their computers. It's supposed to be the other way around.

These 10 tips help your computer work for you:

1. Use the right printer for the job. If your needs are primarily for internal correspondence and record keeping, 9-pin or 24-pin dot-matrix printers will do just fine.

If you make complex presentations, an industrial-strength laser printer can cost \$1,500 to \$2,000. Don't bother with the in-between step of ink-jet printers; the consumables will eat you alive.

2. You can do a lot with "obsolete" technology. Techie types look down their noses at XT (8088) and AT (286) class PCs. But they can handle lots of computer chores, when in good repair and equipped with the right software.

3. Look for hand-me-down software. Software publishers are constantly releasing major and minor upgrades of existing products. Many registered users buy upgrades 10 percent to 25 percent of the "list" price of the new version, whether it really improves their productivity or not.

4. Look for simple software. Some of the major names in software have daunting interfaces that retard the learning curve. Some don't share data easily with other programs. If you don't have much time or money invested in one of these packages, buy a low-priced "works" package that incorporates word-processing, spreadsheets and data bases.

5. Don't skimp on essential functions. If you need a detailed, flexible, reliable data base, acquire a full-featured data base product; Alpha Four is nifty. Unless you're a spreadsheet whiz, don't try to turn a spreadsheet into an accounting package; find \$39 and buy one.

6. **Get on those mailing lists.** Always send in the registration forms that come with hardware and software. You'll be first to hear about bug fixes and discount offers for upgrades. Your name also will be passed on to other vendors eager to woo you with special offers for their products.
7. **Don't network to be trendy.** Be sure network advantages outweigh their costs. Sneaker-Net, walking 30 feet, is still a good way to share a disk.
8. **Replace your fax machine with a modem.** If your fax needs are modest, an internal send/receive fax modem (Prices start around \$90) may be all you need. If you have to be watching for incoming faxes constantly, you would need a 386 or 486 PC with enough RAM to run Windows 3.1 or another multitasking environment.
9. **Seek support from experts.** Two good sources of information are bulletin boards and user groups. These people have already plowed the hard ground to gain the expertise you need - and they're usually eager to share it.
10. **Data security is paramount.** Your data is vital to your business, yet it's stored on inherently unstable media. Institute a regular program of backing up your data. Keep redundant copies at a safe location off-site.

We often complain our teachers are out of touch with corporate reality. Instead, one thoughtful business group in a Canadian city asked: Why don't we take them as "summer interns"? The experience made a difference for all concerned. May be, we too can take a lead, give some teachers this benefit and thereby the benefit to the young people in the schools and colleges, follow this up and write a story. Here is the story that appeared in the *Globe and Mail*.

**3563
TEACHERS
IN
TOUCH:**

After raising a family for 10 years, Pat Clysdale has found it hard getting back into full-time teaching. This summer she took an unusual step--a job with no pay or benefits but with loads of insight and responsibility.

Ms. Clysdale spent several weeks toiling at **SHL Systemhouse inc.**, the Ottawa computer systems integration company. She worked on a training assessment program and built a data base to monitor Systemhouse's internal education efforts.

"I thought picking up some job skills that weren't directly related to teaching would help my chances," she says. "I was looking for something other than traditional courses."

Ms. Clysdale was part of an internship program of the Ottawa Carleton Learning Foundation, which matches local teachers with jobs in business and government for three to six weeks. Interns

operate as unpaid volunteers - but they do more than photocopy and scour the coffee urn. The program addresses one of education's big needs: keeping teachers in tune with changing technology and the work world. Teachers get a chance to develop skills; the companies get some well-educated workers for a few free weeks.

Systemhouse's manager of employee development, Ann Laidlaw, had planned to outsource the training assessment until Ms. Clysdale came along. "We were lucky enough to get a mature, motivated resource who delivered more than expected - and perhaps got more than she expected," Ms. Laidlaw says.

Ms. Clysdale learned research and spreadsheet skills, but she also found Systemhouse's collegial culture to be an eye-opener. As a company driven by projects, it has few departments; instead, it forms teams around specific contracts. This approach requires personal flexibility and co-operation. "I see why this style of facilitation works with today's workers. I think it could work with today's students in the classroom."

Bob Lafleur, the intern program's director and a retired teacher, has enlisted high-tech companies such as Systemhouse and Northern Telecom Ltd., as well as employers like the Conference Board of Canada and Canada Post Corp. In its third year of operation, the program still has more spots than teachers.

Mr. Lafleur grapples with a shortfall of technically oriented applicants and the challenge of finding the right people fit. In 1992, the program's first year, four teachers applied. This summer, 45 participated - a tiny percentage of the area's 7,500 teachers.

Mr. Lafleur attributes the gap to a lack of awareness. "We're only now getting the message out. But positive response from participants is our best advertising. All our group is going back to school converted."

John Katic is one such missionary. Mr. Katic, who teaches computer science at Ottawa's Woodroffe High School spent the early weeks of this summer working on a technical writing team at Northern Telecom's research and development subsidiary, Bell-Northern Research Ltd.

He was struck by the high level of discipline and structure in the software development process. "The essay style of writing we're used to wouldn't work in this environment. I came away with practical examples of the benefits of standardization and consistency. This is the type of real-world experience my students expect from me."

The stint also provided a taste of something few educators see long-term results. Although working in a tiny corner of a vast lab, Mr. Katic frequently ran into some of his former students employed at the complex.

"I work in a very closed system and generally don't know what happens to students after high school. I got to see talented, energetic people at work and I knew I had played some small part in the process."

Mr. Katic's exposure did not, of course, arise entirely from corporate altruism. Employers want to ensure that high-school graduates are equipped with the technical skills to help them compete. Exposing teachers to the world of commerce levers the investment by training the trainers.

Mr. Lafleur wants to forge partnerships that will help "smooth the transition from school by improving students' work-related skills and giving employers good reason to hire them. It seems clear that teachers are the key link here."

Some companies are recruiting educators to help develop links with schools. In addition to the intern program, Systemhouse and Northern Telecom sponsor programs to reach out to teachers.

This month, Northern Telecom assembled 70 teachers and administrators in Ottawa from across the country as part of an annual symposium on co-operative teaching and learning effectiveness. This National Institute is a week-long forum, in which participants attend workshops on teamwork, communications and school/business partnerships.

"BNR's best engineer in the year 2014 is in kindergarten right now," says Arthur Coren, director of the National Institute. "All these programmes are designed to get teachers excited about the business of technology. Motivated teachers give us motivated students."

Earlier this year, Walt Disney Co. announced plans to build a teaching training academy as part of Celebration, its newly created Florida town devoted to pre-Second World War architecture and values. The \$9-million (U.S.) facility will offer weekend and week-long sessions for teachers from all across North America.

Disney's critics say the project is really a market research vehicle that will serve as a testing ground for classroom videos, software and other products for its insatiable sales machine.

But Marilee Taylor, a co-operative education teacher at South Grenville District High School in Prescott, Ont., doesn't think teachers are so gullible. Besides, she says, they have an obligation to train students for the real world. "That means getting a job. Anything that helps make that a useful, rewarding job is worth exploring."

Ms. Taylor spent several weeks last year "shadowing" white-collar employees at DuPont Canada Inc.'s fibres and chemicals plant in nearby Maitland. Unlike interns, who work at assigned projects, shadowers just observe. They look and learn for their own benefit or, in Ms. Taylor's case, to gather intelligence for students struggling with career challenges.

"The kids are very specific in their questions. This is another source of answers."

As for Ms. Clysdale, the experience inside Systemhaus hasn't guaranteed her a full-time job. She is still working as a part-time substitute teacher. But the experience helps her stand out in the crowded job market. "I'm not as anxious as I was."

3559 (A)
JAPANESE
STYLE

(Continued from Aug. Issue).

MANAGEMENT:

In Japan's factories and research centers there is usually a large cafeteria in which the president and other executives sit side by side with rank and file employees and even outside guests. This may appear to be plain democracy, but in fact it is Japanese-style democracy - in other words, indiscriminate equality. I've travelled quite a bit, and I've never seen a place outside of Japan which gets by with just one cafeteria. GE's Sao Paulo plant has three separate cafeterias. One for top executives, one for middle managers, and one for regular workers. As a matter of fact, in Japan there is no word corresponding to "worker." If I went into a factory and called somebody a "worker," that person would most likely angrily reply "I'm not just a worker. I'm a full-fledged employee with a badge to prove it." But once they step outside of Japan, they are just workers. So if one tries to employ Japanese management methods outside of Japan, and does so by just throwing together a mish mash of ideas, then it probably won't succeed.

Japanese
businesses
need to be
world
companies.

THURLOW: I make a distinction between world companies and international companies. An international company simply sells its products in various regions around the world, but a world company is defined by how many people it actually employs from a variety of countries. If more than 50% of a company's top executives are from countries other than the company's home country, I'd say that qualifies as a world company. In Japan's case, this percentage is extremely low. In order to succeed in the 21st century, it will be necessary to become a world company rather than merely an international company.

SHIMOYAMA: I agree. In Olympus case, all of our top managers overseas are locally hired employees. We have both a factory and marketing subsidiary in the U.K., and neither have even a single Japanese among the top management. And top management at Olympus Optical Co. (Europa) GmbH in Germany, which controls our activities all over Europe, including the east, is made up entirely of Germans.

With the world as small as it is, and the age of information making it possible to send facsimiles, telexes, and make telephone calls at will, I can direct the company from my own office by telephone, and if necessary, jump in an airplane and be virtually anywhere within a day. So there is really no need to station any Japanese in these areas.

Right now economic conditions in Europe are worse than anywhere. In Germany in particular, there are no companies which are immune

from making layoffs. Nevertheless, our U.K. subsidiary, which is managed 100% by British employees, is currently the number one profit producer in the Olympus group. And despite the layoffs going on elsewhere, our endoscope factory in Germany, which is also 100% operated by local Germans, is currently expanding to accommodate a huge order backlog. I know of no other company in Europe besides Olympus which is currently expanding capacity. A minute ago Professor Thurow said that "half of top management must be locally hired employees." Well I am proud to say that in our case, this figure is nearly 100%.

MODERATOR: Moving on, criticism of Japan from overseas has been on the rise recently. Some of this criticism, in fact, increasingly appears to be calling on Japan to change its economic system to a more American-style system.

THUROW: If I were Japanese, I think I would be against any movement toward restructuring Japan's system to make it more like America's. However, there are some things which do need to be done. Other countries around the world are not really looking at Japan and wondering if its system will change to become more like the U.S system. Rather, they are concerned about whether or not Japan is conducting balanced trade with the rest of the world. Therefore, Japan must take a close look at how its system is operated, and make its international balance of payments more even. If Japan can achieve some level of evenness here, I doubt that many people around the world will care much what kind of a system Japan uses. (To be continued in next issue.)



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LAUGHING
MATTER?

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