

## TRAINING WITHIN INDUSTRY BULLETIN SERIES

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### HOW TO GET A PLANT TRAINING PLAN INTO ACTION

More training plans fail because they are poorly presented and inadequately presented to management than for any other reason. Each instance of this kind is unfortunate. Even more unfortunate are the good plans that operate half-heartedly, all for the lack of proper management support. This bulletin deals specifically with the problem of getting a training plan into action so it produces results.

When the training man does something FOR the line organization, the problem of selling is usually not too difficult. In such cases management often needs only to give approval. An example is approving a program of class instruction in any technical subject, like arithmetic, blueprint reading, electricity, or approving the use of engineering school extension facilities.

Those activities that a training man does THROUGH the line organization not only must be approved by management but must be done by management because they are a part of the management process.

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### STEPS IN GETTING A PLAN INTO ACTION

The steps required to launch a training plan will vary according to the plan. The following outline covers the four basic steps which the training man commonly follows in order to get a plan into action:

1. Get top management support
2. Sell and inform middle management
3. Select and train the instructors or conference leaders
4. Schedule sessions

This material will be useful to training men in large or small companies—whether they have full or part-time responsibility—whether or not they are called training men—in fact to anyone responsible for training in a staff capacity, who wants to get results through the line organization.

### GETTING TOP MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Top management is the operating official who has final authority to say “Yes” or “No” on any question that requires management approval.

#### What preparation should be made prior to the interview?

This is often the key to the success of the whole program. Be clear in your own mind just what is to be accomplished. In particularly every case there are just two end objectives: to secure acceptance of the training plan and to secure agreement to sponsor it.

Before arranging to present a plan to management, the training man must plan how he will carry out the following steps:

1. Outline a plan and the mechanics of the necessary procedures for keeping the plan in action.
2. Establish the duties of all persons with staff responsibility for keeping the plan in continuing operation.
3. Establish the duties of those with line or operating responsibility for keeping the plan in continuing operation.
4. Outline a plan to evaluate the results in terms of measurable data:

Production increases	Savings in machine use
Reduction in "break-in" times	Fewer accidents
Savings in scrap	Less fatigue
Savings in manpower	Reduction of grievances

5. Get management agreement to review these results at regular periods as a basis of giving encouragement and backing.
6. Establish procedures for getting reports of results and production benefits routed to the top executive.

Supporting material and exhibits must be ready. The value of such materials varies according to the man using them and also according to the executive to be sold. Some supporting materials which might be used are:

Results reports from other industries  
 Charts of production problems and their solution through training  
 Samples of the materials to be used in the training plan

#### How should the interview be conducted?

Each interview differs according to existing personal relationships. The following points cover many of the important details:

1. State purpose of the meeting: Some executives want to get the recommendation or proposition stated in a point-blank manner at the beginning. Others want background before hearing your plan or conclusions.
2. Build the advantage to him and to the organization: Sell him on what the training will do: Talk about the PROBLEM you have to discuss—not "Training." Avoid arguments—use the "Yes,—but..." approach.
3. Get a decision:
  - a. Tell him how it works—outline the mechanics you recommend, i.e., your recommendation for leaders, sessions, and the like.
  - b. Secure his definite acceptance—ask him to approve or designate the individuals who will assist in the plan.
  - c. Establish the responsibility for getting the plan off to a good start. Get him to agree to: personally sponsor the plan, approve the details, and call and

chairman the meeting at which it will be launched (set definite date if possible).

- d. Establish the responsibility for getting CONTINUING results.

Beware of too ready acceptance—of too ready a “Yes.” Many a training man has been swept off his feet by a top executive who agreed to everything promptly, and said or implied, “You just go right ahead and do it.” Then back in his own office the training man realized that, instead of getting the boss to take the lead, he was to take the lead.

Perhaps the executive will not give final agreement until the matter is discussed with the executive staff. If this is the case, arrange for such a meeting immediately. Cover the complete story with the executive group.

### SELLING AND INFORMING MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

A meeting with executives is conducted to get group approval of the training plan, to convince them of its value, and to secure the maximum possible understanding and cooperation of all management. It is necessary for a specific date and time to be set and a satisfactory meeting room arranged. The meeting must be called by the TOP EXECUTIVE over HIS SIGNATURE.

#### What should be covered in such a meeting?

The introduction should be made by the sponsoring executive. The plan is presented by the training man, the industrial relations director, the works manager, or by the person who carries the most weight and who can be persuaded to do the job. This presentation should cover (1) what the training will do in terms of production benefits, (2) what it is, and (3) what must be done by management to make the plan function as a continuing production tool.

### SELECTING AND TRAINING LEADERS

#### Who should select the prospective instructors or leaders?

The use of special leaders or instructors is not a required part of every program, of course. The initial list should be put together by the training man. Depending on the size of the plant, he should get the counsel of others regarding the ability of each proposed leader. The final act of selection and notification should be done by each prospective leader's own boss.

#### Who make the best leaders?

Personal characteristics are among the most important considerations:

1. Operating men often make excellent leaders. However, some operating people are too busy and are victims of too many pressures.
2. “Acceptability” of the leaders can be a controlling factor.
3. The all-around ability of a prospect is the most important consideration. The job must be done by those who “can’t be spared.” The program fails if done by those “who haven’t much to do anyhow.”
4. Competent staff people often can give time more readily and can do the best leadership job.

### Do leaders need any special preparation?

Even if the meetings are not more than staff meetings with their own people, leaders need some help. If they are to hold special meetings or if they are to become trainers for any of the T.W.I. programs, they need even more attention. The training man must arrange for the special coaching to be given to the leaders. This coaching may vary from a short one-hour explanation of the company's plan for handling returning veterans, to a five- or six-day Institute on how to successfully conduct one of the 10-hour T.W.I. programs.

Prior to the beginning of their preparation to handle a new program, the prospective leaders should be called together and all points connected with "who does what, and when" cleared up. At this meeting, the training man can "size up" the group and perhaps pick out those who won't make the grade. It will save time and embarrassment to him and the prospective leaders if this can be tactfully handled ahead of time.

## GETTING SESSIONS PROPERLY SCHEDULED

### When should sessions be scheduled?

BEFORE the prospective leader or trainer attends the special leaders' conference, all arrangements for sessions he will put on MUST be completed. The leader loses his enthusiasm if he has to wait a week or two before he puts on his first session. As a result, he has forgotten many of the fine points; his mind becomes occupied with other things, and he does a mediocre job.

### What must be considered in scheduling sessions?

1. Number of supervisors or others to be trained
2. Timetable for coverage, starting dates, and starting groups
3. Determination as to whether training is to be during working hours or out of house—management should be urged to compensate supervisors for any out-of-house time spent on basic training.
4. Selection of meeting rooms and checking of equipment
5. Notification of persons who are to meet in each group (such notification should come from each person's boss)

## SUMMARY

Any training program that involves supervisory practice throughout the plant is a big job. One of the difficulties with the training function in most companies is that training men and management alike take a superficial view. Influencing the way men conduct their daily jobs is, in actual fact, one of the most difficult undertakings in the whole field of industrial management. Any training man who wants to measure up to the size of the job that he holds should start by recognizing with great confidence, yet humility, that the job is big and difficult, and that he can only hope to get it done through the line organization. An "expert on training" cannot do it all himself.