

# TRAINING ASSISTANTS DEMANDS SKILL

Developing an assistant is one of the challenging jobs an administrator can have. When the trainee takes over a top-level position he probably will adhere to the good business practices learned on the job.

Developing an assistant is hard work, requiring careful attention to details and explanations while yielding an enormous amount of confidence in and responsibility to the trainee. Here are a few items that may help in attempting to develop an assistant:

Give him the facts: Only by being informed about his responsibilities and authorities can an assistant get a clear picture of what he is to do and how he should do it. A job description should be developed to give a trainee some guidelines. Personally introduce the assistant to those with whom he will be working.

Smooth his path: Request employees who work with your assistant to cooperate with him. Inform everyone of the duties he will be performing; then impress upon him the importance of earning the respect and confidence of these employees.

Share knowledge: You must keep the assistant informed of your plans, your progress and your reasons for making each move. If you expect him to do a good job, you must share your knowledge with your assistant. Warn him of problem areas and see that he learns the ins and outs of working with the people working for you. Neglecting to provide background information keeps the assistant in the dark and prevents him from performing to the best of his ability as well as makes him look bad in the eyes of those with whom he must work.

Add responsibility gradually: Let the assistant get a feel for his job. Then gradually give him additional small doses of responsibility. By working in this fashion he will

gradually absorb additional knowledge and pick up those qualities that make a manager competent.

Hold a loose rein: An assistant who is constantly being checked on gets the feeling he is not trusted and this retards his growth as a manager. Let loose and give your assistant a free rein; let him make decisions and learn by his mistakes. You don't want a trainee to lose his initiative, but keeping him under your finger can snuff out any spark or flame of initiative.

Give him authority: Give your assistant a task and tell him to get the job done and to come to you only if he sees problems or something is out of line. Encourage him to bring one or more suggested solutions to any problems he may bring you. Instead of giving him answers to problems, guide him to making the correct decision.

Remember that you are in control: Delegate responsibility and authority but remember that you are in control.

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