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Recruiting and Training Employees in the Service Industries

Michigan State University

Cooperative Extension Service

Recreation and Tourism Series

Robert W. McIntosh, Extension Specialist, Tourist and Resort Service and Professor of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management

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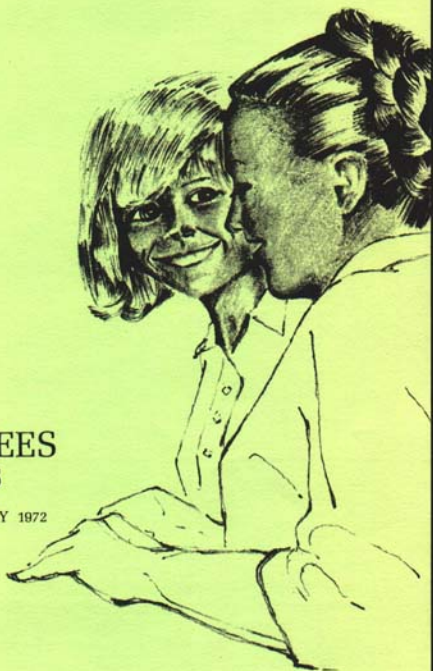
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RECRUITING AND
TRAINING EMPLOYEES
IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES

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RECRUITING AND TRAINING EMPLOYEES IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES

By ROBERT W. MCINTOSH

*Extension Specialist, Tourism and Recreation and
Professor of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management*

THE RIGHT PERSON in the right job is essential for success in any business. In hotels, restaurants, motels, resorts, and similar businesses, this factor is particularly important. The guest forms his impression of the accommodation and its services almost wholly by the way the employees treat him. Thus, your guest-contact employees are importantly responsible for the success of the enterprise.

JOB STUDY AND ANALYSIS

Recruiting the proper person for the job is the first step in building and improving guest satisfaction. To do this properly takes thought and advance preparations. For each position, you should perform a job analysis, compile a job description, detail a job specification, and prepare a job evaluation. Then you are ready to begin filling vacancies.

JOB ANALYSIS

This means that you make an organized study of each job which you have to fill. The study should include (1) job description, (2) job specifications, and (3) job evaluation.

Start by writing a description of the job. Keep the description short and to the point, and answer the following questions:

- What does the worker do?
- Why does he do it?
- How does he do it?
- When should it be done?
- What particular skills are required?

Benefits of writing a job description now become apparent. These include:

- Help to establish a fair wage rate for the job.
- Determine the amount of training needed.
- Clarifies the qualifications required by applicants.
- Shows supervisors what is entailed in performing the job.
- Defines the job, reduces job conflicts and confusion.

Here is an example of a job description for a housekeeper (maid)

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR HOUSEKEEPER (MAID)

Makes up each guest room which has been occupied to a completely clean, neat, attractive, and fresh smelling room. Cleans rooms by conventional sweeping methods using vacuum cleaner, dusting cloths, cleaning cloths, and similar materials and equipment. Washes fixtures and tile areas of the bathroom with cloth or sponge and sanitizes as required. Changes linen completely after each occupancy. Performs other cleaning jobs at regular intervals such as washing windows, cleaning lamp shades, washing mirrors, polishing furniture, lobby cleaning and similar tasks associated with housekeeping. Stocks the bath and guest rooms with linen, towels, and guest supplies.

Note that this job description answers the questions, "what," "why," and "how," and "skill needed." Such criteria are needed for all job descriptions.

The job description should be prepared carefully. In unionized businesses, many union members will refuse to work outside of their job descriptions. Therefore, it should cover all possible duties.

JOB SPECIFICATION FOR HOUSEKEEPER (MAID)

After describing the job, list all specifications for the position, filling in the requirements for each important aspect in detail. This procedure is called job specification. Here is how the job specification for a housekeeper (maid) might look:

Job title: Housekeeper or maid (former title preferred)

Department: Rooms

Sex: Usually female, but could be male.

Physical aspects: Should be in good health and not exceed 150 pounds. Medium height (short persons have trouble reaching and tall persons have trouble bending.)

Working Conditions: Five to eight hours per day, five or six days per week.

Equipment, materials and tools used: Housekeeper's cart, small sweeper, cloths, pails, and other cleaning-sanitizing materials.

Compensation: (Specify rate and any bonus or profit sharing plan.) See following section on job evaluation.

Training required: Two weeks apprenticeship under experienced housekeeper.

Vacation with pay: One week after one year of employment, two weeks thereafter.

Experience: None required.

Personality requirements: Dependable, careful, methodical, pleasant, and neat appearing.

Judgment: Must have high standards of cleanliness, be able to see dirt and take initiative to clean all parts of room to acceptable sanitary and housekeeping standards.

Manual dexterity: Considerable manual skill needed in use of fingers, hands, arms, legs, knees, and back. Also, must have good feet as most of the work is done in a standing or stooping position.

Accuracy: Must have fine touch with bedspreads, pillows, and sheets so that they present an even and attractive appearance to the newly arrived guest.

Strength: Stamina is required for sustained physical activity involved in changing linen, lifting blankets, sweeping, dusting, and cleaning bathrooms.

Supervision: Works under rooms inspector, supervisory housekeeper, and executive housekeeper.

Responsibility: Must be able to work alone. Is responsible for care of equipment and room furnishings, also of guest's belongings. Must be scrupulously honest and upright.

Opportunity for advancement: To rooms inspector, supervisory housekeeper, and executive housekeeper.

JOB EVALUATION

The third step is to prepare a job evaluation. This determines the correct *relative* value in terms of pay rates for each job. For example, should a front desk clerk receive more pay than a supervisory housekeeper? The only fair way to judge is by using the job evaluation technique. Here is the method:

1. On a sheet of paper, construct a chart listing the primary qualities expected in persons who hold this job. For example, you might list education, intelligence, capacity for receiving instructions, experience, and other criteria on the left side of the chart. Across the top list a series of numbers, usually from 1 to 10. (See Fig. 1)

2. Now rate each of the criteria according to its relative importance. Number 1 would be of least importance and number 10 would be of greatest importance. Keep in mind that you are evaluating the various qualities for what they "ought to be" rather than what they *may* be at the present time. Also, remember that it is the *job*, not the *person*, which is

FIG. 1 JOB EVALUATION CHART

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Education										
Intelligence										
Capacity for receiving instructions										
Experience										
Initiative										
Personality										
Dependability										
Working with others										
Appearance										
Responsibility for supervision										

Source: L. C. Pigage and J. L. Tucker, Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois (adapted from the bulletin, *Job Evaluation*, 1959, 44 pages.)

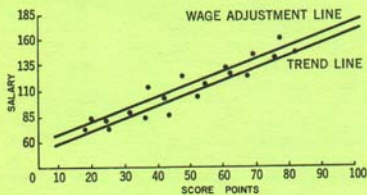
COMMENTS: Prepare a separate evaluation chart for each job. Check the appropriate column from 1 to 10 for each criteria. Then add up the total score. Jobs with higher scores should receive higher wages.

being evaluated. Add up the score for each job. The ratings will be entirely a matter of judgment and therefore are not at all scientific. However, whether you are overly lenient and generous or not doesn't really matter, as long as the job evaluation is a matter of *relative* standing between jobs.

3. Next, plot the jobs and the wage rates on a graph with the score point values along the bottom of the graph and the present wage rates on the left hand side. A series of dots will result, as illustrated as Fig. 2. Note that considerable variation exists in the placement of dots. If the importance of all of the jobs were ideally related in terms of the pay, the dots would form a straight line. They are not, and thus, some of the jobs are overpaid and some are underpaid.

4. While a simple procedure would be to raise those who are underpaid and cut those overpaid, this is not a practical solution. A better approach is to try to raise the pay of those who deserve it whenever possible, not give any raises to those overpaid, and when new employees are hired, hire them at the proper pay rate for the job, in accordance with the job evaluation. This procedure results in the most equitable system of pay for the jobs being accomplished.

FIG. 2. DETERMINING EQUITABLE WAGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE JOB EVALUATION.



Source: George Strauss and Leonard R. Sayles, *Personnel* (adapted from the book) (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960, p. 592.)

COMMENTS: Each dot represents a job. The general trend is shown by the parallel lines. The wage adjustment line provides an area of wage variation within which wages would not be changed. However, if a person was being paid at a rate above the variation range area, he would continue to be paid at that rate. If another person were hired for the same position, then he would be paid at the rate indicated by the trend line and variation area.

FINDING EMPLOYEES*

There are several recommended methods of obtaining good employees:

- (1) Prospective employees referred by your present staff. Your experienced employees know the business and know the kind of person for which you are looking. They can help you locate someone who comes close to filling the job specification.
- (2) If unable to secure applicants from employee referrals, notify the Michigan Employment Security Commission office nearest you. They have employees available and can send you qualified applicants. Or use other respectable employment offices. You may wish to contact the local high school also. There are growing numbers of job-seekers in the young people's group, as well as in the older age group.
- (3) Another method is to seek employees from the local chapter of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders International Union, if your establishment is unionized.
- (4) Or place a classified ad in the newspaper, completely describing the job.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Millions of high school graduates will be looking for employment during the next decade. If you decide to hire young people, here are some tips on going about it:

- (a) Talk with the high school principal concerning your need and get his suggestions for candidates for jobs.
- (b) Review the school records of promising young

*Contributed in part by Bill Knapp, Bill Knapp's Restaurants, Battle Creek, Michigan; and the late Keith White, Elms Motor Lodge, Flint, Michigan.

people. Choose those with favorable records and high I.Q. ratings.

(c) Talk to several applicants and make your offer complete. Don't be surprised if an 18-year-old boy asks you about the details of your retirement program!

(d) Insist on high standards of performance, appearance, and above all, a pleasing personality.

Some of the positions for which young people are particularly well suited are: Cooks, bakers, busboys, waiters, waitresses, cashiers, swimming pool supervisors, bellmen, sales representatives, entertainers, store room clerks, room clerks, secretaries, yardmen, and vehicle operators.

Young people work out best in an organization which is "on the way up." Each new person hired is a potential future department head or even manager. This gives each person the incentive to stick with the company and to look ahead to increasing responsibility and compensation.

OLDER PEOPLE

At present, there are over 20 million persons in the United States over 65 years of age. Many in this group are in excellent physical and mental condition. They can be of great value to your business in several capacities. Persons over 50 who are seeking jobs or are retired early from other fields of work are likewise potential employees. In some cases, retirement benefits will have to be waived by the employees as a condition to employment, but this is often not a problem.

Older employees have mature judgment and poise which is valuable in motel and resort operations.

Examples of work suited to mature workers are front office desk clerk, accountant, security officer, yardman, laundry worker, sales representative, dining

room hostess, cashier, purchasing agent, receiving clerk, and possibly even manager if the responsibilities and hours are not beyond the person's capacity.

INTERVIEWING THE APPLICANT

Managers can improve employment interviews by studying the purposes and techniques of the art of interviewing. Costly labor turnover, poorly assigned and adjusted employees, and worrisome employee problems can be greatly reduced by means of better interviewing for employee selection. Research in interviewing is now extensive. Here are some suggestions:

- (a). Recognize the importance of the interview to the success of the business.
- (b). Plan it in advance, make the proper preparation, and select a dignified, comfortable place to talk.
- (c). At the outset, establish a harmonious relationship between applicant and interviewer. Ask the applicant to be seated and treat him in a friendly and dignified manner.
- (d). Make the interview conversational! Ask questions about the applicant's goals and aspirations. Weave in questions about his family and where he lives, also means of transportation between home and the business. Your purpose is to learn about his attitudes and aptitudes in order to evaluate him as an employee.
- (e). Confine the interview to the purpose — that of hiring — and avoid non-related subjects such as politics or the weather.
- (f). Let the applicant do most of the talking. A common fault with interviewers is that they dominate the conversation and hardly give the applicant a chance to answer the questions. The applicant should do at least three-fourths of the talking so that his prospective employer can learn as much about him as is needed to establish his qualifications for the job.
- (g). Be sure to find out about previous experience in this type of work. The applicant may be able to make a substantial contribution to the enterprise based on his previous experience.
- (h). Keep the conversation going, showing in-

tense interest in what the applicant says. Give him the impression that you are getting acquainted, as you are, rather than weighing his strong points and faults. Avoid giving the impression that you approve or disapprove of what he may relate. Use such conversational expressions as "is that so?" "My, that must have been interesting!" or a non-committal, "Please tell me a little more about that."

- (i). Sell the applicant on your enterprise if he appears to be the kind of person you want in your organization. Enthusiasm is catching and it builds a strong foundation for your relationship with the employee, should he be hired. Be sure to tell him about your company, its background, and the growth of the public hospitality business, generally.
- (j). First impressions are not reliable, nor are general impressions. Establish your judgments upon what is brought out in the interview and put more weight on past experience than on general impressions.
- (k). Measure the applicant according to the criteria shown in the job description and job evaluation. This will determine his degree of qualification for the position.
- (l). Check on letters of recommendation and references. Sometimes a person will write a letter with some reservations, which will be brought out in a telephone conversation.
- (m). When making your final decision concerning hiring, be sure you can give at least two or three reasons why you have rated him high or low in each of the major characteristics of the job. If you neglect this last step, you are basing your judgment on first or general impressions.

CAUTIONS

Some applicants have characteristics that are detrimental to their employment. These include:

- (a). Those recently divorced, or within a year of a divorce.
- (b). Those with low educational background.
- (c). Those having many different jobs in the past few years.
- (d). Those with distracting mannerisms, or are extremely heavy smokers, very nervous, overly confident, lacking in good diction, or careless about clothes and person.

APPLICATION FORM

A comprehensive application form is recommended. If the applicant is sincere in his wish to obtain a job, he will not mind processing the form. Include all of the information you are seeking. You may wish to include a space for a short statement by the applicant as to why he wishes to be employed by your establishment.



TESTS

In many businesses, tests are used to measure specific characteristics. These include intelligence tests, grammar tests, personality tests, and specific knowledge tests. Whether to use tests or not will largely depend on the nature of the job. If you are hiring a front desk clerk, he should be tested on his use of grammar and his command of the English language. An intelligence test would also be useful. Skill tests are available for jobs requiring special skills such as cashier or secretary.

You can obtain information on testing and other related matters from the Department of Psychology of any of Michigan's colleges or universities. Also, see your Michigan Employment Security Commission for suggestions on tests. In addition you could write to the Executive Secretary, American Psychological Association, Inc. 1333 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

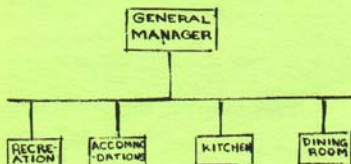
The best procedure is to make your final decision on the basis of the interview and the test combined. If both agree, it is reasonably certain you have the best qualified person for the job.

ORGANIZATION CHARTS

Good organization assures the smooth functioning of your business. Unless the business is well-organized and each employee is fully aware of the identity of his supervisor and higher level managers, he will not function properly and the business will suffer. Effective organization is, in fact, a key to success.

Preparing an organization chart will assist management to draw clear-cut lines of authority which can then be explained to the new employee. This is helpful in improving all work situations.

Rather than drawing up a hierarchy of names alone, a method proven effective is to have pictures taken of each person in the organization and then place both picture and name on the chart. This addition of a human interest touch makes the new employee feel more a real part of the business. Post chart in a conspicuous place so that everyone can study and appreciate it.



TRAINING AND TRAINING METHODS

Training is simply learning. Learning is changing behavior. When an individual behaves differently, that is, when he does something differently than he did before, then he has learned something. We can see it. He may have learned well or poorly, but the behavior which we see is that which has been learned.

The components of any behavior can be singled out with study. Once isolated, they can be taught. Thus, you must first identify or describe the kind of behavior desired. When you have fenced off the end-product desired, the learning products to be taught to achieve the goal should become visible, and their components then easily taught. For instance, if a behavior-goal is to produce a skilled front desk clerk, then the separate learning products to be taught are singled out. These may be skill in greeting the guest, hand-visual coordination, concentration, accuracy and so on. The components of these individual product skills are then taught.

KNOW THE LEARNING CATEGORIES

Learning of course is not confined only to motor skills. Our concepts and attitudes are similarly learned by training in behavior patterns. The whole realm of learning categories might be subdivided as follows:

- (1) **PSYCHO-MOTOR HABITS (Skills)** — Those manipulative-mental habits (learning) which are readily repeatable. For example, teaching a housekeeper how to make a bed correctly.
- (2) **COGNITIVE HABITS (Knowledge)** — Understandings such as cause and effect, concepts, information, ideas. For example, teaching the effect of certain cleaning agents on wall and floor surfaces.
- (3) **AFFECTIVE HABITS (Attitudes)** — Those emotional habits (learning) involving likes, dislikes, fears, anxieties, values, and appreciations. For example, teaching the housekeeper that cleanliness and service to the guest are of utmost importance.

We should note that these products which make up behavior are often interwoven. They may be learned separately, such as teaching the separate product-skills required in housekeeping. Often they are learned together. The housekeeper who learns to have a positive attitude toward cleanliness and service (affective) is also learning how to make a bed (motor) and at the same time understanding which cleaning agent to use on the walls (cogni-

tive). The desired end-product of behavior, i.e., an efficient housekeeper, has been achieved.

PLAN THE TRAINING PROGRAM

As a businessman plans for a desired result, such as complete satisfaction to the guest, increased sales, greater profit, or reduced expenses, so must every teacher plan for the desired result — behavior.

In teaching, *these desired learning products are our managerial objectives*. For example, when a new employee is hired, the first objective in the management process will be training: "Now we will have to *train him* to do the job." The new employee will always feel somewhat insecure during the first few weeks. He probably feels a need for growth and an opportunity to develop his skill and ability. A good training program tends to eliminate this margin of insecurity, and is a tremendous help to the employee. If you as manager or supervisor do an outstanding job of training, you will be respected as a good "boss" and you will build cooperation and teamwork among all of your staff.

Plan the following for a successful course of instruction:

- (1) **WHO** — determine if the learner has the capacity to learn.
- (2) **WHAT** — analyze what is to be learned and in which sequence.
- (3) **WHY** — help him find the reason to learn.
- (4) **HOW** — organize situations or activities in which learning is *possible* and *probable* and so prevent frustration as the result of failure.

TRAINING METHODS

Any manual or textbook that lists varieties of training methods — and there are several — would be extensive. In the next few pages we will discuss six commonly used and effective teaching techniques, beginning with *Job Instruction Training* and *Dialogue Training*.



Job Instruction Training is the traditional method used on most jobs, and is familiar to most of us. It is useful for skill-type training — showing someone how to do something; for instance, training a housekeeper to clean a guest room.

Dialogue Training is a new technique which creates realistic situations in which the accompanying dialogue is intended to teach. It usually has the triple effect of improving the actual ability (motor skill), deepening understanding (cognitive habit), as well as improving attitude (affective habit).

Following these types of training methods are discussions of *On-The-Job Training*, *Role Playing*, *Conference Training*, and *Group Instruction*. Each of these has a place in the training program, and the application of each will be explained.

JOB INSTRUCTION TRAINING

Contributed by Dr. Tunis H. Dekker and Dr. Peter C. Haines, Michigan State University.

When a person receives a carefully worked-out sequence of instruction from one who fully knows the job, he can master it himself in a surprisingly short time and do a very acceptable piece of work. Following is a sequence outline, start to finish:

SEQUENCE OF INSTRUCTION

Prepare The Instruction (Get Ready)

1. Decide the behavior desired.
2. Analyze the material
Use Job Description for:
Skill training: List important steps.
Key points
Information training: List important facts.
Minor points
Attitude situations: List observed behavior.
Probable causes
Possible solution

3. Plan the training.
Using training schedule — decide:
who is to be taught *what*
how is it to be taught
where and *when* to instruct
performance expected
4. Prepare to Instruct.
Review training checklist (page 12)
Secure teaching supplies and equipment
Arrange work place
Study job break-down
Review four basic steps you will be using
(they are outlined on pages 7 and 8)

HOW TO INSTRUCT

(Use Four Basic Steps)

- Step 1. Prepare the learner:**
Put learner at ease.
State specific job.
Find out what he knows about job.
Develop interest and desire to learn.
Organize material to be learned in correct learning sequence.
- Step 2. Present the material:**
Use the following sequence to present the material: Tell — show — demonstrate — question the student.
Present one step at a time clearly, patiently, and in the correct learning sequence as just stated.
Stress key points by emphasis and repetition.

Present no more than learn can master at one time.

- Step 3. Try out under supervision:**
Have learner do job — correct errors.
Have him repeat and explain steps and key points.
Question him — why — what — how.
Continue until *you* know *he* knows.
- Step 4. Check on learning:**
Check on understanding and performance.
Correct errors — reteach.
Put him on his own.
Tell him where to go for help.
Taper off coaching to normal supervision.
Your motto throughout preparation and instruction should be: "If the instructor has taught, the worker can perform."

EXAMPLE OF RECOMMENDED METHOD

(Instructing housekeeper to clean guest room)

- Step 1. Prepare learner:**
- Accompany housekeeper to a guest room which is ready for cleaning. Have equipment ready in room.
 - Explain what you plan to do.
 - Ask if she has cleaned guests' rooms before and what she knows about the job.
 - Describe why high standards of cleanliness are vital to a profitable lodging business.
 - Arrange tools and equipment for use and know the proper sequence of each item.

Step 2. Present material

- Push housekeeper's cart loaded with linens and cleaning materials into guest room. Park it between bathroom and bed(s).
- If room is to be aired, open windows.
- Strip bed(s). First remove pillowcases. Work from head of the bed to the foot. Put dirty linens in dirty-linen bag in cart.
- Carry clean linens to bed farthest from the bathroom.
- Make the bed(s) by one-corner-complete method.
 - Spread both sheets, adjust at head. Put on and adjust blankets and bedspread.
 - Put on clean pillowcases. Adjust pillow in place on bed.
 - Adjust and miter sheets at foot of bed; adjust bedspread.
 - Finish other foot in the same way.
 - Walk to head of bed and repeat.

Parking the cart here will save many steps.

Save steps by making only one trip from cart to bed and back to cart.

This method saves at least three trips around each bed.

- Take bathroom cleaning materials into bathroom. Put disinfectant in toilet. Remove soiled towels, etc. Clean in this sequence: tub or shower, mirror, lavatory, toilet.
- Wash floor and return cleaning materials to cart.
- Replace glasses, towels, bath mat, soap, etc.
- Dust the guest room and furniture. Start at nearest corner and work around the room ending up at the cart. Check dresser drawers and wardrobe for forgotten items and litter. Clear tops of tables and other furniture before dusting. Don't overlook light bulbs in lamps, mirror tops, telephone and stand, window sills, and venetian blinds. Dust desk, checking needed desk supplies. Empty waste baskets, pick up desk supplies and put in place. Check:
 - Arrangement and supply of stationery and cards.
 - Pen to see if clean and usable.
- Take vacuum cleaner and starting at farthest corner from door, vacuum rug (or floor). If you have hard surfaced floors, a dry mop treated with wax-base material is good for removing fine dirt and grit.

Use 2 sponges of different colors. One for scrub pail to clean toilet and floor and the other for hand bowl and tub (or use old towels of different colors).

To save time have two dust mitts, one for each hand.

Use a lightweight vacuum cleaner and vacuum every day so that dirt does not stay in the rug foundation. When walked on, such dirt cuts the rug fibers. (Carpet sweepers can be used to pick up noticeable litter.)

EXAMPLE OF RECOMMENDED METHOD (Instructing housekeeper to clean guest room)

Step 2. Present material (Continued)

11. Return vacuum cleaner to cart. Remove cart from room. Make a final room inspection. Balance pictures, arrange furniture in balance, etc.
12. Note items that should be attended to during next weekly or periodic cleaning. This periodic cleaning includes washing rugs, drapes, bedspreads, blankets, mattress pads, and venetian blinds, washing and waxing of tile floors, etc.

Step 3. Try out under supervision.

After you have completely done a room (explaining as you go), then move to another room which is to be made up. Now have the learner clean the room while you observe her methods and thoroughness. Ask her to give you the *reasons why* the job should be done in this particular way. Correct any

errors which might be committed. Question the learner and ask her about the various key points which you wish stressed. Continue the supervision until learner has done several rooms so that you are convinced that she knows exactly how it is to be done.

Step 4. Check on learning.

For about two weeks after the instruction, make a careful inspection of each guest room which was cleaned by the new housekeeper to ascertain the quality of her work. If any weak spots occur, show her where the problem is and how to correct it. Explain to her where to get advice and help if it is needed. After the two-week period, place her under normal supervision. An occasional expression of interest and concern for her work on your part will show her you are interested in her success and achievements on the job.

DIALOGUE TRAINING

Foremost among the methods for achieving motivational results as well as job-know-how is that of dialogue training. Dr. Joseph W. Thompson, formerly Director, School of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management, Michigan State University, has applied dialogue training to the public hospitality business with excellent results. He states in a series of articles in the *Hotel Monthly*:*

"If you want to put reality and creativity based upon sound psychological and educational learning principles into your training program, try dialogue. That is, create realistic situations involving relations between people, and then have participants discuss the dialogue which illustrates these situations. Dialogue eliminates the need for skits or play acting, and it doesn't have the disadvantages of these traditional training devices. It reduces the problem of horseplay, it eliminates the trainee's embarrassment at play acting and it saves time. Above all, it trains people to think; it isolates and pinpoints the idea that the trainee wants to make. But the ideas come from the trainees, not the trainer."¹

*Joseph W. Thompson, "Situation Management: A Strategy of Selling and Training for the Hotel Industry." Evanston: *The Hotel Monthly*, series of articles, 1961.

[Some original research work in the application of dialogue training to restaurant management has been made by Dianne Adams Heuston, former graduate student in Restaurant Management at Michigan State University.

PLANNING DIALOGUE TRAINING

First step in planning the use of dialogue training is to obtain verbatim transcriptions of conversations held on the job. These may be recorded by the trainer posing as a guest, between waitress and guest, or the waitress instructed to report on some examples of dialogue between waitress and hostess or cashier.

After representative samples of actual situations have been collected (a sample dialogue is presented in the next few pages to give you the idea), the next step is to carefully study and analyze the dialogues. You should look for situations that particularly point up needs; i.e., for giving the guest better service, showing more courtesy, or using an improved sales approach. The trainer should be able to identify those phrases that embody the desired sales principles and hospitality techniques he wishes to convey; that is, the hospitality message he wishes to "sell."

Dialogues finally selected for the first phases of the training program should be prepared on lantern slides so they can be projected on a screen. We recommend that the dialogues also be duplicated on paper. The trainees like to make notes about the dialogues and the written sheets provide a convenient way to do this. This also instills self-confidence in the trainee and encourages him to enter into the discussion. As you have noted, this method should

influence the employee's *attitude*, improve his *interest*, and build *self-reliance*. It usually increases *enthusiasm* as well.

The discussion constitutes the most important and final part of the dialogue training.

TRAINING PROCEDURE

Here is the suggested procedure for the whole training:

(a). Trainer presents a brief explanation of the dialogue situation prior to presenting the dialogue, and explains the viewer's role.

(b). Dialogue presented on screen. Dittod copies handed out.

(c). Silent period during which trainees study the screen and their copies of the dialogue. They *think about what was wrong and what should be improved* — the proper way to have conducted the dialogue.

(d). Trainer now proceeds to ask questions of the group such as "what was wrong?" "do you think the employee said the right thing?" "was the guest satisfied?" "could an additional sale have been made?" "could the conversation be improved?" "how?", etc.

(e). Group members give their ideas as to how the dialogue should have been conducted. Trainer should try to involve *every person in the discussion*. If some don't speak up, he should call on them and ask for their opinions.

(f). The trainer then presents a brief review of the dialogue, and summarizes the consensus of the group as to what the *best way would have been* for handling the particular situation presented in the initial dialogue.

(g). The above steps are repeated for each dialogue projected on the screen.

SOME RESULTS

The objective of dialogue training is to teach employees to think about typical situations they meet on the job and about the best possible dialogue to use in that particular situation. Actually it is the fact that dialogue training is based upon actual situations between customers and employees, employees and supervisors that makes it so interesting and enjoyable. No unrealistic material dulls the learner's interest. He enters into the training experience enthusiastically because he senses that the material presented is exactly what really happens. His interpretation of what would have been said and done makes a lasting impression on his mind. This type of thinking strongly

motivates him to try to handle the situation "right" at the first opportunity which next presents itself. Thus, dialogue training helps him to understand a situation thoroughly, and so he becomes more confident, assured, and capable.

Remember, though, that the immediate purpose of dialogue training is to give the guest and customer *better service*. Better and more satisfying service results in greater sales and profits.

SAMPLE DIALOGUES

In order to furnish guidelines toward organizing a training program, nine sample dialogues are given. Dialogues 1 through 4 involve waitress and guest; dialogues 5 through 9 relate to reservations or room service.

Dialogue 1 — Knowledge of the menu.

- WAITRESS: "May I take your order now?"
GUEST: "I see you have lasagne on the menu. What is this dish, anyway?"
WAITRESS: "Well . . . ah . . . now I don't really know just what that is . . . let me go and ask the chef."
GUEST: "Never mind, I'll take a cheeseburger and a cup of coffee."

Dialogue 2 — Making suggestions.

- GUEST: "What do you have special out there tonight?"
WAITRESS: "We have all kinds of good stuff."
GUEST: "I notice you have chicken cacciatore on the menu. Is it good? How does it look?"
WAITRESS: "Everything is good."
GUEST: "Bring me some of that chicken cacciatore."
WAITRESS: (No reply, writes notation on check and leaves table.)

Dialogue 3 — Increasing sales through suggestions.

- (Guest escorts his best girl into fine restaurant for dinner. There is an attractive display of wines near their table.)
WAITRESS: "Are you ready to order now?"
GUEST: "Yes, we would like that sirloin dinner for two, medium, with the chef's salad, lima beans, and coffee."
WAITRESS: "Thank you. It will take a few minutes to prepare your steaks."
GUEST TO GIRL FRIEND: (After waitress leaves) "I would have ordered wine, but she didn't ask me if we wanted any and I'll be darned if I'm going to beg her to sell us a bottle."

Dialogue 4 - Responding to suggestions from supervisor.

- HOSTESS: "Mary, Mr. Hanson (the manager) would like to increase the sales of soup and we are stressing this for the next two months. When you are taking orders, why don't you suggest a delicious cup or bowl of soup?"
- MARY: "That's fine. Are we going to have a special card on the menu about the soup?"
- HOSTESS: "Yes, there will be a different soup each day." (To the first guest the following day) "We're featuring garbanzo soup today, have you ever tried it? It's delicious. . . ."
- GUEST: "Never heard of it, what's it like?"
- MARY: "It's a Spanish soup. It has beans in meat broth and flavored with chorizo sausage."
- GUEST: "I'll take a chance, bring me some."

Dialogue 5 - Being polite, use of words. (front desk)

- PROSPECTIVE GUEST: "I'd like to register for a room."
DESK CLERK: "Do you have a reservation?"
PROSPECTIVE GUEST: "No."
DESK CLERK: "Then you will have to step over to the reservation desk."

Dialogue 6 - Being helpful and polite. (front desk)

- PROSPECTIVE GUEST: "Do you have a room?"
DESK CLERK: "I'm sorry but we are all booked up for today."
PROSPECTIVE GUEST: "Well, where could I find a room?"
DESK CLERK: "As far as I know, every place in town is filled."

Dialogue 7 - Room sales technique (front desk)

- PROSPECTIVE GUEST: "What are your rates for rooms?"
DESK CLERK: "Well, sir, how many are in your party?"
PROSPECTIVE GUEST: "Just the wife and myself."
DESK CLERK: "That will be \$8.00."

Dialogue 8 - Guest's complaint

- GUEST (TO DESK CLERK): "That shower head in my room just doesn't work right."
CLERK: "Oh my! Did you get that room? I'll put it down again and see if we can't get it fixed this time."

Dialogue 9 - Guest Courtesy

- (Bellman near front desk, greeting guest with considerable luggage):
"Good afternoon, sir, may I help you with your luggage?"
"Yes, that will be fine."
(Obtaining key from desk clerk):
"You are in 631. You take the passenger elevator to the sixth floor. I'll take the freight elevator and you meet me on the sixth floor."
- GUEST:
BELLMAN:

OTHER TRAINING METHODS

ROLE PLAYING

Role playing is a training device in which the trainee learns by observing and taking part in a dramatization of actual problem situations. For example, a waitress pretends she is serving one of her fellow workers as a guest. Under the supervision of an experienced trainer, she learns to do and say things correctly by play-acting the part.

CONFERENCE TRAINING

Conference training utilizes the technique of group discussion of problems and an exchange of ideas. It also affords an effective method of influencing the attitude of group members. Each person receives practice in influencing other members of his immediate conference group. This is a stimulating and rewarding experience for the employee.

GROUP INSTRUCTION

Group instruction makes use of group classes. A competent instructor must be provided. This might be organized under the study program of the Educational Institute of the American Hotel and Motel Association. This organization, located at Kellogg Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, also offers a good selection of home study (correspondence) courses available at nominal prices. University or college short courses or study of books and trade journals are additional ways of providing training and educational opportunities.

APPRENTICE TRAINING

Another training concept is that of apprentice training. This is an organized program consisting of the formal study of prescribed training manuals or books, lectures and demonstrations, the showing of films, visits to suppliers, etc., in addition to under-study training under an experienced trainer. The apprentice learns by being an assistant for a prescribed period of time on the job in addition to classroom work.

ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING

Learning by doing is the most meaningful way to teach an employee. Listening to a description of the job and viewing training films are helpful to insure top quality training. However, the actual doing is culmination of any training system. This makes the

most lasting and influential effect on the employee. So dialogue training, role playing, and other progressive methods, while strongly recommended, must be supplemented by the learning-doing process itself. Good supervision in the actual working situation is essential for good on-the-job training. How well does your supervisor or department head train? Has he taken instruction or attended a short course on training methods? It is one thing to *know* the job and another thing to *train* the employee. The trainer usually needs training in his role of teacher, administered either by the manager or by a professional educator such as a local school teacher. A manager with a large staff can often arrange a short course of his own for his entire staff or, better, for a select group of staff teachers, using the help of his state university school of education in cooperation with local school personnel. Supervisors or department heads who have received such instruction in teaching methods are then much better equipped to do an effective job of training the employees.

TRAINING CONTINUITY

Regardless of the methods used in any training system, every employee, supervisor, and manager needs new educational experiences which constantly keep him informed and increase his knowledge and ability.

All training must be considered as only a part of a regular program of *continuing education*. New ways of doing things, new equipment, new processes, new materials, and new food items are appearing continually and should be taught. Few people can operate continually at top-notch efficiency. They tend to get sloppy or indifferent from time to time, and to develop bad habits through lack of good supervision. Progressive management must therefore provide every employee with the opportunity to study and improve himself. *A regular training program coupled with re-training is the answer to superior employee performance.*

An additional bonus of a continuous program is more employees within the organization who are prepared to accept jobs of greater responsibility. Because they were encouraged to undergo training and improve themselves, they are now ready to step into higher level jobs when needed.

EVALUATION SHEET (An additional management aid)

Purpose of an evaluation sheet is to list items which are oftentimes areas of weakness in individual employees and which need to be strengthened. An additional use of the sheets is to point up items which should be covered in training.

The evaluation sheet is used only by supervisors. For instance, for a housekeeper it would be used by the manager in cooperation with the head housekeeper. No information concerning the rating should be given to the individual worker. After some period of trial, particular weaknesses, if uncorrected, should be brought to the worker's attention. This should be done with the proper use of psychology by saying something complimentary about the person's work and then mentioning the weak spot. The thought uppermost in mind should always be, what can you, as manager, do to help the employee? Giving her plenty of encouragement and understanding would be one way to show that you are truly interested in helping her to become a superior housekeeper in every respect.

For each housekeeper, review each item on the evaluation sheet and rate as "poor," "fair," "good," or "excellent," placing entries under the heading *Present Status*. Without doubt a variety of ratings will be given and of course, the objective is to eventually make them all "excellent."

Do not make any entries in the *Progress* column at outset of the training program. As the program progresses, make entries such as "some," "much," "none" or similar appropriate remark. A monthly rating program is suggested but this will depend upon the nature of the training program.

Keep in mind that the end objective of the evaluation program is to create superior guest services through high quality personnel. This means employees who have received effective and imaginative training. Individual favoritism towards any particular employee has no place in the rating process. Supervisors and managers must be as fair and impersonal as possible, trying to help each employee improve and make the most of his potentialities. An abundance of deficits found on Evaluation Sheets may reflect on the training rather than the employees.

JOB INSTRUCTION TRAINING CHECK LIST*

(A Reference and Guide for Instructors)

*Prepared by Dr. Peter G. Haines, College of Education, Michigan State University.

Can I say "Yes" in answering the following questions?

A. GET READY TO INSTRUCT

1. Plan the training:

In planning, do I know

(a) of the worker:

- That he needs to learn a job? - - - - -
- The job he must learn? - - - - -
- What can he do now? - - - - -
- From his background and interests, what can be used in his training?
- How quickly he learns? - - - - -

YES NO

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(b) of the training situation?

- Where instruction will be most effective? - - - - -
- When instruction can be arranged? - - - - -
- When instruction will be most effective? - - - - -

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(c) of the job:

- What specific job operations are to be learned? - - - - -
- The level of performance the job requires? - - - - -
- How to do the job myself at that level? - - - - -

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Analyze the material:

Have I asked myself:

- Is the learning time available adequate to teach the job? - - - - -
- What type of break-down shall I use? - - - - -

_____	_____
_____	_____

if a manipulative skill—

- Is the job title descriptive of job? - - - - -
- Do I know where training should be done? - - - - -
- Do I know time required in training? - - - - -
- Are training equipment and supplies available at training place?
- Are important steps arranged in logical order? - - - - -
- Are all key points included? - - - - -
- Has break-down been checked against job? - - - - -

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

if information training—

- What type of information is needed? - - - - -
- For which purpose is it needed? - - - - -
- What time is required? - - - - -
- What equipment and supplies are needed? - - - - -
- What are the important steps? - - - - -
- What is the logical order of steps for the "purpose"? - - - - -
- What are technical names and minor points? - - - - -
- Have I checked information needed against break-down? - - - - -

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

if an attitude situation—

- Do I know the attitude needing correction? - - - - -
- Do I know the parties concerned? - - - - -
- Have I considered the personalities involved? - - - - -
- Have I considered the best time to discuss the problem? - - - - -
- Have any needs for equipment and supplies been arranged? - - - - -
- How much time will be needed? - - - - -
- Do I have all the facts on "observed behavior"? - - - - -
- Have I considered all possible causes? - - - - -
- Have I satisfactory remedies to suggest? - - - - -
- Is situation still in the annoyance stage? - - - - -
- Have I considered all possible results of failure? - - - - -

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

B. USE OF FOUR-STEP METHOD

Step 1 - Prepare the learner

Have I considered how:

	YES	NO
to put him at ease		
What actions will put him at ease? - - - - -	_____	_____
What interests can be aroused to get the participants on a cordial basis? - - - - -	_____	_____
How to make a natural approach? - - - - -	_____	_____
How I can make an honest and tactful approach? - - - - -	_____	_____
to state the specific job - can I		
Describe the job accurately and simply? - - - - -	_____	_____
Relate it to his work? - - - - -	_____	_____
to find out what he knows about the job - Do I know		
What experience he has had? - - - - -	_____	_____
What to ask to find out what he knows about job? - - - - -	_____	_____
to develop his interest and desire to learn - Do I know		
The interesting features of the job? - - - - -	_____	_____
The story of the job? - - - - -	_____	_____
The importance of the job to his success? - - - - -	_____	_____
The need he has for the job in satisfying a natural desire or ambition? - - - - -	_____	_____
to place him in the most advantageous learning position - Have I considered		
Where he can more nearly be in position of the manager? - - - - -	_____	_____
Where learner can see, hear, and get the "feel" of the job? - - - - -	_____	_____

Step 2 - Present the material:

Have I considered how I shall

Tell-show-demonstrate-question		
What I shall "tell" and how? - - - - -	_____	_____
What I shall "show" and how? - - - - -	_____	_____
What combinations of various methods I shall use? - - - - -	_____	_____
The use I can make of visual aids and exhibits? - - - - -	_____	_____
How I can provoke thought through questions? - - - - -	_____	_____
Present one step at a time, (clearly, patiently, and in correct learning sequence)		
Have I considered:		
How to explain steps clearly? - - - - -	_____	_____
The places at which the learner can go wrong and how to overcome them? - - - - -	_____	_____
The best approach to each step? - - - - -	_____	_____
The reasons for each step (if needed) - - - - -	_____	_____
Stress key points		
Do I know all the key points? - - - - -	_____	_____
Can I show their bearing on the important step? - - - - -	_____	_____
Present no more than learner can master		
Am I sure of the safety precautions? - - - - -	_____	_____
Do I know what the learner can master? - - - - -	_____	_____
Do I realize difficulty of the job to a beginner? - - - - -	_____	_____
Have I made special preparation to present the job in a simple manner? - - - - -	_____	_____
Have I considered how much to teach before asking for a response from learner? - - - - -	_____	_____

Step 3 - Apply the learnings (Try out under supervision)

Have learner do the job - correct errors.		
Am I prepared to provide adequate practice by the learner? - - - - -	_____	_____
Have I decided what errors are commonly made and am I prepared to reteach them? - - - - -	_____	_____
Have him repeat and explain steps and key points.		
Am I sure he clearly understands the steps and key points? - - - - -	_____	_____
Question him-why-what-how.		
Do I have questions in mind I can ask? - - - - -	_____	_____
Will my questions indicate the worker's judgment of the job? - - - - -	_____	_____

Continue until you know he knows.

Am I prepared to insist on sufficient repetition to get correct performance?

YES NO

Step 4 - Check on learnings

Have I considered how to

Check on understandings and performance

Is questioning enough?

Is watching his performance enough?

Correct error - reteach

Am I prepared to stop the learner courteously and reteach when he makes an error?

Put him on his own

Have I considered how soon to put him on his own?

Tell him where to go for help

Have I decided to whom he should go?

Does the other person know he may come for help?

Taper off coaching to normal supervision

Have I considered how often to check on learner?

Have I made note on a calendar of gradually reduced checking until it becomes normal supervision?

Do I feel that success of the worker in learning the job is largely my responsibility?

Am I ready to teach?

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