

TRAINING WITHIN INDUSTRY BULLETIN SERIES

Bureau of Training
War Manpower Commission

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SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION FOR UPGRADING

America at war demands that every man and woman work at his or her top skill. Maximum production depends on maximum use of skill. The upgrading of workers to more skilled jobs requires the full cooperation of both employees and management. Management must be constantly on the job of discovering skills and placing and training its employees until everyone is doing the best job of which he is potentially capable. Similarly, the employee must avail himself of every opportunity to learn, on or off the job, both the technical skills and the supplementary knowledge necessary for advancement to the higher and more responsible jobs in his plant.

Training in the essential skills of a job is best done on the job, but the supplementary information which is a tool for a more demanding job is most often acquired off the job. Supplementary instruction is applicable at all levels of the organization and a necessary requirement for moving from one stage to that above. Time is wasted and lost, and so are skills, unless management encourages employees to help themselves through off-the-job instruction and integrates it with the progression on the job.

The best interest of the worker, the best production by industry, the best service to our country depend largely on the BEST USE OF THE SKILLS of all of our people.

C. R. Dooley, Director

Training Within Industry

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION

Every earnest worker expects to be promoted to a better job with better wages, as soon as he demonstrates that he can do that more responsible job and there is an opportunity. The individual worker generally knows what his actual skills are and in what potential direction they lead. Therefore, much of the responsibility for supplementary instruction to develop his potential skill rests upon the employee himself.

While some employers provide both facilities and time for related instruction concerned with the job on which the employee is now working, the increasing necessity for maximum production means that this type of instruction will more and more be done after hours. And instruction which applies to the more advanced job will tend to be left even more to the ambition and initiative of the employee.

However, management can and should stimulate the employee to seek supplementary instruction outside the plant by:

1. Establishing and announcing the requirements for advanced jobs toward which the worker may strive
2. Publicizing the use management makes of information about out-of-hours instruction

3. Providing information about local opportunities for supplementary instruction
4. Giving financial assistance for or other recognition of outside study

And management can perform a useful function in coordinating such instruction by:

1. Guidance of outside study to tie-in supplementary instruction with training received on the job
2. Making information about the employee's off-the-job instruction a part of the plant personnel records used when candidates for better jobs are considered

The Requirements for Advanced Jobs

Each war industry has a vital and definite training job. Maximum results must be accomplished in record time. Upgrading is constantly necessary if war industry is to get results. An invaluable aid in securing the cooperation of employees in upgrading is the use of specifications giving essential requirements for jobs. Job specifications, listing the most important types of things each skilled worker does, should therefore be widely circulated among all employees. The worker then will know what information, skills, and aptitudes are required of him in order to secure an advanced job and will see what he has to do in order to fill that job.

Job specifications are also necessary for schools that offer supplementary instruction to workers. Properly prepared specifications furnish an accurate picture of specific skills required and may be used to outline a school program of progressing steps to develop the required skills and information quickly in wisely selected workers.

During the last war, the Army wrote such specifications for the various jobs in military units. Schools used them, and extraordinary results were obtained. Skilled workers were trained in much less time than had ever been done before and more effectively than had ever been considered possible—in many instances the instruction period in schools was cut in half. Industry now recognizes its own need for job specifications but does not always make them available to employees or to schools.

We need to use specifications now as a medium of stimulation, inspiration, and incentive for the employee—in other words, we need them now, as a necessary tool in securing the worker's cooperation in his own upgrading. He needs to know just what the requirements are for successful performance on the job.

In order to use supplementary instruction in the upgrading procedure, it is essential to study the progression that can be made if "something else" is added. The company training director should be responsible not only for collecting information about available supplementary instruction but also for presenting it to employees in a way which shows its relation to the factory jobs.

"Going to night school" is a good American custom—it will help America now if the young factory operator, for example, studies shop arithmetic or blueprint reading, and the ambitious supervisor adds to his knowledge of technical and personnel subjects.

Information about Outside Instruction

In helping employees (men and women) to plan their own off-the-job instruction intelligently, management, through its training director or similar official, will need an evaluation of instruction offered by outside agencies—public school evening courses, defense courses, government

sponsored adult education programs, programs by such groups as the Y.M.C.A., college extension programs, and so on. The district offices of the Training Within Industry Service furnish information on the amount, caliber, and cost of supplementary instruction.

COORDINATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION

Once the employee undertakes supplementary instruction in order to qualify for more skilled tasks, management must help to coordinate the employee's out-of-hours study in such a manner that the supplementary work assists in the upgrading of the employee in minimum time.

Training is a management responsibility. When part of the employee's instruction comes from an outside source it is good business for the management to help in shaping the direction of the off-the-job instruction. Well written job specifications will help management to know what specific jobs require special or technical knowledge. From this knowledge management can help the aspirant for any particular job to plan his supplementary instruction intelligently.

RECOGNIZING SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION IN PLANT RECORDS

The fact that a young operator, since his employment, has successfully studied blueprint reading and drafting is as necessary a part of the plant personnel records as the fact that before he was employed he was graduated from a high school. This off-the-job instruction has added to his ability and it has also given an indication of personal characteristics. Such instruction is therefore a very important part of the employee's personnel record. It is immediately useful to management for upgrading the employee. It is a powerful factor in morale building because the employee knows that management recognizes that he is trying to improve himself not only on his present job but also for the advanced job which he hopes to get.

The plant training man cannot pick up this information completely by any casual method. There must be a regular process or channel through which this information becomes part of the personnel records. This is valuable information for the company, and it is a builder of good will. Even if there has been no insurance, through a regular process of recording information on off-the-job instruction, that the company knows that a man has acquired a better background and that he has a marked interest in his job, the man who is not considered for a job for which he knows he is qualified will feel resentment.

The company can guide its employees toward useful off-the-job study and it needs to set up a regular process to get information about the instruction which its employees are getting on their own. It must be made clear however that this kind of related instruction is no guarantee for selection for the next vacancy; too many other factors are involved.

Assistance with the Expense of Off-the-Job Instruction

When a public agency supplies instruction which is useful to production, part of the load on plant management has been relieved. A number of companies feel it is a good investment to pay all or part of the fees which the employee must pay for supplementary instruction when such instruction follows an approved plan and is successfully completed.

PLANNING INTEGRATION OF SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION

With the increasing training load, it is necessary to assume that in each plant there is one person who has the responsibility for training (of course, in small plants, this may not be a full-time job). But one person cannot do the whole job of integrating supplementary instruction with production. Supervisors are in the best position to be helpful to those whose work they know.

Supervisors write job specifications or assist with them, and they will help most on job performance. If there is a joint training committee, it should be used to get employees' ideas on what they believe they need.

SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTION'S IMPORTANCE TO A PLANT PROGRAM

Off-the-job instruction will do part of the training, and plant management needs to know what is available so that employees can be helped. But making information available does not insure that it gets across. Supplementary instruction must be promoted.

When supplementary instruction is planned, when it is integrated with the plant program, and when it is used, it becomes an important part of the industrial training program.

Training on the job and supplementary instruction, when planned, tied-in to, and used with the individual worker's best talents in view, results in real education for the individual—he is then at his best; he grows strong, works hard, and likes it.

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