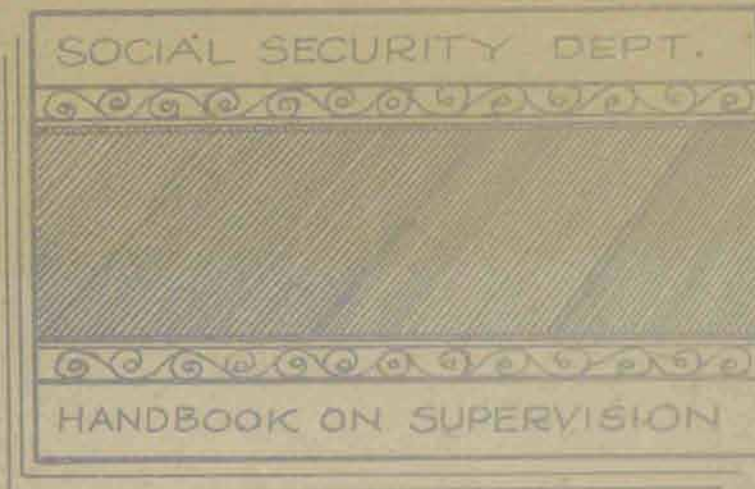


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HANDBOOK

ON

S U P E R V I S I O N.

1958

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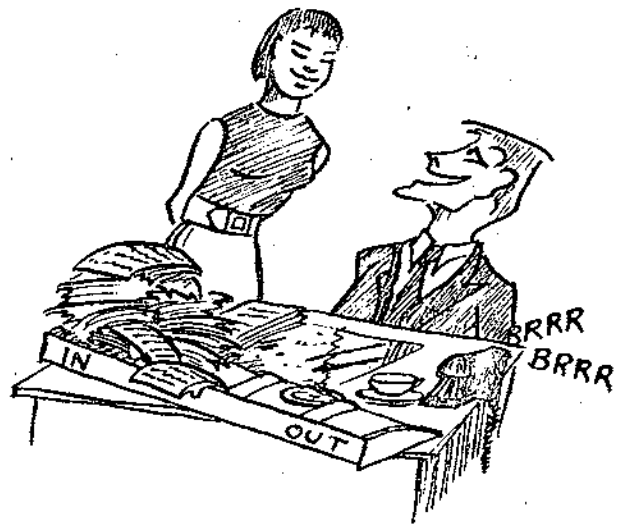
## FOREWORD

The general efficiency of the Department and the quality of the service which it renders to the public are dependent to a great extent upon good supervision of staff.

Following your appointment to a position above basic grade you will sooner or later be required to supervise the work of other people. At all times your own efficiency will determine the efficiency of your section.

This handbook sets out your responsibilities as a supervisor and outlines some useful principles and techniques of supervision.

## THE NEED FOR GOOD SUPERVISION



### 1. What is a Supervisor?

In the Public Service it is not easy to say where supervision begins and ends. There is a line of supervision throughout the Service from small to big positions, and it is perhaps one of the most important jobs in the Service. The successful working of the Service is directly related to the quality of its supervision.

In this Department there are few examples of supervision pure and simple as almost invariably supervisory and functional responsibilities go hand in hand. We can define a supervisor as a person **IN CHARGE** of others, who **LEADS, CO-ORDINATES, CHECKS, GIVES DECISIONS** and **GETS RESULTS** by co-operative effort within his particular group.

He is the person employed to ensure **EFFICIENT OUTPUT** at **MINIMUM COST** and he does this by ensuring that his staff are -

- (a) Using the best methods within the most suitable organisational structure.
- (b) Properly trained.
- (c) Getting the work done economically, efficiently, and effectively.

The **ABILITY** to supervise is now recognised as a very valuable quality in an officer and it is commonly accepted that supervisory ability is something quite distinct from, but quite as necessary as technical skill. The best supervision is the supervision which gets results and that is what the Department really asks and expects from you as a supervisor.

Supervision is your career - and it can be a very satisfactory career if you wish - but the Department and the Service are not prepared to advance any supervisor beyond his present level **UNLESS HE ACCEPTS HIS SUPERVISORY OBLIGATIONS!** The Department can stand or fall by the quality of the officers who direct its work - and it cannot afford to fall.

There is a tendency on the part of good desk officers, promoted to their first supervisory position largely on the basis of a high work output and an adequate personality to go on being good desk officers; the invariable result is that they are not effective supervisors. We do not suggest that you should attempt to delegate yourself out of a job. First line supervision is not a full time job. But as supervisors you have a **DUAL TASK**. To do your own work and to get work done by others. You will agree that the second function is the harder.

Ability to handle staff is the hallmark of an executive. His own unaided efforts will yield the product of one man alone. But the power to animate others will enable him to harness their energies and release the fruits of many.

This power is patent in some people, apparent to everybody who comes in contact with them; in others it is latent and has to be developed by training and experience. Unhappily there are no ten easy rules or six simple lessons, as far as they are concerned. They have to learn the hard way - by sedulous study and practice.

It is the supervisor who is personally responsible for the job. As he cannot do it all himself, he has to depend on others to do it for him. Obviously he is at their mercy if he lacks the competence to direct them in their work. He might as well try to move mountains with a shovel as try to get efficient teamwork without managerial skill.

The task of the supervisor, then, is to get work done by other people - and to get it done as quickly, as economically and as effectively as possible.

## 2. Supervision analysed:

On "Chemical" analysis, Supervision breaks down into three elements - the Supervisor, the Staff and the Work. The Supervisor, therefore, has three responsibilities:-

- (a) Responsibility for his staff (their efficiency and morale).
- (b) Responsibility for the work (its quantity and quality).
- (c) Responsibility for himself (his personal efficiency, attitude and conduct).

His task can be conveniently considered by looking at each of these responsibilities.

This handbook is divided into three parts in which we shall be dealing with each of these responsibilities in detail.

## 3. The Supervisor's job.

The supervisor's job is largely one of co-ordination in that he has to tie together a lot of separate units and integrate their efforts. He has to see that the whole job is not held up through delay on one section or its quality marred by defective work on one section. The uniform flow of work of uniformly good standard can be secured by the methods which will be outlined in this handbook.

The supervisor is a key man and the state of his section - perhaps even of the whole organisation - is likely to depend on whether he is active or passive, positive or negative. Promotion to supervisory rank is not the signal to cease work and sit back. It is a spur to still greater personal effort. Those who are chosen should master the work as never before and be right on top of it all the time. The temptation to coast along has to be resolutely resisted. The supervisor must be up and doing all the time.

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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

Part 1. For his Staff

General responsibilities

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Leadership, Morale and Staff Relations

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Control and Discipline

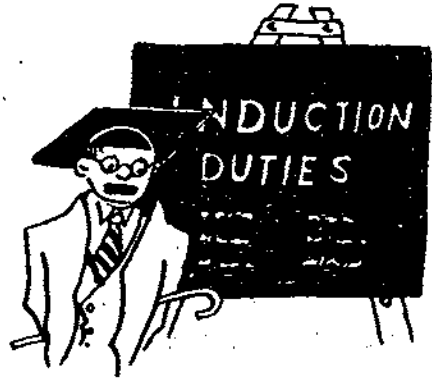
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Assessment and Reporting

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What people want from their work  
and what should be expected of them.

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### GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The supervisor's responsibilities for his staff will firstly be considered under the following headings:

1. Induction.
2. Training.
3. Assigning work and directing those to whom it is assigned.
4. Assisting with problems and correcting mistakes.
5. Keeping staff informed and enlisting their help in problems.
6. Encouraging suggestions.
7. Dealing with complaints and dissatisfaction.

### INDUCTION

The procedure for induction of new staff as set out in Appendix B, of the Staff Rules should be read and followed by all supervisors. We shall now deal with the induction of a newcomer after placement on a section. These notes will also apply to some extent to an employee transferred to your section from another part of the office.

The newcomer to your section faces the disturbing prospect of having to learn entirely new work in strange surroundings. He finds it difficult at first, particularly if he is a junior fresh from school, to adjust quickly to his working environment. Your aim is to get him settled in as smoothly and speedily as possible to the stage where he can be trained as an effective unit of your work team. It is your job to break down the new employee's natural diffidence, make him feel at ease, establish him on a good footing with his co-workers, and build up his confidence by exhibiting a friendly and helpful attitude.

He must be made to feel that he is not only at home but that he is wanted and will be expected to share and participate in the scheme of things within the office family.

Your new recruit may come on to the section when the work is in arrears. Let the work stay in arrears for the period necessary to make your recruit feel at home in the job.

In carrying out your part under the Induction Procedure:

#### DON'T

- Entrust anyone else with his induction.
- Give him the impression his arrival is inopportune or disruptive of current work.
- Leave him to his own devices.
- Put him out to graze on an office manual. It's indigestible fare for a newcomer.
- Overawe him.

If you have made a good job of induction, your recruit will feel from the outset that he is part of your team and have confidence in you as his supervisor.

First impressions are lasting and the treatment a newcomer receives in the first few weeks of service are highly determining in the question of whether he will form the right attitudes towards his work and settle down as a useful member of the staff. As the first immediate controlling officer you have the most important part to play in the induction of a newcomer to the department.

## TRAINING.

### The objectives of training.

The basic aim of all training is to improve efficiency and increase production. Training is not an end in itself but only a means to an end - the improvement of production. There is no profit in giving training merely for training's sake - we must keep the objective ever before us and plan our training accordingly.

Organised training is the answer to many of our difficulties. It counteracts staff shortages and staff turnover by making new appointees effective quickly.

Supervisors in their anxiety to get the job done often overlook the fact that time spent in training staff is well repaid in better work, fewer mistakes and less wasted effort all round.

Good training produces good morale. The recruit who feels that he is being fitted to carry out his duties will work better than the man who is left to pick up the work as he goes along. Learning by trial and error leaves the employee with the feeling that he is wasting his time and no one cares - his standard of work suffers accordingly and eventually more often than not he looks for a job elsewhere.

Furthermore we must look to the development of the individuals on our staff. This applies to women as well as to men.

One writer says - "The best type of executive is deeply interested in the process whereby his assistants from month to month and year to year continually expand their grasp of the work".

### Your responsibility for training.

The Department's Staff Training programme as set out in Part XI of the Staff Rules should be studied by all supervisors in conjunction with these notes.

It is your duty to supplement general training with training on the job. All senior officers are in agreement that "on-job" training is the most important type of training for our basic grade staff. This means that the part played by junior controlling officers is a most important one in the training of our staff.

Let us divide the training in which you are interested into

1. Job rotation.
2. Training in the rules and procedures affecting the section's work - Job instruction; Desk files; Study of Manuals.
3. Training for development.

### Job rotation.

Read paragraphs 166 - 170 of the Staff Rules.

If we can see the importance of "on-job" training it follows logically that there must be an organised system of job rotation in an office.

### Advantages of Job Rotation.

#### 1. To the Supervisor.

- (a) Ensures a versatile and well trained staff. This enables contingencies such as absences, sudden resignations and staff shortages to be coped with.
- (b) Gives more scope for delegation.
- (c) Enables him to train competent under-studies.
- (d) Facilitates staff assessment and shows aptitudes of employees for different kinds of work.

## 2. To the Officer.

- (a) Maintain his interest in the work. This is particularly important for junior staff.
- (b) Develops his capacities earlier.
- (c) Fits him for increasing responsibility at an early date.

### Limiting Factors.

- (a) Calibre of Staff.
- (b) Establishment.
- (c) Co-operation of Staff.
- (d) The Department's job rotation plan.

### Objections raised in practice

### Validity of these

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Allegations that job rotation upsets the work.                            | This should not apply if changes are correctly timed and a reasonable period is allowed for handing over. Changes are facilitated by adequate desk files and good "on-job" training.   |
| 2. That certain classes of officers are not interested in learning new work. | Resistance to change is natural in some people. A full explanation of the reasons for job rotation is a help.  |
| 3. That constant changes are upsetting to section morale.                    | This is a generalisation hard to support by actual instances. Lack of change can be more upsetting to morale.  |
| 4. That officers do not receive adequate training on the various jobs.       | Some people learn more slowly than others. Generally speaking officers should not be moved to a new job until they are competent in their present one. However it is good for juniors always to have some work which is a bit beyond them. |
| 5. That some staff are untrainable.  | We sometimes tend to take a pessimistic view of the other fellow's capabilities. However, with some older appointees we do have to limit, or cease job rotation.   |
| 6. That job rotation is not possible without a full establishment.           | Lack of job rotation can be the cause of staff shortages through staff losing interest and resigning. To cease job rotation when there is a shortage of staff will only aggravate the position.  |

### The job rotation of graded officers:

If you are not receiving changes of duties in accordance with the Department's job rotation plan you should ask for it and see that you get it.

Job rotation keeps graded officers up to date. It brings new ideas to a job and enables controlling officers to assess relative merit.

### Job Instruction:

Read paragraphs 171 - 176 of the Staff Rules.

An outline of job instruction methods is given in Appendix "A" to this handbook.

### Desk Files.

Read paragraphs 177 - 181 of the Staff Rules.

Desk files if carefully and efficiently prepared are an invaluable help to basic grade staff in learning a job and they reduce considerably the amount of instruction necessary by Section Clerks.

It is primarily the responsibility of the Section Clerk to see that there is an adequate desk file on every basic grade position on the section. The efficiency of Section Clerks is judged to some extent by the quality of their work documentation.

### Study of Rules and Procedures.

Read paragraphs 182 - 184 of the Staff Rules.

In all training there must be time allowed out of the job for discovering principles. It is best to encourage your staff under training to set aside a short period each day for reading the manual or manuals concerning their work. First thing in the morning before work is commenced, is really the best time.

The study of manuals is made more interesting and is more valuable if supplemented by group study as outlined in paragraph 189 of the Staff Rules.

One word of warning here. There has been a practice in some offices for newcomers to a Section to be asked to read over a manual before commencing a job. Reading a manual is bewildering to a newcomer with no practical experience of the work and he learns little from it. Manuals should be read after the job has been taken over.

Staff should also be trained to use the manuals in their day to day work. By this means graded officers can save themselves time as they will be referred to less often regarding problems which arise.

### Training for Development.

Many of your basic grade staff will become supervisors in their turn as you people move up the promotion ladder. You are responsible for developing their potential, in particular such qualities as:-

- Capacity for decision
- Willingness to accept responsibility
- Judgment
- Initiative
- Precision
- Expression
- Enthusiasm

You can best do this by progressively assigning more difficult work to those of your team who show their fitness for it. You will find that most people react favourably to increasing responsibility and will regard it as a challenge. Don't hold a man back because you are fearful of losing him through promotion. Your job as a supervisor CARRIES A RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAINING.

### Another View of the Training of Juniors (The Accountants' Journal July 1957)

Staff training is a matter of teaching good habits.

That, in a word, is the aim and purpose of those who do take seriously their responsibilities to their staff. Supervisors should be best able to pass on these good habits, for the presumption is that they have themselves acquired at least some of the necessary qualities.

What are these good habits?

#### 1. Reliability.

This may well be the most important of all. The executive will overlook many faults in his assistant if he knows he can rely on something being done and disposed of, once the order has been given. Top management must delegate, and delegation must be to those who have shown that they can really be relied on to take effective action. There is nothing more aggravating to an executive than having continually to prod the assistant's

memory. Nothing more galling than to ask John Jones if something or other has been attended to - "Oh no, I forgot", or "I was just going to," or "I was waiting till" (typical excuses these). The man who is reliable, who can be trusted to remember an instruction and to carry it out and report back, so that the principal can forget all about it - he is the man who is wanted in every walk of life, he is the man who is worth concentrating further on.

## 2. Keeness.

A little enthusiasm for the job is refreshing to both employer and employee. The junior who is a clock-watcher, who wants concessions all the way without reciprocity, who regards everything as "just another job", will never get far in his profession, and is not worth wasting time on. But if he shows himself as keen and interested, if he enters into the spirit of things, then the probability is that he is going to absorb, and give back, at least some of the training he is given. He should be helped along.

## 3. Punctuality and diligence.

These will usually follow on from the last point. The man who is really keen will pride himself on being, whenever reasonably possible, ahead of time. He will arrive early in the morning, he will keep his appointments with a little time to spare (instead of being perpetually those annoying few minutes late every time); in his working hours he will apply himself to the job in hand, which for the moment is just the most important thing in life. Other things will take their place, but for the moment this is what he is doing!

## 4. Neatness.

This involves various aspects. Neatness of writing, neatness of person, neatness of expression, neatness of thought. In most cases the man who is neatly, and quietly dressed, will be found to have a fair mastery of the other qualities as well; in most, but not all, for some very well-dressed young men are untidy in their thought, in their speech and in their writing. The man who can train both his mind and his body into the channels of clear and orderly thought will earn rich opportunities for himself.

## 5. Imagination and originality.

At first sight this might seem to be the antithesis of proper training. The man who is orderly in thought is frequently unimaginative, and it is left to the rebel to do the original thinking. But surely one can acquire a tidy orderly mind without losing the faculty of original thought. - and that certainly is one of the qualities to be kept steadily in mind. A tidy mind without imagination - an automatic filing machine like Himmler - is very useful, and will always have its place; but when that same tidiness of thinking is enriched with originality, that indeed is a combination to be reckoned with.

## 6. Self-discipline.

This no doubt is the epitome of all that has gone before. The capacity to discipline one's mind and body is a quality calling for long and intensive training, and one which in turn will unlock the doors of ambition.

## SUMMING-UP.

The Department's Administration believes in the principle "If you can teach, you can manage men." If your training is good it will not only be appreciated by the individual members of your staff, but you will also receive full credit from your senior officers.

### ASSIGNING WORK AND DIRECTING THOSE TO WHOM IT IS ASSIGNED

Every supervisor has a responsibility to set a fair day's work and to see that a fair day's work is done. If he fails he is falling down on the job. If he has insufficient work available to fully occupy the time of all his staff, he should notify his senior officer. In practice there are a lot fewer problems of control and discipline when every member of the staff is fully occupied.

In assigning duties we must consider individual capacity with a tendency to err in the direction of a little more rather than a little less. Most people work best if slightly extended - it brings their faculties right up to the surface and ready for action. This is, of course, a different thing to being over-loaded. People who are over-loaded invariably make more mistakes.

Workers tend to set their own pace; they can make a small job spin out and often resist additional work being assigned to them. Yet if you give such a person further duties they get through it and still manage to leave the office by 4.35 p.m. That is where output standards are useful where they can be applied.

### ASSISTANCE WITH PROBLEMS AND CORRECTING MISTAKES

All staff and particularly newcomers need assistance with their problems on the job. Supervisors must not only do this when problems are referred to them but they should be constantly on the watch for members of their staff who are in any difficulty over their work and need help. We all learn by making mistakes so that correction of mistakes is a valuable means of training. Generally speaking it can be stated that staff like to know where they are wrong and appreciate working under a boss who sets high standards of efficiency. Now let us look at the subject in greater detail.

#### Methods of correction.

As a general principle you should not take over work which is poorly done and do it yourself. There is always a temptation to do this especially if you are busy. Staff very often take little notice of corrections made by senior officers and learn little from them. Furthermore they get into the habit of thought that it doesn't matter if a thing is not right as it will be corrected by the section clerk anyway. Explain the right way to do the job and why, and have the member of your staff do it again or put it right.

If you feel that in an exceptional case no amount of explaining would enable the job to be done again correctly by the clerk concerned and you must do it yourself, then be sure to show your version to the officer concerned and explain it to him.

#### Putting work back.

It is generally agreed that it is best to put work back to the staff for correction **VERBALLY**. This allows for full explanation and questions. The employee can be advised to take notes if necessary.

Putting a job back with a written statement of errors can cause resentment, particularly if the minute stays on the file for all to see.

You may need to put a matter back in writing if complicated directions are involved and you wish to keep a record of what has to be done. If so, be careful of your wording and remove the note from the file after the matter has been cleared up. Make it clear to your staff that your notes come off the file after the matters are put right.

#### Small mistakes.

Small mistakes sent back for correction savour of pin-pricking. Correct the small ones yourself unless there is a constant repetition of the same error.

### KEEPING STAFF INFORMED AND ENLISTING THEIR HELP IN PROBLEMS

Some writers on administration are very emphatic about the need to have information passing both up and down an organisation, and incidentally sideways also to and from the public. Keep your staff informed about instructions received and the plans, thoughts and problems of your seniors. Keep your seniors informed about the work and the progress, thoughts and grievances of your staff. A full exchange of information with other supervisors is also desirable.

Tell your staff in advance about changes that will affect them in their work. Give the reasons, not arbitrary decisions and help them to understand. By discussing proposed changes and encouraging your staff to offer suggestions and criticisms you can secure valuable ideas. But more important, it makes the changes more acceptable and gives the staff a chance to adjust themselves to the change.

### ENCOURAGING SUGGESTIONS

Encourage suggestions from your staff about the work of the section and of the department as a whole and see that they receive full recognition for them. Be very careful not to purloin the ideas of members of your staff or take the credit yourself. Where a suggestion should be submitted under the P.S. Suggestions Scheme, see that the officer concerned submits it in writing and give him your help and advice as to how to do so.

### THE PUBLIC SERVICE SUGGESTIONS SCHEME

Modern management rejects the idea that the man at the top has a monopoly of the knowledge of how to run an organisation. Nor does he have a monopoly of ingenuity. Thus, good managers look more and more to a relatively untapped source of ideas and assistance: the employees themselves.

The Public Service Suggestions Scheme is designed to provide all public servants with an opportunity of trying to improve the efficiency of the Government Service. It is a means of establishing good staff relations as all employees can really feel that they are part of the organisation and that their ideas are welcome. They receive personal recognition for constructive thinking and a real satisfaction on seeing their own ideas being used.

In short, the basic idea behind the Suggestions Scheme is simple; it provides employees with a method of taking part in the teamwork of making their department or their organisation more efficient. They are stimulated to think about the problems of work methods and will do their best to help solve them if convinced that their ideas will be considered fairly and that they will gain personal recognition for the suggestions they make.

When a worker can produce an idea to save time or money, increase efficiency, or improve working conditions, his satisfaction when his idea is accepted and acted upon must be reflected in his attitude to his job and to his employer - thus efficiency, morale, and staff relations are all improved.

#### Types of Suggestions.

Employees are not generally restricted in the types of suggestions they may submit. The following are some examples of the types of acceptable suggestions -

1. Improvement of office methods, procedures, and systems.
2. Reduction of administrative costs.
3. Elimination of unnecessary operations or unnecessary steps in the work.
4. Elimination of delays.
5. Improvement of work conditions, particularly with regard to safety and health.
6. Better service to the public.

#### Eligibility for Awards.

This is sometimes a difficult problem but the rules concerning it are elastic. Senior officers who are normally responsible for improving the efficiency of their own organisation are not usually eligible. Also, only in exceptional circumstances is a monetary award granted to persons who have the power to adopt their own suggestions in full without reference to higher authority. However, this is not an inflexible rule. As is pointed out in the Public Service Manual (U.43) "There may be exceptions to this rule and the Commission would consider them if the Permanent Head wished".

All employees are encouraged to submit their suggestions regardless of whether eligibility may be clouded. It is the responsibility of the Department and the Public Service Commission to determine eligibility.

Awards are not made only for suggestions which are adopted in full. They are often made for suggestions partly adopted or which lead to another method and sometimes for special effort or good work on a suggestion which is not adopted.

#### How suggestions are handled.

The procedure for handling suggestions in this Department is as follows -

1. Address to Director typed or in writing through Registrar, or Div. Off. in H.O.
2. Registrar forwards to Head Office with his comments.
3. The Secretary, O & M Committee investigates and submits to the O & M Committee.
4. O & M Committee submits with recommendation to the Administration, for decision.
5. Details of suggestion and outcome sent to P.S. Commission with recommendation regarding award.
6. P.S. Commission notify the employee making the suggestion of the result.
7. The result is published in the P.S. Official Circular.

(Note: When submitting a suggestion you can ask to remain anonymous if desired.)

#### Success of Scheme:

The continued success of the Suggestions Scheme is assured if supervisors accept the principle that it is one of their responsibilities to encourage staff to make suggestions for the betterment of the section, the Department or the Service.

### DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS AND DISSATISFACTION

Complaints and dissatisfaction should always be dealt with PROMPTLY and FAIRLY. We have to develop a knowledge of human nature to deal with grievances; no two persons are alike and the same methods will not succeed in all cases.

Consider a grievance<sup>as</sup> a danger signal and:

1. LISTEN to the employee with interest, patiently, sympathetically and openmindedly. Be sure you understand his viewpoint.
2. LOOK at the problem objectively. Get all the facts obtainable. Talk with individuals concerned, (but maintain confidences). Differentiate between opinions and facts. Weigh carefully. When coming to a decision ask yourself how it will affect the work, the employee and the group.

3. STOP the cause behind the grievance promptly or show that there is no case for complaint. Admit errors you have made. If the employee is wrong make it easy for him to back down. Check results.

You may not be able to handle the grievance personally and may need to consult your senior officer but remember that the supervisor settling grievances himself, builds himself up as a leader and gets close to his staff.

Make it clear to your staff at all times that they should refer their complaints to YOU but that you are prepared to refer any matters to your senior officer if they are dissatisfied with your ruling. Complaints in the family are best dealt with within the family circle.

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## LEADERSHIP, MORALE AND STAFF RELATIONS



### Leadership

#### Definition of Leadership.

"Leadership is a lot of things. It is the art of getting along with people; of guiding and controlling others in getting a job done. It is the ability to solve the problems that face us and to sell ourselves and our ideas to others. Everyone wants to copy and follow a leader".

#### Loyalty to the Job.

To be a good leader, a supervisor must be loyal to the Service, to the Department and to his senior officers and he has to be enthusiastic about his job. Is it not rather strange that in New Zealand we as Public Servants are apt to decry our calling and run down our own particular Department. The position does appear to be somewhat different in other countries such as England where you find a tradition of Public Service running down through some families. Yet the quality of our Public Service stands high in world ranking. We must show enthusiasm for our job, if we are to obtain and retain the best staff.

We all have a duty to act as recruiting agents. In the Service we have a fair system of promotion. There are plenty of good jobs at the top. In all Departments the Permanent Head and the Administration do all they can for their staff. Lastly, there is real satisfaction in knowing that we are serving the community.

As supervisors we should endeavour to disseminate this spirit of enthusiasm for the job and keep our complaints to ourselves. Every job has its ups and downs. Enthusiasm is infectious and will communicate itself to the staff - if it is sincere.

#### Loyalty to the Staff.

A good leader is loyal to his staff and makes them see that he expects loyalty in return. He should instil into every member the need to be loyal each to the other. This brings about team loyalty. It is one of the keystones of high morale.

#### Methods of Leadership.

One writer states: "Leadership is not the tyranny of a dictatorship, it is the knowledge of how to achieve teamwork". The development of a "we" attitude with staff. Some studies were carried out on this subject by a man called Lewin. It was found that the best results came from groups of workers which were democratically led, i.e., those where the members of the group were consulted about their work; where the leader discussed problems and shared his responsibilities with his team. Such groups co-operated well even when the leader was absent and there was little jealousy.

In groups which were autocratically led, that is, where the leader organised all the work himself and gave detailed orders to each member, the production rates were also high. There was less co-operation, however, there was a tendency to exclude certain members of the group and a great deal of strife when the leader was absent.

As a general principle it can be stated that, whether or not their ideas are accepted, people feel better about carrying out a programme of work in which they have had a chance of having a say.

#### Personal qualities for Leadership.

Most of us as supervisors think we already are good leaders. We are often unaware of our shortcomings. We hesitate to admit we could improve for fear of reflecting on our ability. Personal habits are hard to change and habits are the root of the leadership problem. Habits can be changed or adapted only after conscientious continuous effort.

#### MORALE AND STAFF RELATIONS

Morale is something that influences groups of people more than it does an individual. Morale cannot be defined as traits, characteristics, or qualities inherent in individuals, although some traits or qualities can influence or assist in building and maintaining morale in a team. These traits or qualities are constant and always with us, but good or high morale may be with us today and gone tomorrow.

For the purpose of this study we can define morale as:-

"That state of mind, or mental outlook of the staff, that gives them as a team, courage, zeal, optimism, and confidence, together with a contented interest and desire to carry the work of the office through efficiently".

If this spirit or sense of unity is absent, then as sure as night follows day we will find that morale is low in our place of work.

One writer has described morale as "The individual attitude towards the group endeavour". Conversely, morale is largely dependent upon the attitude of supervisors to their staff.

We can now see that morale may not be dependent on good working conditions. All the best amenities in our work place, although helpful, will not give us high morale. High morale can be found in all kinds of places and under all sorts of conditions. It can also be found in varying degrees and will fluctuate from time to time.

Here are some impressions on working conditions of Mr. J.K. Hunn on his return from the Duke of Edinburgh's conference on "Human Problems of Industry".

"Perfect amenities, thought Mr. Hunn, could never take the place of human relationships. Good working conditions were tangible marks of management's respect for the dignity of the individual and as such could be a valuable complement to good human relations. He compared the working morale of two textile firms he had visited. One had excellent amenities but had become so out of date with its staff relationships that morale had been poor. The other was owned and managed by a benign individual whose staff were happy despite their lack of amenities. Working conditions, the Conference agreed, were only an indirect cause for worker dissatisfaction because it had been found that where conditions were as good as they could be, taking into account the actual job circumstances, morale could be high. The Group that went down into the London sewers came out with that conviction."

Important factors in securing and maintaining good staff relations which are the basis of high morale are:-

1. Make each employee feel that he "belongs". This need to belong-to be part of something - is deep rooted in all human beings. The good supervisor recognises this need and makes employees feel that they are part of a team. He consults with them before making decisions affecting them or their work. He enlists their help in solving his problems on the job. He gives them advance notice and explanations of changes. He makes sure they know "why" things are required or actions are necessary.

Letting people know "why" can avoid a lot of misunderstanding. For example, a controlling officer says to George "I want you to go and work in Records from next Monday". He thinks "George has spent only one month in Records. He is studying and a spell on Records will make it easy for him and allow Bob who has been there five months to learn new work". What George hears is "You are considered no good on this job and have been demoted to Records."

2. Demonstrate your desire to help each employee succeed in his work. See that all members of your staff have an opportunity to progress. Never stand in a man's way. Developing someone to be better than you are on your job may give you a chance for promotion yourself. You will grow as others grow under you. Make the best use of each employee's ability. Look for ability not now being used. Don't hold people back to get your job done. (Isn't this a natural reaction when a change of duties is suggested for one of your best clerks?)

3. Let each employee know how he is getting along: Suppose a man goes home and his wife says "How are you getting along with the job" and he has to say "I don't know - frankly I don't know how I stand on my job". Is it good for morale for a man to feel uncertain about important things like his job? We know it isn't. We all like to know how we are getting along.

Probation reports and our staff reporting system are means by which we let employees know how they are getting along. However, supervisors do sometimes give their staff an impression that they are doing quite well when they think otherwise and adverse reports can come as quite a blow.

Employees prefer to be advised if their work is not up to standard and to be given an opportunity to improve their performance.

4. Give each employee the recognition he deserves.

Give your staff full recognition for good work. Staff will be reluctant to assume full responsibility without it. Don't get so busy that you overlook some simple thanks when they are due.

Let us consider the subject of giving credit when credit is due.

Each person is an individual with differences of personality, education and experience. A new worker or a sensitive one or the introspective type may have a strong desire for encouragement and praise. The same treatment may have no effect on the extrovert or "sales" type who is not so sensitive to the criticism or praise of his fellowmen. Ill-considered praise would probably irritate the highly skilled employee who prefers recognition in the form of added responsibility and authority. Other individuals might become self-satisfied or conceited by too much commendation.

Nine out of ten people, however, will react favourably to some form of praise or encouragement and the average supervisor could make more use of this incentive. One of the troubles is that the supervisor expects good work and takes it for granted so he neglects to comment on such behaviour but he attacks errors because they frustrate him in his programme of work.

If you use the giving of credit where it is due, wisely, you will help the person concerned to improve his performance and you will make him feel successful.

In giving an employee praise always consider the effect on the morale of others. Praise the work rather than the individual. Tell him right away. Don't be too lavish and be sure the person praised believes he deserves it.

It is often of value for credit to be received indirectly showing that you have advised others of unusual or extra performance of a member of your staff e.g. you can suggest to your senior officer that he give the credit which is due.

If you can't find anything good about a person's work, beware of showing constant disapproval. If corrective action is necessary try to sandwich in some mention of the person's good points.

5. Remove hindrances to the prompt completion of work and assist with the work when necessary.

It is important to do everything necessary to avoid any employee feeling a real sense of frustration regarding his work. (A little mild frustration, of course, does none of us any harm!) Hop in and help when you find a member of your staff temporarily bustling with work. Other members of the staff will notice it. It helps to build a spirit of comradeship in the team. If the need arises you can then with confidence ask any officer on more senior work to temporarily take over some minor duties.

6. Represent your employees' interests to your superior.

There is an old Army expression that applies to everyone who would be a leader, "take care of your men first". If your staff are consistently overworked you must press for more staff. Staff shortage over a long period is deadly to morale. The constant struggle to get the work through on time and to cope with emergencies can sap nervous energy and when this happens irritations become magnified. Seek improved working conditions where necessary. Controlling officers who have gone furthest in the Public Service are those who have always looked after their staff.

A strong supervisor is always prepared to back his team to the limit and to look after the interests of each member when dealing with senior officers.

A weak supervisor is sometimes tempted to make himself look good at the expense of his group, complaining about its weak points and suggesting that but for him nothing would be done.

If a senior officer complains about the work, the supervisor has to guard against placing the blame on a member of his staff. If he was in the position to have put the matter right, and didn't do so, then he must be prepared to take the kick. If not personally involved, then he should represent the man's point of view and take the responsibility as his section clerk. We have to take care not to whitewash ourselves at the expense of our staff.

If you have to discuss an employee's failings with your senior, review his good qualities as well. It is a common failing to let a person's poor qualities obscure the good. A fair and just judgment builds and maintains morale.

7. Avoid the appearance of partiality or personal favouritism.

This is most important. No matter what we think of those on our staff or their work we must avoid showing partiality or favouritism. We must endeavour to overcome any natural likes or dislikes and treat all our staff the same all the time. Absolute fairness is an essential to the supervisor. Injustices are lasting on the memory. A good axiom is "Be fair to all with special privileges to none".

8. Never criticise or condemn an officer in the hearing of his fellows:

It is worse still to discuss his failings when he is absent. Pause and ask yourself what the others may think about you. You will not only destroy morale, but your staff will lose all faith and confidence in you. You will have forfeited all claims to the staff's respect.

9. Be understanding and helpful in dealing with employee's problems.

To the person concerned his own problems are the most urgent and important in the world. (This applies to beneficiaries and pensioners as well as to staff).

If you are prepared to listen to the personal problems of your staff and give them a sympathetic hearing, it will never be forgotten. In many cases even if you are unable to give a great deal of assistance or advice it does a person good to have someone with whom they can talk over their problems. Remember that if personal problems are discussed they should never be mentioned to others except with the permission of the person concerned. A great deal of tact and understanding of human nature is required in dealing with the problems of your staff.

10. Create a friendly and congenial atmosphere:

It has been said by a former Registrar of this Department that the most important items of staff relations as far as women are concerned are a friendly atmosphere and the absence of any form of autocratic control. This applies to men also.

Never take your job so seriously that you lose your sense of humour. This is important.

Watch for discord and petty bickerings among staff. If allowed to spread it will quickly destroy morale. Locate the cause and rectify it.

Be tolerant, keep an open mind. Your way of life is a result of your training, background and many other influences. It is not the only way to live nor is it necessarily the best. Learn to live and let live.

Do all possible to relieve boredom, e.g. shift the furniture around occasionally but remember to consult your staff before doing so. Modern methods of painting rooms with all the walls a different colour are very helpful in relieving boredom.

As a supervisor, get to know each officer personally; know something of his home life; find out about his hobbies; is he interested in sport; find out what other interests he may have; if married enquire after his wife and children. If you are out for a drive in the car drop in for a few minutes and have a look at his garden; chat with him occasionally on the job about these things. Let him see that you are interested in him as an individual and a human being - don't let him think that you are only interested in him as a unit or part of a machine. This study will enable you to understand each member of your staff in relation to his job. In getting to know your staff do not forget to help your staff to know you. Don't stand aloof - be as good a mixer as your nature will allow.

It is wise for a supervisor to have interests outside the office. Outside interests broaden the outlook and are a great help to us in our relationships with the staff. Remember also that our office life and home life cannot be shut up in watertight compartments. Each invariably reacts on the other.

As a supervisor, it is your duty, if at all possible, to attend and assist in providing office social functions where you can meet your staff on grounds other than work. No doubt you will agree that we see each other in quite a different light at social functions than on the job and this all helps in creating a congenial atmosphere at work.

Improvements to working conditions such as accommodation, lighting, heating, and amenities are valuable as morale boosters. Staff like to think that the management have their interests at heart.

The use of christian names, within limits, is a means of creating a friendly and congenial atmosphere.

### Maintaining High Morale.

The task of maintaining high morale is much more difficult than securing high morale. The price of maintaining high morale is "eternal vigilance". It requires a continuous and sustained effort. You will find that after you have secured high morale there are many factors, that will arise that may destroy it, either slowly or rapidly. Section Clerks have to be constantly on the watch for the "dry rot", remembering it is not always apparent. A fall in morale may start in a small way through various causes and rapidly snowball. Remember also that although it is visible to outsiders, a tense atmosphere in a group may not be evident to the supervisor as he has become accustomed to it.

Watch for the individual called "The Crawler". He will completely destroy all morale. "Crawlers" are small in numbers, but can do untold harm. We all know the type and the subtle methods they use in potting their work mates. Any Section Clerk who listens to and encourages this individual is looking for trouble and plenty of it.

### The benefits of High Morale:

Now we can ask ourselves what are some of the benefits of high morale.

Here are a few snapshots:

1. Good and better public relations - these are a direct reflection of staff morale.
2. Greater efficiency and higher output of work.
3. Lower staff turnover; control and discipline easier to maintain; less absenteeism. Here are some brief results of a survey carried out by the University of Michigan: 69% of men in work groups with an average rate of 1 absence in 6 months felt very free to discuss job problems with their supervisor; 29% with absence rate of 4 or more in 6 months felt very free to talk with their supervisor.
4. Pleasant office atmosphere; clock watching stops.
5. Lighter loads and greater loyalty for Section Clerks.
6. Contentment of mind for the Controlling Officer to know he can put more confidence and trust in his team, in the belief that they will not knowingly let him down.

### Example of Senior Staff.

It is important to remember that the staff look to their senior officers for an example; if morale is low in an office you will often find that there is a lack of unanimity among senior officers. In the same way that staff morale has its effect upon our service to the public, so do the relationships which exist between the seniors of an office have a direct bearing upon the morale of the staff.

### Conclusion:

A supervisor gets results through PEOPLE. People differ according to health, age, education, hobbies, beliefs etc. and must be treated as INDIVIDUALS.

Every supervisor should have a sincere appreciation of the importance of every member of his team and a modest valuation of his own position.

Here are some short studies on the subject of leadership and morale:

1. The Supervisor and morale - Survey based on war plants.

"For example one manager complains his employees 'do not know there is a war on'. He tells them to 'snap out of it' but there is no response. The girls are a particular headache to him. They want rest periods and more comfortable seats. In exasperation he tells them 'nothing doing, you've got good seats and you don't need rest periods on a sitting job - I've got stuff that has to be delivered'. Then finally he tells them they can take the job as is or leave it".

In contrast, another manager says:

"We're all working towards one goal - winning the war". This manager talks things over with his employees, he appreciates their efforts and refers to them with pride. When his girls complained about stools being too low he had platforms built beneath the stools. He listens to all their problems even personal ones, his employees feel important and their work shows it.

2. Hawthorne studies in Western Electric Co.

A number of girls were chosen and placed together as an experimental group. Progressive steps to improve working conditions markedly improved output. Steps were then taken to make the working conditions of the group less attractive than normal and output still increased. The chief influencing factor seemed to be the attention drawn to the girls by the fact that they were the centre of an experiment. The Hawthorne studies showed conclusively that the frame of mind of the employee has a great effect on production. These studies also showed that the manner in which people are supervised has a greater effect on their output than working conditions, length of working day or even rate of pay. In other words, people respond more favourably to attention than they do to physical factors or to other material inducements.

3. A supervisor must 'maintain an atmosphere of approval' at work. It is very hard to put into words just what is implied by this heading, but most of us can think of situations in which we have worked which were characterised by either the conspicuous presence or absence of an atmosphere of approval. Most of us have worked, at one time or another in a situation where the superior held a particularly tight rein over things, seemed to be constantly looking for someone to do something wrong, and when he found a mistake, managed to give the impression that that was just about what he had expected all along. On the other hand, we have probably all also been in situations where we felt comparatively free and unhampered and able to operate with our whole selves in trying to do the job as we saw it. The difference between these two is largely a difference in the atmosphere of approval. While it is difficult to define it, it is not particularly difficult to sense it, as you go from group to group. Quite quickly one can sense, in a work group in an office, a tense fearful manner on the one hand, working in the fear of being caught doing something wrong, or on the other hand a relaxed and easy atmosphere where the person feels free to try.

A good part of the atmosphere of approval is in the freedom to make mistakes. This does not at all mean tolerating lower standards of quality at work, but simply the recognition of an honest mistake that comes from someone's trying something and failing to accomplish it for various reasons. It is quite possible to point out mistakes to a subordinate and to correct them with an atmosphere of approval; it is quite possible to maintain a high quality of work performance and still give the subordinate a feeling of having freedom to make mistakes. Nor does an atmosphere of approval suggest a lowered standard of rate of output. The two do not necessarily go together at all. It is quite possible to hold high standards of quality and quantity with an atmosphere of approval, and it is equally possible to have rather low standards in an atmosphere of disapproval. The chief difference will be in the subordinate's feeling about himself, his job, and his boss, and consequently a difference in his effectiveness at work.

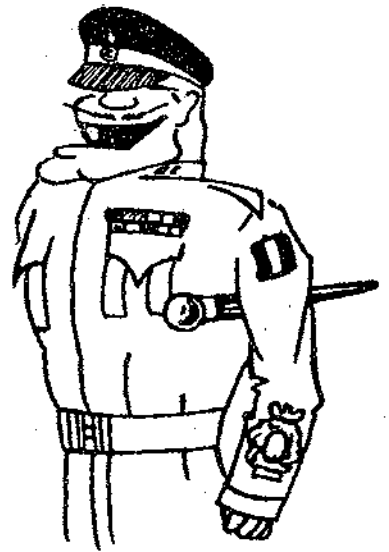
An interesting example of the atmosphere of approval and the freedom to make mistakes appears in a study of supervision on the C. & O. Railroad made by

the Survey Research Centre of the University of Michigan. In Productivity, Supervision and Morale, they report the following: Two groups of section gangs had been distinguished on the basis of their productivity. One group was characterised by consistent high productivity and the other by consistent low productivity. Both groups were asked, "What does the foreman do when you do a bad job?" The answers were separated into those which did not carry an atmosphere of approval (such as "bawls you out") and those suggesting correction with an atmosphere of approval (such as "shows you how to do it right" or "just tells you about it"). The foremen of the high-production work groups characteristically used the latter method - that is, their correction of mistakes carried an atmosphere of approval.

Still another example of the effect of an atmosphere of approval is found in the same set of studies of productivity. The researchers examined the techniques of supervision of a group of foremen whose work force had high-production records and the techniques of foremen whose groups had low-production records. They discovered that the foremen who could be described as "production-oriented" had lower production records than those who were described as "employee oriented." This means that the superior who is continually watching production records, and waiting for the subordinate to fail to accomplish something, actually limits production by creating an atmosphere where the subordinate cannot work effectively. On the other hand, the foremen who primarily attended to their subordinates and concentrated on making it possible for them to do their jobs in fact accomplished more production. (Extract from the book "Psychology in Management" by Haire).

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## CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE



### 1. AN OLD ARMY EDICT.

It was Napoleon who said "No bad troops only bad officers". This may be a generalisation we cannot fully support, but it has an element of truth. The supervisor with problems of control, and discipline should first look into the mirror and ask himself whether he himself is at fault. Is he providing the right kind of leadership and example to his staff?

### 2. THE NEED FOR CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE;

The object of requiring a good standard of control and discipline is to obtain the maximum quantity and the highest quality of work from the minimum of staff. It is not the only requirement for achieving this goal, as associated with it is the necessity for good morale, leadership, supervision and teamwork.

There was a time when control and supervision did not involve the difficulties it does today. Any breach of discipline was considered only from the point of view of what punishment to impose - in bad cases immediate dismissal, in others promotion blocked, transfer to lesser jobs, written reprimand or a good telling off by a senior officer. The culprit was made to realise the error of his ways and he also no doubt received a warning that he would not get off so lightly if it occurred again. Apart from the effect on the recipient of these expressions of unpopularity, they were a stiff deterrent to any others who might have had any similar ideas.

Today the subject is approached differently. The fear complex is gone and in any case better results are obtained without it; but the need for discipline still exists. The onus is primarily on the junior controlling officer to get results from his own personality and the little authority he is given.

The gradings in this Department have been allotted to some extent on the degree of responsibility in authorising and paying benefits but this does not mean that the graded officer is responsible only for a signature on a renewal, a review or a sickness benefit grant. You must take the responsibility for the entire work of your section and equally as important as the correct payment of benefits is the responsibility for the work of the staff including control and discipline. With only a few exceptions the work in our offices has been broken up into small sections with very few basic grade staff attached to each, so that the amount of supervision required for each section is not great and you are fortunate that your first acquaintance with maintaining staff control and discipline need be on a small scale only. Nevertheless, the duties are there and they are just as important as if a greater number is involved and on the way in which they are carried out will depend the success or failure of your part of the work of the office. In addition, your own standing in the office, your promotion prospects and your peace of mind will depend on how well you maintain control and discipline.

One thing to be remembered is that, generally speaking, staff prefer to work where discipline is not lax. Our good workers whom we wish to support feel

let down if others are allowed to get away with breaking the rules. The need for control and discipline arises then not only from the work but also from the staff themselves. Social conformity is always stronger and better enforced when it springs from the sentiments and feelings of the group itself.

### 3. MEANS OF OBTAINING GOOD CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE

Obviously threats of punishment are out of the question. There is no punishment that you are allowed to give beyond a rather mild reprimand. A report to a senior should be reserved for a fairly serious offence as you cannot be running continuously to the senior officer. In any case, this would weaken your authority and you would lose the respect of your staff, so other means must be employed.

There are many difficulties that you must face up to. Some you will already have met and probably learned from experience. You may be junior in age or service to others on your section, less experienced in the work and even a newcomer to the office. Some of you may have worked with your staff before promotion. If you use too light a rein, sooner or later someone will take advantage of this and challenge your authority. If you assert yourself too much or otherwise upset the staff they will be resentful and the work will suffer. The correct course will be the middle course and you should aim at co-operation but ensure that authority is not lost.

There are no hard and fast rules for maintaining control and discipline and each section clerk must adopt a method most suited to his personality. There are, however, some general points which will be of assistance in going about the job and the following will be worth some study.

You cannot command full respect if your knowledge of your work is not at least as good as that of the best of your staff.

Thorough knowledge of the rules and procedure is essential. Any questions from the staff must be explained with the minimum of delay and your checking must be thorough and accurate. The fewer the errors found by senior officers and inspectors the better for the respect of your staff. On appointment to a new job you may be at a disadvantage but the sooner this is overcome the better.

You must know your staff, their attitudes, capabilities and limitations. If you seek to get a good day's work from a man you must know in advance his potential output. In considering your own staff you will see that some are working hard for promotion - the career types who want recognition and good marks. These will give very little trouble and require little, if any, discipline. Others will be at their maximum grading with no prospect of promotion - possibly just there to draw a wage. It is these that will concern you most - and perhaps a cadet if you have one who will be the same as you were at his age.

Be careful not to disturb the staff any more than necessary, that is, don't stop everyone or even one individual frequently to give a pep talk, explain an instruction or to point out each error in the work as it is found. Don't discuss a point across the room with one officer so that others will be distracted from their own jobs. It is certain that everyone will stop to listen although the conversation will not concern them.

Don't allow conferences of your staff to form by themselves whether or not you are included. It is only to be expected that a junior member will approach a more experienced clerk on a rule or decision rather than ask you. There is nothing wrong with this but it is carried too far if a third or even fourth clerk joins the discussion. It is just a matter of being reasonable so break up a conference as soon as it forms - but do it tactfully.

Ensure that your staff are fully occupied. Problems of control and discipline are always much greater where there are staff with not enough work to fully occupy their time. It has occurred and will occur again. Let your senior officers know if you cannot keep any member of your staff fully employed.

Set a good example. You will criticise laxity in punctuality, wasting time and adherence to rules in others, but see that you are not an offender in these respects yourself. Don't ask your staff to do more than you do or to conform to standards you don't observe yourself.

Remember also that if you maintain staff morale at a high level you will have discipline in its highest form.

Control and discipline then should be apparent but unobtrusive. Ideal control is such that it is effectively felt but not openly manifested. When you reach this point you can consider yourself a pretty good supervisor.

#### 4. SOME NOTES ON CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Before taking corrective action seek reasons for the breach of discipline and make sure you have your facts right.

Corrective action should be taken at the lowest level possible. You often hear junior controlling officers say "why don't the seniors take a hand in this matter of maintaining discipline". If a junior supervisor takes an employee to task it is much less upsetting than the same action coming from a more senior officer.

Reports to senior officers should be reserved for fairly serious or oft repeated offences if you are to maintain your authority and keep the respect of your staff.

If it is necessary to reprimand, do it privately, be as tactful as possible and where practicable put it in the form of an appeal for co-operation. Discuss the act rather than the person when criticising a poor worker or a breach of regulations. Remember that harsh words or sarcasm may cause illfeeling which will last a very long time. Persistent disobedience will require a sharper tone but words that will cause resentment should still be avoided. Don't shout across the room or reprimand in the presence of others. This causes loss of face which is more humiliating than the words you use and will result in complete loss of co-operation.

One writer says, "A good supervisor can reprimand in such a manner that the employee understands exactly where he or she has transgressed and also leaves the offender with the feeling that the reprimand was well deserved. The subordinate knows too that unless the offence is repeated nothing more will ever be said on the subject."

And lastly, corrective action must be consistent, and it is essential that all members of your staff are treated in exactly the same manner.

Here are some notes from the book "Psychology in Management" by Haire on the subject of maintaining consistent discipline:

"One of the problems that all people have is to make sense of an environment that is vague, ambiguous, and confusing. Each person has to learn, little by little, what the main shape of the situation is, what the rules are, where the limits are, and what actions are approved and disapproved in this particular part of the world. If the rules are not consistent, and if the limits won't hold still, it is impossible to learn about the situation, and the person is in a very difficult position of having to work in an environment about which he cannot feel sure or secure. He may or may not know how to get ahead, or to protect himself in it. To help him we must provide clues to the organisation of the environment which are as consistent as possible. Often we do not point out an infringement with the feeling, "Well, I'll let it go this time; it's a little thing, and there's no point in hounding him about it". This is usually accompanied by the feeling that we have been lenient and actually done a favour to the violator in over-looking the infringement. However, the fact of the matter is that we are treating ourselves to a favour by avoiding the correction when we are not sure how well we can administer it, and it is done at the expense of the subordinate, who is now not sure whether this is an infringement or not. In his view it has seemed to be the rule in the past, but, after all, it wasn't called this time. Maybe this particular supervisor doesn't hold to this particular rule. A situation of this sort can generate a great deal of insecurity and anxiety and leave the subordinate completely in the dark about what to do and what not to do. It would actually be more of a favour to the subordinate to call each infringement closely and consistently. He will not feel "hounded" if it is done in the right atmosphere. He will, though grow more secure in the feeling that he knows exactly where the limits of the situation are."

## 5. COMMON FAULTS REQUIRING DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

The following are some of the faults found in most offices. It is your job to do something about them;

### (a) Irregular attendance:

As far as the morning attendance is concerned the Administration Clerk and the Registrar will take action on habitual irregularity. Lunch time attendance and departure times are primarily your responsibility and it is most important that your section is not found wanting in exercising discipline. The PLS. Regulations provide that time must be made up for late attendances and unless other arrangements are made you will be required to supervise the time made up.

### (b) Overlong absences at tea breaks:

The regulations provide for only ten minutes for morning and afternoon tea and the section clerk should see that this is not exceeded. Let your section set an example.

### (c) Absence from the office during working hours.

There can be no objection to occasional absences for urgent private business that cannot conveniently be transacted out of office hours. Such absences should be by prior permission only and here again the time must be made up. In general, unauthorised absences are to be treated as a serious matter and reported to a senior officer.

### (d) Leaving the desk for long periods.

Most jobs call for a certain number of absences from the desk during each day. In the smaller offices there are trips to the counter, the index, the district card cabinets and possibly the records room. The necessity for these will vary according to office practices but the system should reduce them to a minimum. In most offices too much time is lost by reason of absence from the job, possibly genuine in the original reason but prolonged by unofficial conversations around the office.

### (e) Conversations with "visitors" to the section:

To preserve good relations it is advisable to allow a certain amount of latitude in this respect and it is necessary only to see that it is not carried too far. Where it is considered that visitors are too many, too frequent, or stay too long, the officer on your own staff and not the visitor should be spoken to. Sections Clerks will assist each other by enforcing this rule on their own sections.

### (f) Tardiness in starting work:

It is not sufficient to see that commencing hours of work are observed from the timebook point of view. The staff is expected to actually start at the correct time and such practices as reading the newspaper discussing racing and sports results should not be permitted. Here again good relations may require a little relaxation on sports discussions but only within reason as too much latitude is liable to build up to a major waste of time.

### (g) Repetition of errors previously explained:

#### Inaccuracies due to carelessness:

#### Careless writing and untidiness in forms:

These items can be combined and accounted for by carelessness or a don't care attitude. Some people are notoriously inaccurate and no response will be obtained to any attempt at correction. It is here that the supervisor must exercise his judgment and with younger members of the staff particularly, persist until such time as it is obvious that no further results can be obtained.

Poor handwriting is a very common fault and strangely enough it is often an otherwise competent officer who is the worst offender. A good standard of handwriting and general neatness must be insisted on and younger staff should be encouraged to attain a higher standard.

(h) Direct approach to a more senior officer for advice on work:

This most annoying practice often arises when individuals on the staff, rightly or wrongly, consider that the Section Clerk does not know his job. It must be stopped, even if it is necessary to ask the senior officer concerned to refrain from dealing direct with basic grade staff. The effect is demoralising and if the Section Clerk's lack of knowledge or indecision is the reason the sooner this is remedied the better.

(i) Too much use of the telephone for private conversations:

It would be easy to cover this fault by saying that private calls should be reduced to the minimum but in practice it is not so simple. We have all come across cases where a junior is an official of a sports club and much of the work is done on the office telephone. Once again this is a case where good relations must allow a certain amount of toleration and the solution is to keep it within reasonable bounds. Use of the 'phone for private calls must not interfere with either inward or outward official calls.

(j) Loafing on the job:

This is a very difficult subject but the Section Clerk will have no trouble in identifying any cases which occur on his section. The most obvious symptom is a low output from a clerk who obeys all the other rules, e.g. seldom leaves his desk, is reasonably accurate and has a fair knowledge of his work. The cause could be due to his mind being taken up with outside interests, or troubles at home but more often by sheer laziness. If no response is obtained from approaches along the line of team-work or morale, the only solution is in discipline. How to go about it will depend on the individual concerned and the Section Clerk. The solution may be setting a quota, imposing a time limit or administering a stir up. With most people in this class the fact that the "Boss is wise to them" is its own solution but if nothing is done the low output will continue.

(k) Lack of interest:

This is a subject which is dealt with under the headings of leadership, morale, and supervision but it is not out of place to mention here that this is a welfare department. Thousands of people in this country devote their time to welfare without any pay. It is a satisfying work and one in which most of us, particularly those engaged on the counter, on weekly benefits, claims, renewals and war pensions, are able to meet the beneficiaries and pensioners ourselves; we can take some satisfaction from knowing, in the great majority of cases, that our efforts, even though nothing more than the instructions, are appreciated; and we are paid for this work.

That concludes the main items on which control and discipline may be necessary. There will be others but they are not so common and the solutions should suggest themselves.

## 6. CONCLUSION

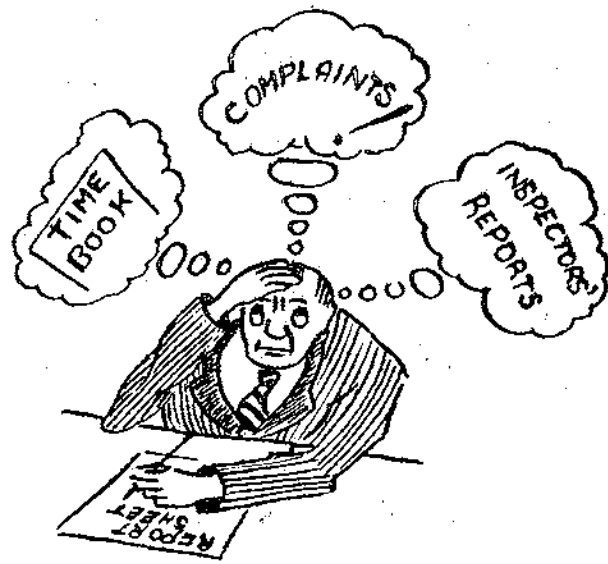
The job of maintaining good control and discipline is not an easy one. Too often supervisors assume it is. Before you can make demands on your staff, you have got to get yourself accepted, win the respect and if possible the regard of your staff. Then when it is necessary to correct or to reprimand it will be taken in the right spirit by the best of the staff and philosophically, at least, by the others. Don't start seeing yourself as a big executive or efficiency expert. Staff will be more inclined to work for you and under your direction if you treat them as people not cyphers.

On the other hand don't lean over backwards to placate or cajole the officer who won't co-operate or flouts your authority. Few supervisors in these times err on the side of over-strictness - the reverse is generally true. Don't be found lacking in the moral courage necessary to enforce an unpopular edict from a senior officer, or to take firm action when it is required.

In your time you have worked for a number of Section Clerks and senior officers. You will have noticed how some get good results and some don't. Adopt the best practices and be careful to avoid the others. Your experience will teach you much of what you need to know.

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## STAFF ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING



### 1. INTRODUCTION.

Meaning of topic: Estimating value of staff and furnishing reports thereon.

Reason for inclusion in this handbook:- As graded officers in the Department you will be called on from time to time to assess the value of staff, compare one officer with another, judge suitability and efficiency for promotion and to complete probation reports in the case of probationers.

### 2. PROBATION REPORTS:

Junior Controlling officers should keep in mind at all times that they will be called upon to report on probationers on their staff, and the dates when reports will be called for should be ascertained. If a probationer is failing in his duties in any respect it is wise to bring this to his notice verbally well before reports are due so that he can be given an opportunity to improve his performance before the next report.

Care should be taken to ensure that each progress probation report shows the correct position at the time of preparation in order to let the probationer know where he stands and provide him with a written guide for the future. Good performance of duties should be commented upon, whilst directions, if any, in which the probationer is failing and ways in which he could improve should be shown on the reports.

The making of adverse comments on probation reports should never be postponed in the hopes that the probationer will improve. Controlling Officers sometimes take the view that they are not going to be the one to give an adverse report; this can be left to the controlling officer on the next section or division to which the probationer is transferred.

Failure to face up to the position and to give a true picture of the probationer's suitability for the work has caused a great many difficulties in the past, as the reports are used in many ways.

If a probationer is unsuited to the work it is only fair to him that he should be guided to take up other employment as soon as possible. If adverse comments first appear on a final probation report they come as a shock to the probationer. "I have been here two years; why wasn't I told before?" This applies even though unsatisfactory performance may have been commented upon verbally.

It must be kept in mind, however, that probation reports remain on personal files for the whole of an officer's career. Discouragement should be avoided as far as possible and the procedure outlined in the first paragraph should help to keep adverse comments down to a necessary minimum.

### 3. PERSONAL REPORTS:

#### (a) Inevitability of assessment and reporting:

Writers on the subject of administration are in agreement as to the necessity for systematic staff reporting. An employer must rate his employees every time he promotes one man instead of another, so that some form of periodic written staff record indicative of actual per-

formance on a uniform or comparable basis is indispensable in any large organisation.

It is better too from the employee's viewpoint that reports should be made openly rather than behind his back.

(b) Purpose of Reports.

Formal reports are aids:-

- (i) in ascertaining if an officer's value is increasing or decreasing;
- (ii) in providing a uniform basis for salary increases;
- (iii) in selection for promotion;
- (iv) in correcting an employee's weak points;
- (v) in checking effect of recruitment and promotion policies;
- (vi) in building morale - separation of good from bad;
- (vii) in demotions and dismissals.

Staff reporting is important in the New Zealand Public Service where the Public Service Commission must report annually on the condition and efficiency of the service (Sec.15, 1912 Act) and where promotion is according to efficiency and suitability (Sec.8, 1927 Amend) and all appointments on promotion automatically carry a right of appeal.

(c) Reporting systems;

All should endeavour to meet these requirements:-

- (i) Simplicity in operation.
- (ii) Employee understanding and acceptance.
- (iii) Flexibility so as to cover differing groups of employees.
- (iv) Economy.
- (v) Validity, i.e., ability to measure what it is intended to measure.
- (vi) Reliability, i.e. ability to measure accurately and consistently.

There is a bewildering variety of systems and forms in use in many countries, particularly in the U.S.A., e.g. rating scale or schedule, descriptive scale, numerical scale, alphabetical, graphic and linear scales. Our own Public Service has tried at various times a variety of systems from the rating of specific qualities, to an over-all assessment on a numerical scale combined with a rating for suitability for advancement.

If reports are to be used as a guide to promotion, an estimate of an officer's potentiality is necessary. If the reports are to be used mainly as a tool of management for improving the efficiency of staff in their present work, the emphasis should be on actual performance. Our report forms endeavour to meet both of these needs.

Under our system, suitability for promotion is assessed on a 1 - 10 scale. The Public Service Commission has set down a standard percentage for each mark which applies to all grades. The assessment in present occupation, group and grade is based on 100 marks. An average mark for each grade in all Departments is prescribed (i.e. the mark to be allotted to the hypothetical 'average officer'), and what should be the distribution of marks <sup>about</sup> that average is also laid down. A graph and a marking scale are used, which show the theoretical ideal spread of marks of a group of officers. This system is necessary to provide for comparisons between reports on officers in different departments which can only have some relevance or meaning if there is uniformity in marking standards throughout the Service.

Special emphasis is given to the fullest use of the "Remarks" section of the reports as these are regarded as an important adjunct of the numerical rating. Comment should be designed to help and guide officers in self-improvement, and also serve as an explanation of the numerical ratings. Remarks should be specific and such sterile clichés as "good average officer", "keen and conscientious officer", should be avoided.

Expressed opinions should be supported by reasons in brief and the reporting officer should not confine himself to a series of unqualified statements.

(d) Frequency of Reports:

At the present time personal reports are called for by the Public Service Commission about twice in every five years. If reports are too frequent there is the danger of unsettlement of staff and the cost in time of doing the job properly. If reports are not frequent enough, the marks become outdated for the purpose of deciding on salary increases and promotions.

(e) Method adopted by Social Security Department.

The procedure followed by the Department conforms closely with that laid down by the P.S. Commission. It is usually termed the Committee system. This reduces to a minimum the influence of the vagaries of controlling officers without reducing responsibility for the reports.

Briefly, it operates as follows:-

- (i) The C.V. Officers sit as a committee to assess the basic grade staff. Usually this committee is only required to put forward an order of merit.

Each members should draw up his own list independently before meeting in committee. He should also indicate on his list the extent of his knowledge of each officer listed. Unless this is done the result could be that the majority opinion is an uninformed one.

- (ii) Each succeeding grade forms itself into a committee and working in the same manner draws up a merit order for the grade immediately junior. They also consider the orders of merit for groups assessed by committees of officers junior to themselves and should make such comments as they think fit or alternatively prepare a separate list of their own.

- (iii) When all orders of merit have been handed to the Registrar (or H.O. Divisional Officer) he usually calls together his senior officers and they decide district (or H.O. Divisional) merit orders for each grade. There will often be difference of opinion between groups and it is the Registrar's (or H.O. Divisional Officer's) duty to probe the reasons for these differences before coming to a final merit order.

- (iv) Marks must then be fitted to the merit order. For purposes of uniformity throughout all departments, the P.S. Commission sets out marking instructions and the ideal distribution of marks for each grade, as a guide.

- (v) When district marks are assessed tentatively, regional conferences of Registrars meet at Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch and a meeting of Head Office Divisional Officers is held. Two members of the Head Office Co-relation Committee attend all such meetings in company with the District Inspector. The purpose of the conference is to arrive at a merit order and marking for the region.

The marking and merit order are in effect an assessment of the performance of each officer's work, in comparison with others in his grade. A separate mark, to reflect suitability for promotion to the next grade, is also required.

- (vi) Following these conferences each Registrar or H.O. Controlling Officer decides on the marks for his reports. The marks allotted will generally be those agreed on in the Regional Committee. However, if in any particular case a marking officer is unable to agree with the Committee he may recommend his own assessment. The marking officer then completes and signs his portion of the reports and attaches a note containing his assessed markings.
- (vii) The Head Office Co-relation Committee visits every district office and Head Office Division accompanied by the District Inspector and interviews every officer who has been marked. Officers are handed their reports and advised of the marks allotted by their controlling officer prior to the visit of the Committee and they have an opportunity of giving their views on their reports to the Committee. Before leaving, the Committee discuss merit order and marks with the Registrar or H.O. Controlling Officer. Some adjustments may result.
- (viii) After all officers have been interviewed the marks for all districts are integrated and reviewed by the full Co-relation Committee.
- (ix) The Permanent Head then reviews each report, inks in the marks and adds his signature. He is entitled to make such adjustments as he thinks fit.
- (x) The reports are issued to the officers marked and they are given at least two working days to initial the report and record any comment they may wish to make. At this stage they are also notified of the number in their group who are marked in each category i.e. "excellent", "very good", "good", etc.

This is an important part of the procedure. It is preferable for controlling officers to hand reports personally to staff members, answer any immediate questions and offer to discuss further when the officer has studied his report.

The controlling officer may also comment on the report if he disagrees substantially with the co-related marking.

- (xi) Any comments made are considered by the Permanent Head who adds his comments and the report is returned to the officer concerned for noting. The completed reports are then forwarded to the P.S. Commission together with lists of marks, graphs and other statistical data.
- (xii) Every report is carefully examined in the office of the P.S. Commission and the reports are then placed on personal files.

#### (f) Reporting Officer's Responsibilities:

The success of any reporting system depends to a large extent upon the reporting officer.

He should:-

- (i) Make a careful study of the report form and instructions.
- (ii) Undertake the task free of interruptions.
- (iii) Make preliminary assessments and review after a few days.
- (iv) Confer with his senior officers.

More important still is the attitude of mind with which he approaches his work. It is not a mere matter of routine, but an onerous task which requires the utmost accuracy. Reports should be made not in terms of a man's personality and traits, but in terms of what he does and particularly what effect he has on the persons with whom he comes into contact - his seniors, his juniors and the public.

Some of the tendencies which the normal <sup>man</sup> shows in judging other people are to judge them by the feelings they arouse, to judge them by externals, to judge them in terms of one's own daily habits, to judge them in terms of knowledge gained only through one's personal contacts, to select some facts and ignore others. The reporting officer should endeavour to arrive at a fair judgment of the man. No officer should be marked on the basis of some isolated incident in his career.

The reporting officer requires to be just and impartial, to have a sympathetic understanding of staff and to display judgment and courage.

(g) The Officer and His Report:

All officers should make themselves familiar with the reporting system.

Reports should be handed out as privately as possible. They should be considered carefully. Few people are completely satisfied with both the marks and the comments on a report and there is often instinctive resentment at being assessed by another person.

If some aspect of your report does "get your back up" don't rush straight into the controlling officer and have it out there and then. Sit on it for a couple of days till you cool down. Try to assemble reasoned arguments to support your case then put them forward without heat.

(h) Conclusion.

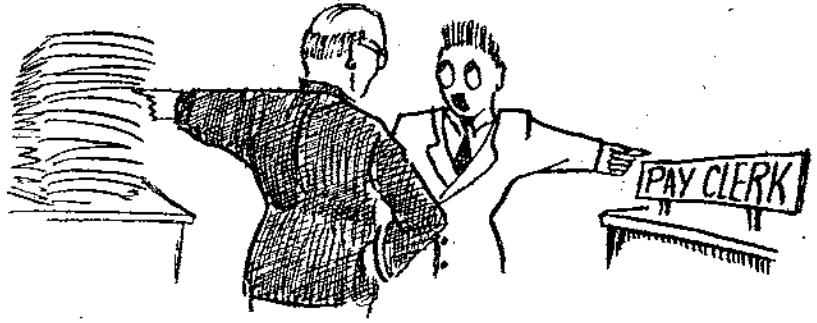
- (i) Assessment of staff is a continuous process not tied solely to a formal written rating at regular or irregular intervals.
- (ii) Our system of formal reports is by no means perfect but is probably the best that has so far been devised and used here. Most will agree it is preferable to no formal ratings at all, but is just as clearly open to further improvement which should come in the light of experience.

Reporting on staff is not a new idea as witness this quotation from the beginning of the eighteenth century - "The Bailiff of Westminster hanged himself. He had an ill report."

John Evelyn, "Diary".

May 1704

### WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT FROM THEIR WORK?



The total satisfaction a person obtains from his job is the true yardstick of its value to him. Wages are a direct reason why most of us work as it buys us satisfaction in the form of both the necessities and luxuries of life and is the tangible evidence of recognition and a source of pride.

Total job satisfaction depends not only on the money received but on satisfactions that result from the attitude and efforts of the employee himself, his fellow employees, his supervisor and his employer. The satisfactions above and beyond that obtained from wages may take the form of such things as:-

- Pride in work
- Congenial fellow workers
- Pleasant surroundings
- Good working conditions
- Good supervision
- Opportunities for training and advancement

The supervisor who wants to get top production helps his employees to achieve at least some of these additional satisfactions.

### WHAT SHOULD BE EXPECTED OF THEM?

"Morale results not from giving people something but from making proper demands upon them, to win the psychological rewards of achievement."

The recommended procedure is to set high standards and goals for your group, both in amount of work to be completed and in excellence of work. Let each individual know that you expect much, show your confidence in his ability to produce more than the minimum and by good leadership make it possible for him to outdo himself.

A supervisor who expects little of his employees either lacks the competence necessary to leadership or lacks confidence in his employees' ability which insults them and discourages them from doing their best. If, on the other hand, he expects a great deal his confidence in them will be regarded as a compliment and his competence will be acknowledged by willing co-operation.

Just what should a supervisor expect? There are four things which every supervisor should expect from his employees; if it's known that he expects them, and if he provides the proper leadership results should prove gratifying.

First, that they meet high quality and quantity standards and a little bit more.

Second, that they maintain congenial personal and business relations with all members of the group (and with other groups) and support spontaneous natural discipline.

Third, that they become increasingly useful to the group, taking on increased responsibility and requiring less supervision and instruction.

Fourth, that they offer helpful suggestions and make every attempt to solve problems and minimise difficulties rather than build them up and create trouble.

### And a Little Bit More:

There are certain standards of quality and quantity that cannot be relaxed without inviting inferior work in the future. As a supervisor you should not be satisfied with the bare minimum. The team that's really a success produces work

that meets the requirements and a little more that lifts it out of the mediocre class.

And how do you get these plus results? Certainly not by expecting fair or average work. Not by being easily satisfied, nor by relaxing standards so as to let inferior work get by.

Raise the standard for your team above the level of that required. Then meet this goal with plenty of margin to spare. Expect high quality and quantity and expect it at all times. But be sure you have been a good enough leader to provide your employees with everything they need to reach the objective.

If you expect much of your workers, they in turn will expect much of you. Your reaction will be the same as theirs. Meeting their challenge will develop in you invaluable capabilities as a supervisor.

(Extracted from "Practical Supervision" by P.J.Kalsem)

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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

PART 2:

FOR THE WORK

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

DELEGATION OF WORK

PUBLIC RELATIONS

SOME GENERAL NOTES ON INTERVIEWING

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORT WRITING

### GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES



Under this heading the following subjects will be considered:-

1. Acceptance of responsibility
2. Planning the job
3. Looking for improvements in work methods and procedures
4. Keeping costs down to a minimum
5. The issue of instructions
6. Checking up on the work
7. Collaborating with colleagues
8. Office Routine

### ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY

As a supervisor you must be prepared to take full responsibility for the work of your section. You sometimes hear it said of a supervisor "He's all right but he won't take full responsibility". If work passes through you, then you are responsible if it is found to be incorrect. You are also responsible for work carried out on your section which does not pass through your hands and you must ensure that such work is being done correctly. This entails, firstly, seeing that staff are fully trained in the job and, secondly, making test checks occasionally to see that the work is being properly carried out.

If you are a "first line" supervisor your checking of work must be thorough. You cannot afford to take anything for granted. When checking benefits and pensions look carefully at every form and read every letter. Always check up with the position at last application, renewal or review. Look through the whole file where necessary. See that you follow up cases where a decision is given subject to further verification being made. Take care to check that all actions have been completed when placing records to file.

The Inspectorate do report on some sections that they find nothing wrong with the work, and it should be your aim to receive such a report on your section. Go carefully through inspection reports on your section's work and take steps to close all the gaps.

If you are checking work to go to higher level, don't lean on the fact that someone else will be looking at the case. Your seniors have a number of sections under their control. They have a right to expect that all the facts have been obtained, that all details of submissions are factually correct and that a reasonable recommendation has been made.

Avoid leaning too heavily on your senior officers; take responsibility for minor decisions yourself. Don't be a "Yes" man. Your seniors will appreciate reasonable arguments raised against their decisions and ideas. (It is equally important, of course, not to be a "No" man always finding fault with policies and directions received from above!)

A word of warning is issued here to all supervisors. Beware of being bypassed. Make it clear to your staff that you are responsible for the section's work and that you expect them to refer their work problems to you at all times. Let them see, however, that you are prepared to refer problems to a higher level when necessary.

A supervisor should aim at being able to say when he leaves a section that it is better organised and more efficient than when he came on to it. Our offices would stagnate entirely if supervisors took up the attitude "What was good enough for my predecessor is good enough for me. I will be off the section after 12 months anyway". There is a responsibility on every supervisor to improve methods and increase efficiency.

ALWAYS, be willing to take more blame for failures than you do praise for success.

### PLANNING THE JOB

Planning and replanning the work of the section is a continuous process. We can look on planning as "thinking ahead" - to tomorrow, next week, next month, next year. We have to plan the training of staff to fill gaps which may arise on account of leave, sickness, or other emergencies. We have to plan jobs assigned to the section and adjust staff loads in keeping with work fluctuations. Every supervisor must "think ahead" regarding the work of his section. Planning substitutes "thinking" for "worry".

### LOOKING FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN WORK METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The ability to originate and develop ideas intelligently and to make constructive suggestions and improvements is one of the most important factors in good supervision. Time spent in unnecessary work is wasteful. Using out of date, energy consuming methods is just as wasteful. Staff respond positively to supervisors who eliminate unnecessary work and improve methods.

Routines of work are a good thing and very necessary. The danger is that they become so fixed that necessary changes are not made, and even new supervisors are apt to accept things just as they find them. We must constantly look at all our routines of work with a critical eye and seek improvements to meet present and changing conditions. Develop a questioning attitude and use your imagination about your job.

Here is a quotation from the film "Stephen Banner, Supervisor" on Work Methods.

"Every work process has three aspects: first, transportation -- moving the papers from one action officer to another; second, storage--while papers are awaiting attention; third, action -- actual dealing with the papers by the action officer.

Analyse this work flow. See that transportation and storage times are reduced to a minimum. Simplify the work process; eliminate unnecessary steps.

Organise your staff. Make your staffing arrangements flexible. The action officer may have too much to do. Give him help -- cut down storage time. Distribute work evenly. Don't have one man idle when another is overworked.

See that your office layout is based on a logical workflow. Eliminate waste movements. Arrange your staff so that work can proceed in order and every man has what he wants near him; and Supervisors must watch staff comfort - such problems as light, air, space, and noise."

You will find that the work will go through your section best when storage space on the section for files and papers under action is down to a minimum. Staff have to push the work through if there is no room to hold it. It is bad to have pigeonholes in filing cabinets or on the desk where files and other papers under action can be placed. All work should be held on the desk. It should never be held in desk drawers. Sets of trays are best flat on the desk and not up on stilts, so that files can be stacked underneath. Working behind a contraption on the desk narrows the vision in more ways than one and makes supervision more difficult. Stationery cabinets preferably underneath the desk can be used to store forms.

As a general principle it is advisable to have all records (files, cards, etc.) as near as possible to the staff using them in order to reduce transportation times to a minimum.

You can play your part in simplifying work and improving methods. Have a look at the work of your section along the lines suggested in the questionnaire given in Appendix B. Submit your ideas to your seniors or under the Suggestions Scheme if you cannot implement them fully yourself.

See that you work out your ideas fully. Obtain all the facts and analyse them carefully. Have an answer to all likely objections.

If you are placing a new method into effect, obtain the ideas and the co-operation of your staff. Have a trial run where possible.

When submitting suggestions higher up remember that it is natural in us all to resist change so that senior officers look very critically at new ideas. In some cases they may have been responsible for instituting the very system you are proposing to alter! Furthermore, they know that a change of methods does not always provide the improvements claimed for it and new problems are often created. Remember the film "Stephen Banner Supervisor" again. "Don't be too easily disheartened. Try to sell your idea if it is a good one".

#### KEEPING COSTS DOWN TO A MINIMUM

It is as well for all of us to remember as supervisors that we have a responsibility to keep administrative costs down to a minimum compatible with efficiency or in other words to get the job done as economically as possible. When we compare Government Departments with private businesses we find that the differences are not very great. It has been stated authoritatively that they are 90% identical. The costs of running a business are very much before the minds of businessmen. The cost to the taxpayer should always be before the minds of supervisors in the Public Service.

In bringing forward a new idea remember that the cost factor is important. Saving the need for one officer may mean £1000 a year saved in administrative costs. There are smaller items such as overtime, stationery and toll calls where supervisors should constantly consider the cost and economise where possible.

One writer says "Nothing is wider of the truth than the belief that Government exists for service and business for profit. Each is interested in both".

#### THE ISSUE OF INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions issued must be clear, concise and in logical sequence. It is a good idea to use Job Instruction methods in giving verbal orders if they are at all complicated, i.e. ask the person concerned to repeat back what he has been instructed to do. This lets you know whether he has absorbed the instruction and you can check also whether anything else should be added.

For longer instructions suggest that written notes be taken, and allow sufficient time for them to be recorded easily. You can ask the person to repeat them back and check that they are complete where necessary.

In time people get used to repeating back instructions received and do it automatically.

You can use these methods when receiving instructions yourself.

Greater co-operation is obtained if orders are given in the form of a courteous request "How about doing this." "Would you find out". Its the friendly way of making assignments. A quotation on the subject of communication may help you to understand it.

### "Two-Way Communication".

"The problem of communication is not a simple one. The problem of communication is not merely to provide an opportunity for person A to say something to B and for B to say something back to A. Each of them is concerned that the other not only hears what he says, but also accepts it, integrates it into his view of the world, and acts on it, rather than distorting it, rejecting it, or hiding it away.

One of the easiest mistakes to make in the practice of communication is to feel that because we have heard ourselves say something, the other person necessarily has heard us say it too, and moreover, has heard much the same thing that we heard ourselves say. The steps in the normal communication process probably usually go something like this: Suddenly A thinks of something. He thinks "I must tell B so-and-so." He goes over to B and says "So-and-so". At this point A is quite apt to be through. He has put the idea into words. He has got it outside himself, and he has heard it out there, so he usually assumes that it has taken the next step - that is, that it has gone from being outside A to being inside B. Consequently A is quite apt to walk away confident in his communication. However, he may go further. He may ask B "Do you get it?" or "Is that clear?". Now, by and large, these are questions to which B is only allowed to answer "Yes"; for B to say anything else suggests an inadequacy in him, so the answer is apt to be irrelevant to the communication. However, even if B is a strong character, and his "Yes" means actually "Yes, I do understand what you said", he still can only mean "I understand what I heard", not "I understand what you heard yourself say". If the communication is of any importance A must have more information than this; he must know something of what B heard.

At first glance this seems to make the problem of communication almost impossible. On the one hand, we are apt to think that no serious misunderstanding will arise if A assumes that B heard A say the same thing that A heard himself say, and on the other hand, it seems very difficult for A ever to find out what B did hear, if he can't trust the answer when he asks B, "Did you understand that"? Indeed, it is difficult to communicate. We are probably saved mostly by the fact that there is a very great tolerance in the degree of understanding that we require of one another; very little precision is asked of most of our communications. However, it is still possible for A to find out a good deal more about what B heard. Even though he can't trust B's response when he asks him directly, there are other techniques. If A, after he has made his statement, simply does not walk away, and does not ask any questions, but only stands a moment in an expectant pause, he will create a situation in which B is much more likely to tell him what he heard. B, feeling that the matter is not closed, and that some sort of response is required of him, will probably either ask questions, revealing his conception of the communication or repeat the gist of it, so that A now knows not only what he heard himself say, but, to some extent, what B heard". ("Psychology in Management" by Haire).

Oral orders suffice for most instructions given by junior controlling officers. There is a very limited need for written instructions apart from manuals and desk files and any that are issued should usually be approved at a high level in the office.

If it is necessary to hold someone strictly accountable the motto is, "Put it in writing". When clearly expressed, the written word cannot be disputed and will be available for reference whereas a spoken order may be forgotten or its meaning lost as days go by.

Where the sequence of an operation is highly important, written directions enable a man to do a job step by step in the exact manner desired. Writing is also better than speaking where complicated details are involved.

### CHECKING UP ON THE WORK

Section clerks and more senior officers must not let their day to day work prevent them from checking up on all the work of the section to see that it is being done expeditiously and well. As you know, beneficiaries and pensioners are dependent upon us for their means of livelihood and every single case must receive prompt attention. It is the difficult cases, which take a long time to finalise, which are apt to be over-looked and placed in a "hard" tray and give the Department a bad name. Checking up is not the job of the Inspectorate; it is your duty as supervisor to see that work is being done correctly and kept up to date. Here are some ideas:

1. First thing each Monday morning is the best time for junior controlling officers to check outstanding work of the section. Snap checks may also be necessary at other times.
2. Section clerks in district offices are now required to submit comprehensive work reports higher up. In small offices such as, say, a district agency, where work reports are not prepared, a list of items can be kept on which a check is made.
3. Work reports are not usually so comprehensive that they cover ALL the work carried out by ALL the officers on a section. It is thus necessary for you when preparing reports to make a check also on all other work held on the desks of the staff of your section. In other words, the weekly check must be a comprehensive one. You must be satisfied after making it that all the work of the section is receiving adequate attention.

If you are to retain the respect of your staff, checks on work held on their desks should be made WITH THEM and NOT in their absence. Only if you suspected someone of hiding work would you take any other action.

4. You must look through the files of outstanding cases to ensure that all necessary action is under way. It happens so often that a case is held up awaiting a reply on one point when all the time there are other matters which have not been attended to. Look for opportunities to save hold-ups in payment by putting work through subject to later receipt of verifications or subject to verifications by phone followed by written confirmation later.
5. The test checking of a proportion of any work carried out by your staff, which does not pass through your hands, is a very necessary part of your work as a supervisor. More of this is required with new staff or with poor staff, than is otherwise the case.
6. Look for the reason if work is not coming through to you. There is probably a "block in the pipe" somewhere.
7. And lastly, check up constantly when new policies or procedures are first introduced.

Remember that a member of the Public Service Commission has stated "Failure to make adequate checks is one of the main weaknesses of supervision in the Public Service".

### COLLABORATING WITH COLLEAGUES

If you expect your staff to work as a team, you must be prepared to work as a team with your fellow controlling officers. Too often you find a lack of this team spirit and there are some people always looking for a chance to run down their colleagues.

Seek advice and assistance from your fellow officers, and above all, be willing to give advice and assistance to other junior controlling officers.

Remember also that we can all gain a great deal by learning how the best supervisors we know do their jobs

OFFICE ROUTINE

An extract from the staff training notes for junior staff on the subject of office routine is included as Appendix C. of this handbook. It is suggested that you read these notes and use them in the training of your staff.

DELEGATIONINTRODUCTION TO THE SUBJECT

On supervision courses some junior controlling officers have said "How does this subject of delegation affect us? Our duties have been clearly defined in our list of duties which we are expected to follow". Lists of duties of graded officers, manuals and the procedure sheets on desk files are all aids to delegation but these will not be used to best effect unless the principles of delegation are understood. Let us take just one or two examples:

1. In some instances the lists of duties state that "difficult" cases are to go to higher levels or that "difficult" applications and interviews are dealt with by the Section Clerk himself. The supervisor who makes the mistake of overdoing delegation may look on no cases as being difficult unless a situation gets out of hand. The supervisor who fails to delegate enough may wish to handle everything not absolutely routine or he may accept every case which his staff wish to be rid of. The wise delegator trains his staff so that they are able to deal with an increasing proportion of the difficult work.
2. Emergency unemployment benefit reports are set down as the duty of Section Clerks, Weekly, but a Section Clerk may train his staff to prepare drafts of such work for him. Understudies may similarly be developed for other work.

Much has been written about delegation. Those who wish to make a full study of the subject are recommended to read: "The Executive in Action" by Dimock (departmental library). A good general statement of principles is outlined hereunder in an adapted version of an article by W.H. Newman, Columbia University. It is suggested that all supervisors examine their own performance and that of their staff in the light of what is written. The controlling officer who fails to delegate sufficiently is often a conscientious and likeable fellow who must, however, mend his ways for the good of his health and his prospects of promotion. The one who overdoes delegation is not usually held in such high esteem. If only he would do his share when others are up to their eyes!

DELEGATION - WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS.Your Desk doesn't have to look like an Obstacle Course!

Many management practices are open to uncertainty and debate, but there is substantial agreement on the desirability of delegation. Experience, especially during World War II, has shown a remarkable capacity in people down the line to shoulder responsibility and get results. We also know that wise delegation is an important training device and helps build morale. Yet, in many organisations, executives frankly admit that they do not delegate as much as they can and should.

The malady is not universal, of course. The production achievements of Government departments and business would not have been possible without the assignment of tasks - and accompanying freedom of action - to hundreds of thousands of people. Still, in large and small organisations we hear:

"He's overworked but he won't let go".

"There's a good man, if only his chief would give him a chance".

"Everybody agrees it's a one-man show, but we can't seem to break the pattern".

If the obstacles to delegation could be overcome in cases like these, the resiliency and flexibility gained would add further strength to the organisation and its structure. What, then, is the nature of the difficulty?

To clarify the problem, let us set aside the cases where a senior officer at any level does not want to delegate. Some people are little Napoleons who can satisfy their egos only by keeping all the authority to make decisions within their own hands. Also, a senior officer may hold such a tight rein that the junior man does not dare delegate further.

But what of the cases where effective delegation is lacking even though it is recognised as desirable? All too often a controlling officer may give lip service to delegation and sincerely agree that it is desirable; but for some reason, the right to ~~the~~ decide - with corresponding responsibility and initiative - does not pass down the line.

#### A personal relationship.

Effective delegation centres around a personal relationship between two individuals; the supervisor and his immediate subordinate. The supervisor who is accountable for achieving certain results, looks to the subordinate for the performance of parts of the job, and toward this end gives him permission to take certain action. The greater the freedom of action, the higher the degree of delegation. The subordinate, on the other hand, accepts an obligation to use his talents to accomplish the mission.

In practice, this is typically a growing and shifting relationship between the two men. The freedom and initiative that the subordinate is expected to exercise can rarely be spelled out in detail; the substance of the delegation takes on real meaning in the working habits that are developed from day to day. These habits and attitudes, in turn are shaped by the subtle interplay of the two personalities involved.

The personal adjustments required for effective delegation cannot be created by an order from the Permanent Head or a page in the organisation manual. Formal statements about organisation have an influence, of course, as does departmental tradition. An organisation plan, however, does not become a reality until it is incorporated into the behaviour pattern of the individuals involved. This is the point where delegation so often breaks down.

A closer look at some of the tugs and pulls on the two people involved in delegation may reveal blocks to desired behaviour. The following list suggests some of the common pitfalls. A controlling officer who is plagued with a failure of delegation at a specific point in his organisation may well find the root of the trouble among these stumbling blocks.

Let us look first at some of the reasons that supervisors are loath to delegate; and then turn our attention to common reasons that subordinates hesitate to take responsibility.

#### Why supervisors are reluctant.

##### 1. Some supervisors get trapped in the "I-can-do-it-better-myself" fallacy.

A man who is conscientious and has high standards of performance is naturally tempted to perform any activity that he can do better than his subordinates. Assuming that the supervisor really can do the job better (which is not true quite as often as he thinks it is), he must nevertheless reconcile himself to turning the job over to someone whose performance will be "good enough". The comparison the supervisor has to make is not between the quality of work he or his assistant will do on the specific task. Instead, he should compare the improvement in performance when he does the work himself against the benefits to the total operation when he devotes his attention to planning and supervision, which only he is in a position to perform. Only after a supervisor accepts - emotionally and intellectually - the idea that his job requires getting most things done through other people will he be able to make full use of delegation.

## 2. Lack of ability to direct is another barrier to successful delegation.

The supervisor must be able to communicate to his subordinate, sometimes far in advance, what is to be done. This means that the supervisor must

- (a) think ahead and visualise the work situation
- (b) formulate objectives and general plans of action, and then
- (c) communicate these to his subordinate.

After the two men have worked together for a period of time, this process may be extremely informal, but it is still important that these three key elements be present.

All too often supervisors have not cultivated this ability to direct.

Lack of ability to train staff also comes under this heading. In order to delegate, the supervisor must be able to train his staff in the work. He must encourage staff to find the answers to their problems themselves - but always be approachable.

## 3. A third possible block to effective delegation is lack of confidence in subordinates. The supervisor hesitates to turn things over to his subordinate because:

- "He'll take care of the details all right, but miss the main point".
- "I'm not sure of his judgment in a pinch".
- "He has ideas, but doesn't follow through".
- "He's too young to command the respect of the others".

When this kind of situation is open and recognised, the remedy is clear: Either training should be started immediately or if this is impracticable a new subordinate found. It will be found invariably that staff respond to responsibility with better and more careful work.

Often the situation is by no means so clear cut, however. The lack of confidence may be subjective and almost unconscious. When this is the case, the supervisor may give lip service to delegation, but in the actual working relationship won't let go.

## 4. A related obstacle is the absence of controls that warn of impending difficulties. Problems beyond those covered by the delegation may arise, and the supervisor naturally wants to avoid being caught with no warning. Consequently, he needs some check on what is going on. Such information is also useful for counseling and for appraising final results. While care must be taken that the control system does not undermine the very essence of delegation, it is also true that the supervisor cannot completely abdicate his responsibilities. Unless he has confidence in the controls, he probably will be cautious about delegating.

## 5. Finally, the supervisor may be handicapped by a temperamental aversion to taking a chance. Even with clear instructions, proper subordinates, and adequate controls, the possibility still remains that something will go wrong. The greater the number of subordinates and the higher the degree of delegation, the more likely it is that sooner or later there will be trouble. The supervisor who delegates takes a calculated risk. Over a period of time, he expects that the gains from delegation will far offset the troubles that arise. Until the supervisor sees this characteristic of his job, and adjust to it emotionally as well as intellectually, he is likely to be reluctant to delegate.

These five obstacles to effective delegation are all related to the attitudes of the supervisor - the man who is doing the delegating. Fortunately, our attitudes can be modified, at least in intensity, by conscientious and continued effort towards self-improvement.

### Why subordinates are reluctant:

Delegation, as we have said, is a two-sided relationship. Even when the supervisor is ready and able to turn over authority, there may be reasons that the

subordinate shrinks from accepting it. Something within the subordinate himself or in his relationship with his supervisor may become a block. Let us look at some likely difficulties on the part of the subordinate.

1. Often the subordinate finds it easier to ask the supervisor than decide for himself how to deal with a problem. Making a wise decision is usually hard work, and men are perpetually seeking formulas or short cuts to avoid this labour. If a man finds that he can take a half-baked idea or a problem to his supervisor and get an answer, he will do so. In addition, making one's own decisions carries with it responsibility for the outcome. Asking the supervisor is a way of sharing, if not, shifting, this burden. Over a period of time, asking the supervisor becomes a habit and the man becomes dependent on his supervisor rather than on himself.

A habit of taking all the non-routine and tough problems to the supervisor can best be broken by an agreement between the two men to mend their ways. If the practice is of long standing, perhaps the controlling officer will have to resort to stubborn refusal even to give advice. Then, after a period of "throw him in the water and let him swim" a more healthy coaching relationship can be established. The distinctions among advice, decision, and orders will, however, remain slippery; and the supervisor must constantly be on his guard not to let his advice undercut the initiative and responsibility he is striving to build.

2. A second factor that keeps a man from embracing greater responsibility is the fear of criticism for mistakes. A great deal depends upon the nature of the criticism. Negative criticism is often resented where constructive review might be accepted.

"Unreasonable" criticism is likely to evoke an even sharper reaction. Unreasonableness in this situation, must be defined in terms of the subordinate's feeling. If he feels that unfavourable results were beyond his control, that his duties and authority were not clear, that his actions were wise in terms of the situation as he knew it at the time, or that he was not given an opportunity to explain his side of the story, the criticism will have a disheartening effect.

Negative or unreasonable criticism that embarrasses a man before his fellow workers adds salt to the wound. There is a direct impact of such criticism on a man's willingness to take on new responsibility. He will naturally be inclined to be cautious and play it safe, if he has learned from experience that taking on more risks may result in embarrassing and unwarranted criticism. His feeling is, "Why should I stick my neck out?"

3. Most men hesitate to accept responsibility when they believe that they lack the necessary information, resources or authority to do a good job. The frustrations that go along with inadequate information and resources create an attitude that might convince the man to reject further assignments.

To obtain the best results authority must be equal to the responsibility vested in a person when a delegation is made. Such barriers makes effective delegation difficult indeed.

4. A fourth obstacle to accepting responsibility is simply <sup>that</sup> the subordinate may already have more work than he can do. True, such an overload may be the man's own fault; for example, he may make poor use of his time. But from the point of view of his willingness to accept responsibility, the cause of the overwork is not the critical point. If he already feels overburdened, he will probably shy away from new assignments that call for thinking and initiative.

5. Lack of self-confidence stands in the way of some men's accepting responsibility. The supervisor believes the man can do the job and is willing to take the risk of the outcome, but the worker is unsure of himself and doesn't like to take the plunge. Ordering the man to have self-confidence will have little effect. In many cases, however, self-confidence may be developed by carefully providing experience in increasingly difficult problems, to help the man sense his own potentialities. To be sure, some men may not have the psychological makeup to carry heavy responsibilities - but here again, World War II provided us with many examples of far greater latent ability than appeared on the surface.

6. Finally, positive incentives may be inadequate. As we have already noted, accepting additional responsibility usually involves more mental work and emotional pressure. In the ranks of some organisations, there is some social stigma on the "eager beaver" who is pushing to get ahead. Also there is more or less risk of failure; failure is unpleasant and may result in embarrassing removal from the job. For these reasons,

there should be positive inducements for accepting delegated responsibility. These inducements may take any form, such as pay increases, better personal reports, recognised status in the organisation, more pleasant working conditions, additional power, personal recognition and approval by respected members of the organisation, and other rewards, both tangible and intangible. The important point is that the person affected by delegation should be provided with a positive incentive that is important to him.

#### A matter of adjustment:

We see, then, a variety of possible reasons that a subordinate may hesitate to accept new responsibilities. These and other points that might be added to the list emphasise the need to think about the individuals involved and the factors that will affect their reactions to any change in the delegation of authority.

Fortunately, many delegations encounter none of these obstacles, and in other situations there may be only one or two points that interfere with effective delegation. In any case, the list suggests potential difficulties to watch for, and provides a frame of reference for analysing the problem.

The main thing to remember is that carrying out such plans requires people to adjust their attitudes, behaviour patterns, and relationships. Such adjustments are a normal occurrence in society, but we must recognise that they take time, and that some people are more adaptable than others. Our best plans will come to naught without these personal adjustments.

#### Delegation of Responsibility:

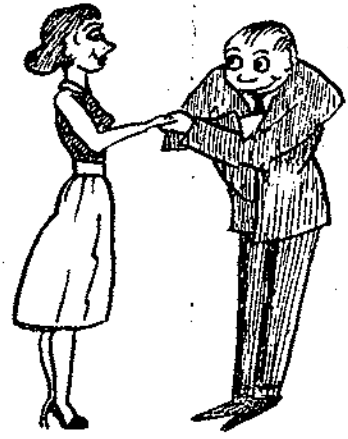
The process of delegation creates a responsibility on the part of the assistant to carry out his assignment. With delegation must go trust or he will not develop. But the delegator is not relieved of any of his responsibility. He is still responsible and becomes responsible for the action of his assistant as well. This aspect of delegation has been clearly, if a bit sarcastically, suggested in the following summary of an executive's job:-

"As nearly everyone knows, an executive has practically nothing to do, except to decide what is to be done; to tell somebody to do it; to listen to reasons why it should not be done, why it should be done by someone else, or why it should be done in a different way; to follow up to see if the thing has been done; to discover that it has been done incorrectly; to point out how it should have been done; to conclude that as long as it has been done, it may as well be left where it is; to wonder if it is not time to get rid of a person who cannot do a thing right; to reflect that he probably has a wife and a large family, and that certainly any successor would be just as bad, and maybe worse; to consider how much simpler and better the thing would have been done if one had done it oneself in the first place; to reflect sadly that one could have done it in twenty minutes, and, as things turned out, one has to spend two days to find out why it has taken three weeks for someone else to do it wrong."

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## PUBLIC RELATIONS

(Notes based partly on the P.S.C. Staff Training Manual on Public Relations.)



### Public Relations at the Individual level:

Public relations occur at all points of public contact and are therefore usually an individual concern. This fact greatly increases the difficulty of controlling and maintaining standards, and also presents a special training problem. The idea that public relations invariably involve face-to-face contact is, unfortunately, still prevalent in the Service. Far too often it is assumed that counter staff, receptionists, and interviewing officers are the only groups needing special training in this field. Obviously, the interview, the telephone and correspondence are all media through which ideas are communicated and impressions are received.

For the individual officer, public relations are resolved into a matter of the impressions - good or bad - he makes on the Department's clients. Good manners do not, in isolation, constitute good public relations. Courtesy must be backed by efficiency. The four components of good public relations at this level are:-

1. Unfailing courtesy.
2. Prompt service.
3. Accurate information.
4. Evidence of a genuine desire to assist.

Efficiency does not originate in a vacuum - it is strictly the product of training. The erroneous idea that good manners and good public relations are synonymous terms has undoubtedly been responsible for some apathy towards training in public relations.

The aim of public relations is not limited to conveying good impressions of the employee's personal attributes; the main object is still the creation of favourable public attitudes towards the Department itself. This will result only if all officers are careful to give full support to the current policy of the Department in all their dealings with the public. If they encounter criticism of this policy they should defend, not deprecate, the Departmental line, which is formulated only after a full consideration of all that is involved. Any criticism received which indicates that a review of policy is required should, however, be referred higher up. The Department's Administration wishes to be kept informed of public opinion regarding its policy. The importance of this type of "positive" public relations at the lower level should be continually stressed to junior staff.

### Employees Represent their Organisation:

The people judge the Public Service as a whole on their personal dealings with individual public servants. If the counter staff of the Department is inefficient and discourteous, the public will naturally assume that the whole Department is tainted with the same failing. Nor is a good impression made when members of a staff chat in groups in view of the counter, particularly when there are people waiting for attention. Any appearance of idleness may provide ammunition for someone to complain of an overstaffed Government Department.

Our Department relies on the goodwill and co-operation of the public in order to attain its objectives. Nothing could be more detrimental to the work of the Department, than the impression that its officers are prepared to do just so much as they are obliged to do and no more. Up-to-date and correct information

must be given to members of the public. Wrong information is worse than none at all. If the answer to a question is not known, it is much better to admit the fact and then to set about obtaining the required information than to profess knowledge where none exists.

An inconsiderate and tactless approach by a single employee even if the action is itself within the law, is to many people an unmistakable sign of "bureaucracy". It is neither expected nor desired that public servants should be abjectly subservient in dealing with the public, but it is expected that they be courteous, and so dispel any impression that the Public Service attempts to be the public's master rather than its servant.

#### Approach to the Public:

It is on the service given over the telephone, through personal interviews, or through our correspondence that the Public Service is largely judged by the public. If we display tact and initiative in all these dealings, the public will feel more kindly towards the service as a whole.

Some members of the public are admittedly "difficult" people, but we should not sum them up too hastily without first of all trying what tact can do.

We should show our tact, avoid arguments and discuss points in agreement first; and then gradually and diplomatically, lead up to the points at issue. By being considerate of the public's point of view and opinions, and never telling a member of the public directly that he is wrong, we will be less likely to antagonise that person. But if we are wrong ourselves, we should admit it quickly and emphatically, and we will impress the public by our fairness.

We should keep in mind that what looks like uncommonly bad manners in others may well be due to worry or illness, and do our best not to let the "problem" people ruffle us into anger. If we remain calm we have the advantage; if we lose our temper, we lose control of the situation.

Callers at our offices will not be as familiar with procedures as we are. Official phraseology may be bewildering to them. Or perhaps they have doubts and difficulties which our sympathetic attitude may help to ease.

We should take the time to explain details carefully; steer clear of Departmental "jargon"; be considerate. And even if we are not able to give the answers ourselves, we can be helpful in directing the caller to the person with the answers.

#### The Right Person for the Job.

Allocation of staff for the counter is one of the most responsible of all the duties of a Controlling officer. On the choice of the right person for the job depends the happiness and efficiency of the whole staff and the quality of the service they give to the public.

It is essential to see that those who are delegated to serve the public directly are soundly tutored about the nature of their work, and fully equipped to answer all the questions that may be asked. Experience is helpful, but knowledge is essential, if the officer is to approach the job with confidence.

Where possible, counters should be manned by fully trained staff at all times. The counter should not be regarded as a training ground, as partially trained staff cannot be expected to give full service to the public.

Finally, it should be remembered that a change of duties is often refreshing and that if signs of boredom or lack of interest are noted among members of the staff, then a switch of jobs between counter and general office will in most cases result in a rise of spirits and a general improvement in the standard of service given to the public.

The Supervisor's Responsibilities:

Junior controlling officers are responsible for the service given to the public by their staff. Here are some of the things you will have to do to ensure that your staff are maintaining good public relations:

- (a) Make occasional checks on telephone service on your section. Give training as necessary in the use of the phone. Refer to the notes on telephone usage in the Department's handbook for new appointees.
- (b) Give advice and training to your staff in the best methods of interviewing.

By example and precept always impress upon your staff that callers at our offices are not interruptions to our work - they are our work.

Ensure that PROMPT service is given always. It is so easy for attention to callers to be delayed especially if they are out of view.

- (c) If you are in charge of the counter, check constantly on the service given especially at busy periods and during lunch and tea hours. Make sure that when staff are placed on counter duties they read the notes on counter service in the handbook for new appointees. Go over the notes with them. Give advice on such things as when to complete forms for beneficiaries and what to do about inquiries to see the Registrar.

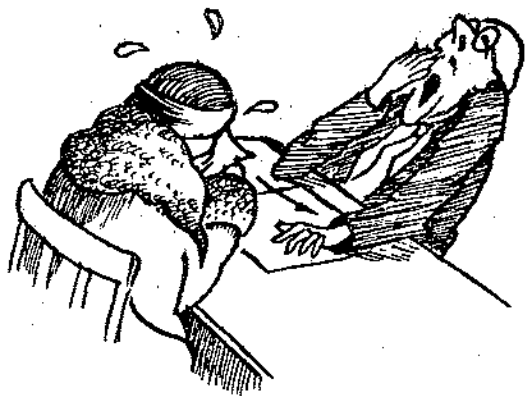
Remember:

A dissatisfied customer of a private firm can always go elsewhere. He cannot do that in his dealings with a Government department. He has no alternative but to deal with the Department <sup>and</sup> if he is treated badly he will broadcast his grievances much more loudly than he would about a private firm.

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## SOME GENERAL NOTES ON INTERVIEWING

(Based on an article received through the office of the Public Service Commission).



### 1. Introduction.

Interviewing is a subject on which all who have taken part in interviews on either the 'giving or receiving ends' have definite views. Those with some experience may agree that interviewing is an art rather than an exact science - a special branch of the art of conducting human relations, a very important phase of management - and therefore it is not possible to lay down infallible rules which by our taking a pinch of this and a dash of that will transform us into expert interviewers.

### 2. How often do we use the Interview:

Social existence today is full of interviews, and in many activities indispensable to modern life, the interview in one form or another plays a part and frequently a most important part. To take a very simple example from every day life - If you go to the butcher's to order some meat you cannot be said to interview him. You might reasonably be said to do so if next day you call on him with the express object of complaining that the meat was tough -

But, thinking of the use of the interview on a rather higher plane, the origin of its modern usage seems to have been the newspaper interview.

Today, however, there are many others besides the journalist who find the interview an essential part of modern working life - the social investigator, the police officer, the public servant, the bank officer, the commercial man, the professional man, and so on. Each of us interviews or is interviewed daily by callers at the office and staff.

With the interview being used over such a wide field, it is only natural that interviews for different purposes vary somewhat as to the methods adopted. Viewing the interview broadly, however, it may be said that it has three purposes within each of which the methods are constant.

These are -

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (a) The interview to collect facts and opinions   | Journalist interviews, interviews connected with Market Surveys, Social surveys, Govt. surveys, etc.                   |
| (b) The interview for the selection or rejection of applicants for employment   | A specialist type of interview in which assessments of personality is one of the chief objectives.                     |
| (c) The interview to obtain or provide information (and in many cases a decision) to a member of the public, your staff, etc. | This is the commonest form of interview and the one on which there appears to have been the least research undertaken. |

This last is the interview with which public servants, bankers, commercial men, and professional men, are most commonly concerned, and is the type of interview now being considered.

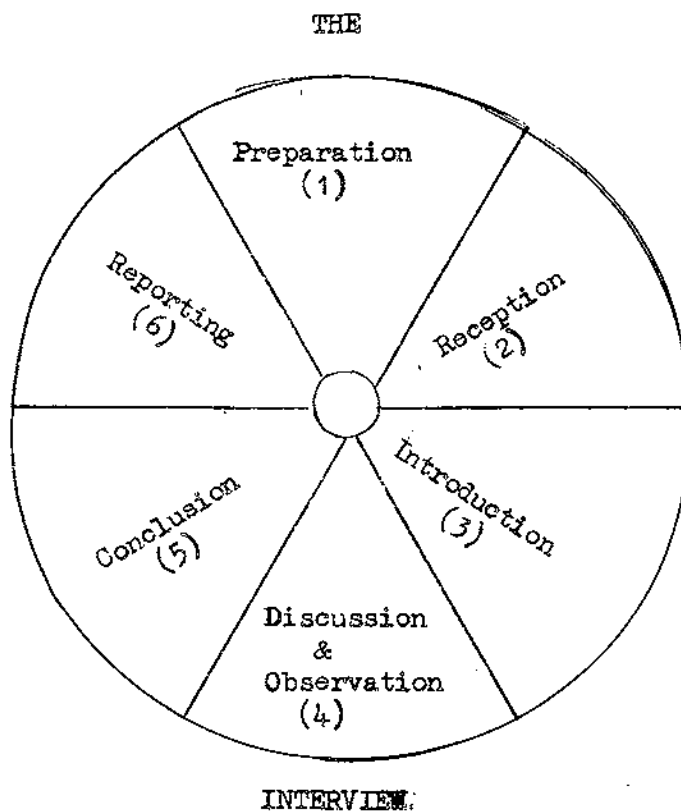
### 3. Special Characteristics of the Interview.

An interview is a form of communication; so is a letter or a telephone conversation, but what is it that is specially characteristic of the interview itself, marking it off from other forms of human communication?

A dictionary definition of an interview is "a meeting of persons face to face especially for the purpose of formal conference or some point", and it will probably be agreed that nothing would be an interview which did not involve a meeting of individuals face to face. Because it is a meeting of persons face to face it involves a relationship of two or more persons who employ as a medium of communication the faculties of speech and sight. The dictionary definition also makes mention of the formal nature of the occasion. The interview must be embarked upon with the consciousness that it is a meeting arranged with the object of accomplishing some purpose, the attainment of which usually requires the giving of information by one party to another.

### 4. The Component Parts of the Interview.

Every interview, whatever its use, is made up of the same component parts, and its shape, whether it is planned or not, evolves around an object which at the beginning of the interview may be obscure but becomes apparent with the development of discussion. Imagine an interview as represented by a circle in the centre of which is an obscured pinpoint presenting the object. Think of the circumference of the circle as the experience of the interviewer conducting the interview through the arcs of:- Preparation, Reception, Introduction, Discussion, and Conclusion and Reporting.



When conducting an interview each of you, whether consciously or not will, in fact, trace the circumference of the circle. The time spent in each arc of the circle varies according to the type of interview.

Similarly, each one of you will use the interview for basically the same reasons. You interview a person either -

- (a) To learn something from him, or
- (b) To tell him something, or
- (c) To advise him in order to influence his actions.

Any interview may be employed for one or all of these uses.

## 5. The techniques of Interviewing.

Those of you who are experienced interviewers will know that whatever the purpose of the interview the first attribute to success in the art of interviewing is a fundamental interest in people. Without this an interviewer cannot enjoy his work, nor use all the resources of his own personality to develop the interview as a more adequate medium of communication than letter writing. You will also know that the art of interviewing is a personal one partly natural and partly acquired. This is brought home forcibly when we look at the necessary qualities of a successful interviewer; as well as sound knowledge and the gift of inspiring confidence, they are courtesy, patience, tact, tolerance, understanding, judgment, imagination, forcefulness where necessary and powers of observation. Being aware of the extreme complexity and variability of human nature we know that no two expert interviewers are alike; although they may possess all those qualities it will be in differing degrees.

It follows, therefore, that one of the most difficult tasks in teaching techniques of interviewing is explaining your skill to others.

Through practical experience one develops one's own technique of interviewing which bears the impress of one's own personal characteristics and the sensitivity of person to person is, an inherent and unteachable quality. Experienced interviewers amongst you, however, will perhaps agree that you have acquired some of your finer technique through trial and error in practical experience and that to some degree you can assist your less experienced colleagues to avoid some of the more obvious pitfalls of interviewing.

One can therefore learn something from the experience of others, but this side of the technique of interviewing is so closely bound up with the personality of the interviewer and his ability to be interested in people that success in the main can only be attained by experience and by suitable development of one's personality.

On the practical, as opposed to the personal side of interviewing, however, there are certain techniques to which an interviewer, whatever his personality limitations may be, can with advantage pay particular attention.

Let us take another look at our component parts keeping in mind that we have to provide not only for interviews by appointment but also for casual callers.

## 6. Preparation.

(a) Every effort should be made to make the Department's premises as attractive as possible to the visiting public and in achieving this a great deal depends upon the ingenuity of officers in making the best of the reception facilities in the premises for which they are responsible.

(b) There should be clear notices directing the public to various sources of enquiry.

(c) Interviewing rooms should include upright as well as low chairs (elderly people avoid low chairs generally) and a writing table.

(d) It is essential that an interview be conducted in private.

(e) In general the interviewer can arrange his table and chairs as he wishes and it is generally agreed that the light from the window should fall evenly between him and the person being interviewed, and that the latter should sit at the side rather than in front of the interviewer's desk and that all parties of the interview when seated should be approximately on the same eye level.

Tables should be clear of all unnecessary papers, and the use of the telephone should, as a general principle, be restricted to calls connected with the interview in progress. Everything should be done to avoid interruptions during an interview by incoming calls or by other members of the staff.

Sometimes arrangements are made for an indication on the door of the room that an interview is in progress.

When interviewing by appointment you will generally have some preliminary data on the file or arising out of a previous visit. Where necessary, prepare a precis

of all information available securing as much from other sources as possible. Make sure you know your facts and if necessary refresh your memory by looking up the relevant rules relating to the matter to be discussed.

Formulate your problem and make a list of the points to be dealt with at the interview.

In other words PLAN your interview beforehand so that you will be sure to cover all the ground in the most natural sequence.

If the interview has not been arranged in advance obtain the file unless this is obviously unnecessary.

You are now PREPARED to receive your caller.

## 7. Reception.

Remember that an interview is "a meeting of persons face to face" so that the pleasantness of your expression is as important as the tone of your voice. Try by your attitude to make every visitor to the office feel that you are interested in him - even although he has arrived at a most inconvenient time for you and without an appointment.

When an appointment has been made, be punctual, have your interview planned, and all relevant documents readily available.

## 8. Introduction.

Greet the caller by name if possible. With well known callers show an interest in their well being. Cultivate a friendliness that is neither too familiar and hearty nor too formal. Make sure that you invite him to be seated.

Make the caller feel from the start that you really want to help him.

Be at ease yourself and put him at ease and always show a willingness to listen in spite of the demands made on your time and patience by having to listen to irrelevant comment.

Having disposed of the "preliminaries" you can now proceed to the 'BUSINESS' of the interview.

## 9. Discussion and Observation.

When interviewing by appointment you will already know the OBJECT of the interview and have prepared a list of points to be dealt with.

Do not reduce the interview to a series of questions and answers but remember that the successful interviewer employs true conversation encouraged by questions which show an interest in the person being interviewed. Listen, even if he rambles, somewhat. Let him tell his story and help him to supplement it by your relevant questions. In the choice of questions lies the core of interviewing. Remember it is your responsibility to keep him to the point and to relate the matter of the interview to its object. If the person being interviewed is not communicative, ask him straight forward questions as if you expected an answer and frame your questions in simple language, give definite leads, be open and frank and show there is a definite wish to help.

If, however, you want some information which the person being interviewed is obviously unwilling to provide voluntarily, do not be put off, but try to show him by a series of questions, and if necessary by explanation, why the information is required.

Unless absolutely necessary do not use leading questions i.e. questions which by their nature suggest the answer you want. However, if you suspect that information has been withheld you may need to lead the person into revealing what he wishes to hide.

Whilst encouraging your client to talk by listening sympathetically do not get so emotionally engulfed in his story that you forget the purpose of the enquiry. "In

the conduct of an interview great skill is needed to steer between the extremes of professional detachment and human sympathy".

Keep in your mind your list of points and deal with each as adequately as possible before dismissing it.

It is as well to check your understanding of your client's statements by repeating every now and then the gist of them to him in your own words.

Weigh up carefully the significance and implication of each new fact revealed and be alert for contradictions in the statements of the person being interviewed so that you may bring these to light immediately.

Make sure you have all information needed. Avoid having to follow up an interview with requests for further information. An interviewer will sometimes record all that the caller said but still fail to get all the information required. See that you retain the initiative in the conversation. Answers to some questions may raise other issues that need to be investigated. Do not ask for more information than is required, however.

You should use your own discretion about taking notes during an interview. Accurate recording of information is important so that some written notes are indispensable during an interview, but these should be made in such a way as not to distract your attention from the person being interviewed or to stem his flow of conversation.

Try not to give the impression that you are in a hurry; on the other hand do not lose control over the time element of an interview. By keeping the objective always in view you will keep firm control of the situation.

In an interview thrust upon you unexpectedly, it may take you some time to establish the object of the call. Few people can express what they want clearly and quickly and it is for you to help your caller to explain his needs. Let him tell his story, listen patiently and be alert for any information that will help you to establish the OBJECT of the interview.

If the caller comes to you in a hostile mood try to remain detached and polite; difficult as it may be at times, it is always better not to retort in the same vein. Remember that his hostility is not directed at you personally. Try to understand his viewpoint. Avoid arguments and endeavour to reach agreement. A sense of humour is invaluable.

Some callers have a habit of arriving just as the office is about to close. If you are unfortunate enough to be delayed dealing with a late caller, however annoyed you may feel, do not show your feelings. Remember service to the public is the reason for the existence of our Department and you must take your part in this service at all times. It is always better to deal with the enquiry if you can, and if this is not possible, make it easy for the caller to make another appointment.

#### 10. Conclusion.

When an interview has come to an end either because the objective has been attained or because it is evident that no further progress can be made, close the interview on a friendly note, particularly if the person being interviewed has shown any hostility during the interview. In other words, terminate an interview so that relations may be resumed later if desired.

Remember the underlying principle of all interviewing is the need to convince the person being interviewed that -

- (a) He has received sympathetic treatment.
- (b) He has been given a reasonable chance to express himself.
- (c) You have really understood his problem.
- (d) You have sincerely endeavoured to assist him.

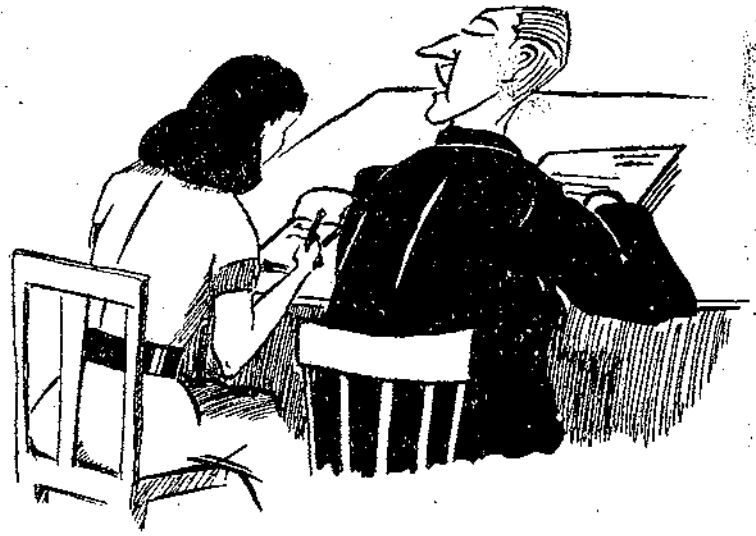
The achievement of this is the touchstone of a successful interview and in it lies the test of your ingenuity as an interviewer.

#### 11. Reporting.

The extent to which a written report is made of an interview will depend upon the importance of the subject matter but it is essential that necessary written reports are made as soon as possible after the interview and that others who are concerned with the matter are informed promptly of the outcome.

#### 12. Conclusion.

So although at the commencement of these notes it was suggested that interviewing was an art rather than an exact science, you will see that there is, in fact, what might be termed a scientific approach to the interview and it is only by learning this "science" of interviewing that you can fulfil your own personality as a skilled artist of the interview.

CORRESPONDENCE & REPORT WRITING

1. It is your responsibility as supervisors not only to prepare good letters, memoranda and reports yourself, but also to train your staff in correspondence work. In particular:-

- (a) Encourage staff to dictate their correspondence. In some offices dictation has been made compulsory. Issue copies of the notes on dictation - Appendix D - to members of your staff for their desk files.
- (b) Ensure that staff responsible for preparing correspondence read the P.S. Commission's Staff Training Manual on correspondence and any other literature on the subject which may be held in your office. A good book entitled "Profitable Business Writing" by Donnelly is also available from the Department's library.
- (c) Demand a high standard in all your section's communications with the public. Check up occasionally on forms issued by your staff which do not pass through your hands.

## 2. How to write letters.

A large part of our business is transacted through the mail, and the effectiveness of much of what we do depends on whether we write well or not. Good correspondence means accuracy, efficiency, speed; bad correspondence means mistakes, red tape, delay and dis-satisfaction. There are many people whose only knowledge of the work of the Department comes through the letters we send them. To a large extent we are judged on what we write, and it is just that this should be so.

### Principles of letter-writing.

**Be prompt.** The duty of every member of the staff is to give efficient service to the public. It is not efficient to "sit on" a letter for a week or a month while you think about the answer. Nobody likes to think that his letter is so unimportant that it is being ignored or forgotten. To the writer it is a personal matter, perhaps of considerable urgency and anxiety. He wants a reply at once, and a prompt answer is only a matter of common courtesy. In cases where a reply cannot be given immediately, allay the correspondent's anxiety by writing to him and advising him that his letter has been received and that something is being done about it.

**Be complete.** Failure to answer every inquiry will lead to extra work and loss of time, and will convey a poor impression of the efficiency of the Department. Remember that many people do not express themselves clearly on paper and do not actually ask for what they want. If you are complete in your reply, you will be helping yourself as well as the other fellow. An incomplete reply will double his work and your own, and destroy both his confidence and that of his acquaintances in the work of the Department.

**Be correct.** Do not give wrong information. If you have any doubt about your facts, check them. If you send out wrong information you may cause serious trouble for your correspondent, for the Department, and for yourself.

**Be clear.** It is not of much use to your correspondent to receive a reply by return mail if he cannot make head nor tail of it. Clarity is hard to achieve, because we rarely try to put ourselves in the shoes of the person we are writing to; but it is important to achieve it.

Be concise. Do not say any more than is necessary. If you put too much explanation into your letter you may make it impossible for your correspondent to see the wood for the trees.

Be courteous. Courtesy is important in every kind of letter. You should be careful not to irritate or antagonise your reader. See that your letters have a warm tone. Be human. ~~Try to write the sort of letter that you would like to receive yourself.~~

### 3. FURTHER NOTES ON LETTER WRITING.

#### The Personal Approach.

- (a) Remember that you are writing to a person. As every person is different the result of your communication will depend upon your manner of approach to him as an individual entity. With beneficiaries you should always convey the impression that your job is to help.
- (b) Adapt your language to the intelligence and educational level of your correspondent. Do not however, allow yourself to become slangy or colloquial, or on the other hand, stilted. Avoid officialese and other forms of jargon.
- (c) Adopt a friendly approach, "Dear Mr....." is likely to foster better public relations than "Dear Sir". Remember that too much of the passive voice will destroy the personal touch in a letter. The active voice is more direct and personal. Do not use stilted stock phrases such as "It is anticipated", "It is regretted" when in speech you would use the more personal "I expect", "I regret".

#### Putting the words together:

- (d) Avoid old style beginnings to letters. Make a direct statement in the first few words "I have received your letter of 10 May". "Thank you for your letter of 10 June". You can then begin a new paragraph with the text of what you want to say. If your beginning is direct the rest of the letter is likely to follow the same pattern.
- (e) A short word is more effective than a long word provided, of course, that it conveys the same meaning. A short sentence is in general more easily apprehended than a long involved construction. Where possible, use short paragraphs. The paragraph is essentially a unit of thought, not of length.

"Let us not shrink from the short expressive phrase even if it is conversational".  
(Sir Winston Churchill).

- (f) Try to obtain some sequence in your letters. One thought should lead naturally to the next.
- (g) Be grammatical. English is excellent material to work with and should not be ruined by poor workmanship. Nothing will be lost by writing correctly, even to the most untutored beneficiaries.
- (h) Remember that you are not writing a novel, or even a short story. Therefore, you need not employ what is known as "the principle of suspense." Say what you have to say in your first sentence or paragraph. Any explanations or excuses can follow.
- (i) Give an impression of honesty. If correspondence arises from an office error, you will not hurt anyone by admitting the error in a straightforward way. Apologise for any inconvenience caused.
- (j) If you want anything urgently, perhaps a brief explanation as to why an early response is desired will achieve the objective better than a bald demand for an urgent reply.

#### Words and Expressions.

- (k) Some words and expressions which are familiar to you will probably be commonly understood in a different sense by your correspondent. For instance, you know what an advice is, but the word "advice" has quite a different meaning.

to the man in the street. When writing to him, why not use the expression "authority for payment" or "payment card"? Again do not advise people when you merely try to tell them, or inform them. Many people resent advice.

- (l) The commonly used word "uplift" has conveyed to more than one beneficiary an imputation of dishonesty. It is just as easy to "collect" or "receive" as to "uplift" an instalment. A dictionary might justify the use of the word "uplift", but commonsense dictates the use of a less ambiguous word. Frequently, a little thought in the choice of a word will pay dividends by saving protracted correspondence.
- (m) While on the subject of words and expressions, it should be noted that objection has been raised to a Registrar using the term "my beneficiary" when writing to a legal firm. Beneficiaries should be referred to as "the beneficiary" or "Mr.....".

#### Quoting from legislation:

- (n) When writing to beneficiaries or pensioners it is unwise to quote direct from an Act as the wording will be difficult for them to understand. The provisions of the Act are best set out briefly in simple language.

Be sure, however, that your references to an Act are correct and that you do not confuse the Commission's rulings with provisions of the Act, e.g. you cannot say in a letter, "The Social Security Act provides that all earnings received by an unemployment beneficiary are a direct deduction from the benefit." This is a Commission's ruling. It is not in the Act.

#### Use of form S.S.34A.

- (o) Form S.S.34A is issued for the purpose of giving interim replies. In the past some members of the staff have also used the form a great deal as a manuscript letter. This may be all right for very minor matters, for instance, as a note returning bank books to a beneficiary. Let us look at the dangers of using form S.S.34A or any other form of manuscript notes for that matter, as a substitute for a letter in its correct form.

#### (i) Bad advertisement for the Department.

The receipt by a member of the public of a small form, often badly written gives the impression that the matter is treated lightly and that the Department as a whole is inefficient. A nicely typed letter inspires confidence. Our correspondence with beneficiaries is often handed on to solicitors, Members of Parliament, etc., and should be such that it gives a good impression.

#### (ii) No record on file of what has been said.

Even though the file may be noted regarding the issue of a form S.S.34A the exact wording of the letter is not held. Replies often require reference to the context of the letter issued.

#### (iii) The forms are not checked.

This is a most important point and has an application to all correspondence. It is a good general principle that correspondence should be checked by another officer, preferably a senior officer, not only for completeness and correctness but also to ensure that the meaning intended, is being conveyed to the recipient. Forms S.S.34A or other manuscript notes issued by clerks themselves are not subject to check in the same way as a letter submitted to a Section Clerk for signature.

#### Use of guide letters.

- (p) Ensure that guide letters are used correctly. They are very useful as a means of saving time when constant repetition of the same kind of letter is required. They have fallen somewhat into disrepute through staff using

them irrespective of whether they fill the bill or not. That is why the term "guide" letter is preferable to "stock" letter. Be very careful to ensure that letters prepared with the aid of a guide letter fit all the circumstances of the particular case and that no relevant information has been omitted. Review the guide letters being used on your section from time to time and look for ways of improving them.

#### 4. MEMORANDA

"Writers of memoranda might well take a lesson from a Negro preacher who explains his success as an orator as follows:-

"Fust, Ah tells 'em what Ah's gonna' tell 'em.

"Then, Ah tells 'em.

"Finally, Ah tells 'em what Ah told 'em.

Put in more academic style, this adds up to

(1) Introduction, (2) body, (3) conclusion; or the WHY, the WHAT, and the WHEREFORE, of your communication." (Kalsem)

For inter-office, or inter-departmental correspondence the same general attitude should be adopted as for personal correspondence. The following additional points should be noted:

- (a) Brevity or economy of words - but not economy of ideas - should be sought. A mass of verbiage can cloud the main issue. Long involved memoranda waste the time of senior officers in reading them. One sheet of foolscap should be sufficient for most of your memoranda. Look at them very critically if they run to more.
- (b) State the FACTS. Vague generalisations and unsupported opinions have no place in a good memorandum. Be specific. Outline the facts and present them in a clear cut logical order.
- (c) Be accurate as to facts, figures and dates, as it may be that important decisions will be based on such data.
- (d) The memorandum should be commenced by giving the reason for its submission. The basic facts should, as far as practicable, be included in the opening paragraph. Amplifications and explanations may follow.
- (e) Adventitious aids to clarity may be used if these would make for a better understanding of the situation, e.g., numbering of paragraphs, underlining, sub-headings, etc.
- (f) Technical terms are admissible. There is no objection, for instance, to referring in a memorandum to another district office or to Head Office to an "advice". The meaning will be quite clear.
- (g) An honest admission of error will receive a better reception than an endeavour to "cover up" or shift the blame. The recipient of your memorandum will probably be an adept at reading between the lines.
- (h) Wherever possible a recommendation should be made by the Registrar or District Agent in memoranda to Head Office. The writer of the memorandum should make a recommendation in his draft copy even though it may not be the one which is finally sent to Head Office.
- (i) Memoranda like films can often be improved by cutting. Go over your draft and trim away anything which obscures the meaning. The number of adjectives can usually be reduced.
- (j) Finally, check your memoranda. Go over them for inaccuracies, omissions and readability.

## 5. REPORTS.

The technique for writing reports is much the same as for preparing memoranda. Let us add -

### (a) Supply what is asked for:

If information only is requested omit opinions or recommendations. Don't introduce side issues.

### (b) Conclusions or Recommendations:

In our memoranda to Head Office regarding benefits we usually include a recommendation at the end. When writing reports it is often the practice for the general conclusions or recommendations to be made in the first paragraph. Your superior may not wish to scan the whole report if he agrees with your conclusions.

### (c) Furnish the proof:

Back up your statements with supporting data. Charts, statistical data and the like, should be appended to the report. Don't include in the body of the report. This confuses the reader.

## 6. DICTATION.

As many writers find they can draft a satisfactory letter, they tend to rely on written drafts of their correspondence. However, it will be found that with practice a more natural and therefore more desirable style can be obtained by dictation. Another result of the regular dictation of correspondence will be greater co-operation from the shorthand-typists, and a good stenographer will be able to correct any slips in grammar or construction. You yourself will be relieved of spelling worries.

## 7. SUMMING-UP.

~~To close there is~~ a quotation which appeared in a Public Service magazine in 1949:

"I suggest four rules which should be observed by all Civil Service letter-writers. If they appear to be too rudimentary, I would say that, having seen hundreds of official letters composed by all grades from Ministers' Private Secretaries to temporary clerks, I have seen comparatively few which pass these simple tests with high honours:-

- (a) Be certain you understand what your correspondent wants.
- (b) Be certain you know the correct answer.
- (c) Be certain that he will understand your answer.
- (d) Don't add "trimmings" unless they are necessary and helpful".

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

PART 3.

FOR HIMSELF

THE SUPERVISOR HIMSELF

TIME ECONOMY & JOB PLANNING

### THE SUPERVISOR HIMSELF



The combined efforts of a supervisor and staff can be made or marred by one man - the supervisor. No doubt we can all think of the same staff in a chronic muddle under one supervisor and yet always running like clockwork under his successor, or vice versa. It is just a matter of the relative capacity of the two individuals.

In the old days the Public Service bred a race of feudal overlords. Men were raised to positions of authority largely on their ability to "lord it" over other people. They were a sort of military caste and their word was law. Of the underlings it could be truly said, "theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die". That has all been altered by the levelling effect of two world wars and a changing social outlook, so that distinctions of rank are now less sharply drawn. Consequently, the supervisors of today have to get results by different methods. It is not enough to have a commanding presence. In fact, it is not essential to have a lordly manner at all. It is far more important to have knowledge and ability plus a calm convincing manner. Staff nowadays judge a superior by the tests of ability and self reliance. I do not wish to imply that personality is unimportant, but the trouble with personality is that nobody seems to know what it means. Many people mistake glamour for personality but how many "personalities" of that kind betray their intellectual bankruptcy in a five minute's conversation? No - physical appearance is often the least of the factors in a good personality, being subordinate to intelligence, maturity and assurance. Physical appearance should not be confused, however, with physical fitness which is very important to every good supervisor.

### KNOWLEDGE AND EFFICIENCY.

As supervisors you are responsible for your own knowledge of the job and your personal efficiency. Staff like working under a boss who knows his job. In reverse they do not respect or feel confident in a supervisor whose knowledge is incomplete. When you are placed on a section of the work you must set about making yourself an expert and becoming an authority on that particular part of the job. Set aside a definite time for increasing your knowledge. One half hour a day for a year is equal in time to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  work weeks.

Let us divide this subject into parts as it affects supervisors in our Department.

#### 1. General knowledge of Social Security and War pensions legislation:

How many really know their Acts and Regulations well and know how to interpret them? This is background knowledge all section clerks should have.

#### 2. Departmental rules and procedures:

These are also important, particularly those dealing with the work on your own section. When coming on to a new section you should read through again all the rules and procedures concerning the section's work.

You must also keep up to date with changes in the work which affect your own section, other sections of the office and also the work in Head Office. No section of the Department works to itself alone.

### 3. Wider knowledge.

To be a good supervisor you need a wider knowledge than just what is involved in your own department and your own job. You should gain knowledge of the work of other departments and of the Public Service generally; you should read widely in current affairs and current trends of thought and also in the art of administration and human relations. If you do this you will be better able to cope with whatever arises and you will have a better knowledge of how your work fits into the life of the community as a whole.

Our departmental library and the National Library Service can provide books on social security matters and on administration.

Attending worthwhile lectures is a good method of improving your knowledge. The Institute of Public Administration is a body well worth joining. Interest in the Public Service Association will improve your knowledge of employee - employer relationships.

### 4. Knowledge of duties.

Supervisors should know exactly what their duties are and the scope of the work for which they are responsible. Your lists of duties will help you in this, but be sure that you know them. You need to know also what each member of your staff does - a complete knowledge is necessary; if you don't know, find out; go over their job with them; do some of it yourself for awhile. You have to know just what is entailed by way of time and effort in every job on the section.

## MAKING DECISIONS

A supervisor must have good judgment; his life is filled with decisions, some of major importance, many of less. The excellence of his judgment is perhaps the principal respect in which individuals differ. Judgment can and should be improved by cultivating the reasoning faculty - by a logical approach to the solution of problems.

Make a habit of using this procedure which will apply to a greater or lesser extent depending upon the problem to be solved:

#### 1. Determine the Objective.

#### 2. Get the Facts.

Review the previous record. Check rules and customs which apply. Talk with individuals concerned. Get opinions and feelings. Make sure you have all the facts available and the right objective.

#### 3. Weigh and Decide.

Fit the facts together and consider their bearing on each other. Pose the alternative solutions. Whether done mentally or in writing, the process is the same.

Test your solution thoroughly. Try using the "other fellow's shoes" method. How would you accept that decision if you were in the beneficiary's shoes? What decision would you make if you were in your controlling officer's shoes? How will your decision affect other people?

#### 4. Take action and check results.

Are you going to take action yourself or do you need help?  
Watch the timing of your action.  
Should you inform your senior officer of your action?  
Follow-up to see whether your action achieved your objective.

A supervisor should develop the habit of making prompt and consistent decisions. Once a decision is given he should be prepared to adhere to it, unless proved to be wrong. Staff do not respect a supervisor who changes his mind with every change of the wind.

Confidence comes from making correct decisions and finding them accepted. Correct decisions come from having a good knowledge of the subject and bringing methodical habits of thought to bear on it. Therefore, the improvement of knowledge and judgment as already described, will build a reputation for correct decisions and enhance one's self confidence.

MANNER AND BEARING.

Staff like to look up to the boss, not down on him. He forfeits their esteem if he is loose, coarse or ingratiatingly familiar. The supervisor should be friendly but not undignified. It is possible to preserve self respect without falling into the error of a stiff, starched and unapproachable manner. It is a matter of preserving the right balance. Courtesy and consideration for others are necessary at all times.

A group of employees stated the following as the violations of good business manners they dislike most:

People who interrupt in the middle of a sentence.  
 Blustering and bluffing.  
 Bad personal habits.  
 Lack of ability to overlook lack of manners in others.  
 Unwillingness to do a simple favour.  
 A prejudiced attitude against women.  
 Obvious lack of interest.  
 Failure to greet subordinates in corridors.  
 People who interrupt private discussions.  
 Walking into an office <sup>either</sup> as if you owned it or as if you wouldn't own it if given to you.  
 Favouritism in manners towards certain individuals.  
 Over-effusive hand-shakes or salutations.  
 The man who is too proud to say "Thank you".

MORAL QUALITIES

Integrity, sincerity, impartiality, loyalty, and courage - who will say that these are of no consequence. They are indeed the qualities that set the seal on the supervisor. They are the hardest to acquire and the easiest to lose.

The supervisor's word should be his bond and never pledged lightly. If he is not consistently straightforward the staff lose faith in him.

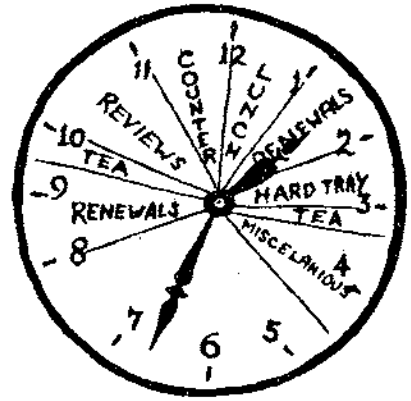
IN CONCLUSION.

A supervisor's loyalty and example in carrying out the instructions of his senior officers and in co-operating with his fellow supervisors, and the attitude which he adopts towards his staff will determine the extent of their co-operation and their loyalty to him.

A supervisor, therefore, must be a balanced individual and he should endeavour to correct any obvious defects in his make up.

A self analysis for supervisors is attached as Appendix E.

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TIME ECONOMY AND JOB PLANNING1. INTRODUCTION TO SUBJECT

Whenever the duties of a supervisor are considered, the natural reaction is "How am I going to find time to do all these things". "No time" is a very common cry and might seem to carry some weight were it not for the fact that there are many good supervisors in the Department who do make time for carrying out supervisory duties. These officers have their sections running so well that there is a considerable overall gain in time. You must all have seen on the same section of an office, one section clerk with no time to supervise and look for improvements; his successor saving himself and his staff considerable work by supervising correctly and by simplifying and systematising the work.

Supervisors must guard against allowing their desk work to spin out and occupy all their time to the exclusion of their supervisory duties. If you definitely allocate time to necessary supervisory duties you will find that you will still get through your desk work and save yourself time in the long run.

Our working week consists of 2275 minutes. Take care of these minutes and the hours will take care of themselves. Remember that you are responsible not only for your own time but also for the 2275 minutes per week of each member of your staff. Our time spent at the office is limited and should be used to the best advantage. On an annual basis office time amounts to less than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of our total hours awake or  $\frac{1}{5}$  of our total time.

2. BUDGETING TIME.

P.J. Kalsen's book on supervision suggests preparation of a time budget as a way of ensuring that working time is used to best advantage. The aim is not to try to adhere strictly to the number of hours allocated to each duty but to have a look at the time budget each week to see whether any of the duties have been given insufficient attention and require more time in the future. Here is an example of how a time budget could be prepared. The plan you would prepare, however, would probably differ considerably.

TIME BUDGETSection Clerk Renewals and Reviews.

<u>Duty.</u>	<u>Number of Hours per Week</u>	<u>Specific Times Allocated</u>
Desk work and Interviewing	24	Check renewals - 10.15 a.m. daily
Conferences with Senior Officers	2	Staff meeting - 9 a.m. first Tuesday each month
Checking up on the Section's work	2	Each Monday morning 8 a.m.
Reading and amending instructions	2	8 a.m. Tuesday - Friday
Dictation of Correspondence	2	9 a.m. daily

(Ctd).

TIME BUDGET (Ctd.)

<u>Duty</u>	<u>Number of Hours per Week</u>	<u>Specific Times Allocated</u>
Staff Training	2	Group Study - 8.30 a.m. Wednesday
Planning & O & M	2	---
<hr/>		
Total	36 hours	

If such a time budget would serve a useful purpose, prepare one. Whether or not you do so, you will find it worthwhile to allocate times for specific tasks as shown in the last column of this example.

It is also necessary to train your staff to use their time economically. Special times must be set down for some jobs, e.g. filing district cards first thing each morning.

### 3. SPECIAL JOBS

There are special jobs which can only be completed by laying it down that everybody on the section (or in the office) will work on them for say the first half hour or hour each day. So long as this lasts for a short period only, such an arrangement will not adversely affect the work and in the end saves a lot of time (and overtime). Monotonous jobs like purging records can be done this way so long as everybody is fully informed on what they are doing and properly supervised in the work.

#### Saving up Time.

As a supervisor there are some jobs, apart from the ordinary run of the work, which take a good deal of time e.g. working out a new system of doing a particular job. Here the only thing to do is to get your ordinary work right up to date (as you would if going on leave), and then let it pile up a little until the special job is done. Urgent work must, of course, always be dealt with right away.

We must guard against holding over special jobs too long. How many of us have felt after doing a job we took some time to get around to "It didn't take so long after all and I would have saved a lot of time if I had done it months ago".

### 4. SUMMING UP.

To sum up then let us say that there is a direct relationship between the efficiency of a supervisor and his ability to use the time at his disposal to best advantage.

## CONCLUSION

In the introduction to this handbook it was stated that supervision could be broken down into three elements, the Supervisor, the Staff and the Work. The Supervisor's responsibilities under each of these headings were then further analysed and some principles and techniques of supervision have been outlined and explained. These you may now wish to try out in your day to day work.

Keep in mind that, in practice, your responsibilities will not be divided up into compartments as they have been presented in this handbook but that situations will often contain many different factors. For example, one problem alone might involve morale, control and discipline, delegation and the making of decisions; knowledge of the work would be required in thinking out an improvement to procedures which in its turn might have an effect on public relations; leadership and training would be necessary in getting a new method of doing a job accepted and placing it into effect, and other responsibilities such as keeping staff informed, assigning work, assisting with problems and correcting mistakes, work documentation and increased checking up, would all come into play.

You will see that even in the handbook itself there has been a certain amount of overlapping of the various subjects dealt with and that certain principles can be applied in different ways.

One of the reasons why the Department holds supervision courses is to help junior controlling officers to understand more fully the inter-relation of these elements of supervision, so that they can be more easily applied on the job. This is done by means of discussions, practical work, and, perhaps most important of all by means of the study of actual cases and of real life situations.

Before you can take part in a supervision course however, you need to acquire a good background knowledge of the subject as outlined in this handbook.

JOB INSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE1. RESULTS OF POOR INSTRUCTION:

Most of us, at some time or another, must instruct a person in how to do a job or tell him what to do. The quality of the final result depends to a large extent on the quality of the instruction. Some of the problems which poor instruction can create are:-

Delays and hold-ups in the work  
Wasted time, effort and materials  
Poor quality work.

Correct procedures not followed  
Incorrect information received by learner.  
Too much time taken in learning the job.

2. CAUSES FOR POOR INSTRUCTION:

Confused thinking resulting in confused instruction. Forgetting that the learner has not had your experience.  
Giving too much material for the learner to remember. Overlooking the points that stump the learner.  
Thinking you know the job when you don't. Use of jargon not known to the learner.

3. LIMITATIONS OF SOME COMMON FORMS OF INSTRUCTION

Telling alone - under certain circumstances will result in confused ideas of the job.  
Showing alone - under certain circumstances will result in job not being learnt, motions copied, job not understood.

4. HOW TO GET READY TO INSTRUCT.

Have a Training plan or Time-Table -

Who is to be trained? For which jobs? By what date?

Break down the Job -

See notes attached on the preparation of job breakdowns.

Have everything ready -

This is just a matter of setting the correct example.

Have the Workplace properly arranged -

Just as the worker will be expected to keep it.

5. HOW TO INSTRUCT - THE FOUR STEP PLAN.Step 1 - Prepare the Employee

Put him at ease.

State the job and find out what he already knows about it.

Get him interested in learning the job by showing its importance and interest.

Place in correct position for instruction.

Step 2 - Present the Operation.

Tell, show and illustrate one IMPORTANT STEP at a time. Introduce each step by saying, "The first thing you do is....." "The next thing you do is.....".

Stress each KEY POINT by inflexion of the voice, by repetition or by giving the reason why.

Instruct clearly, completely and patiently, but no more than he can master.

Step 3 - Try-out Performances.

Have him do the job - correct errors.

Have him do the job again while he explains each KEY POINT to you.

Make sure he understands.

Continue until YOU know HE knows.

Step 4 - Follow up.

Put him on his own. Designate to whom he goes for help.

Check frequently. Encourage questions.

Taper off coaching and ease off the follow-up.

6. THE JOB INSTRUCTION SLOGAN IS:

IF THE EMPLOYEE HASN'T LEARNT, THE INSTRUCTOR HASN'T TAUGHT.

This cannot be taken in too wide a sense. It means simply that if, in his try-out performances the employee has difficulty in doing the job then the instructor should look to see whether there has been some fault in his presentation of the operation.

7. Of course nobody can learn to be a good instructor merely by reading through a list of general principles. Skill in instruction must, like other skills, be acquired by practice. Already in the year 445 B.C. Sophocles warned "You must learn by performing the task for even when you believe that you know it, you have no security before you have tried."

JOB BREAKDOWNS1. The need for planned instruction:

- (a) Making a job breakdown means analysing a job for purposes of instruction.
- (b) It ensures that information is presented clearly and in orderly fashion. Lack of organising the job in one's own mind - failure to prepare - is the reason for much poor instruction.
- (c) Job breakdowns can be prepared for most pieces of instruction in a matter of minutes. They can be kept, improved and used again.
- (d) Have your job breakdown in front of you when you instruct.

2. Definition of terms used in preparing breakdowns.(a) Important step.

A logical segment of the operation which SUBSTANTIALLY ADVANCES the work.

(b) Key point.

Anything in a step that might make or scrap the work or make the work easier to do. Key points are the 5 or 10 per cent of vital information that must stick in the learner's mind, never to be forgotten.

EXAMPLE OF JOB BREAKDOWN

Part: Forms S.S.12 received through post. Operation: Changes of office of payment of up to three months

Manual Reference: Part 35, M.B. Rules and Procedure.

Important steps	Key Points
Sort forms S.S.12	Type of benefit. Numerical order.
Look up renewal months	Refer to list. Month in pencil - top of S.S.12
Obtain district cards	Check name and signature (beneficiary or agent) Check former paying office (if incorrect check file and former actions)
Find code new Paying Office	State on S.S.12
Note District Card	In pencil New paying office and code Date from which changed and period Note "remarks" column S.S.12 13 D or 13D's Date Note S.S.12 re D/C
Deal with advices	Prepare forms S.S.13D Note S.S.12. re advices dealt with.
Issue S.S.13D's	Current month to mail Further months to pay section
Send S.S.12's to file	To records (Destroyed after 6 months)

Notes on preparation of breakdowns:

- 1. Determine the important steps first. Commence each one with an action word.
- 2. Do the job a second time and record the key points remembering the definition.

Check list of questions which a supervisor can ask himself when looking for means of simplifying work, improving/and reducing costs.  
methods

1. Is your section layout and its place in the office satisfactory?  
Would any changes provide a more logical work flow?
2. Could any jobs be better done elsewhere in the office?
3. Could travelling time spent between your Section, Records and the counter be reduced?
4. Are any duties or returns now superfluous? Are any card records, registers or files which are kept now unnecessary?
5. Can any steps be cut out of any work, i.e. is any work passing through too many hands?
6. Can time be reduced in carrying out any step of any job on the section?
7. Could the work be divided up between your staff in a better manner? Is the work load distributed evenly?
8. Can you delegate any more work to members of your staff?
9. Could any more work be done at relatively easy periods to prepare for rush periods?
10. Are senior basic grade staff being used to the best advantage?
11. Have you any output standard to compare work of officers on your section with those doing similar work in your office?
12. Could the additional time and effort caused by outstanding work be reduced by earlier check-ups?
13. Could interruptions in any employee's work be reduced without affecting service to the public?
14. Is it necessary for all the papers which pass through you, either to your section or away from your section, to do so?
15. Could more work be typed or does too much go to the typist?
16. Can any of your "guide" letters or cyclostyled forms be improved?  
Would more "guide" letters or cyclostyled forms be useful?  
Would any cyclostyled forms be better printed?
17. Can you suggest any improvements to printed forms?
18. Are telegrams and toll calls being used to the best advantage taking the cost into account?
19. Have your staff spring cleaned their desks inc. drawers recently?
20. Is any unnecessary furniture, obsolete records or stationery or other unused impedimenta held on your section?
21. Would replacement of any furniture save space or increase efficiency?
22. Have you or your section any bulky desk cabinets which should be replaced by a set of trays plus perhaps a stationery cabinet.
23. Is it really necessary for all the calendars, lists, old photos etc. (if any) hanging on the walls of your section to be there? Would the section not look better if some of these items were held on desks or scrapped?

EXTRACT FROMSTAFF TRAINING NOTES FOR JUNIORS - OFFICE ROUTINE.Work Methods

A Section Clerk cannot afford to keep his head down at his work without giving thought to the organisation of his section, planning the work and supervision. In the same way all clerks must plan their own jobs and give some thought to their methods of work. We all know that some people can work faster than others, and you must allow for this when you are comparing your output with that of another officer. However, sometimes we find a person who seems to work at speed all day, but still has a desk cluttered with papers at 4.35 p.m. and not much to show for the day. Here incorrect work methods are often the cause.

It is part of the make-up of some people to do things in an orderly manner and look for all the ways of saving time: others have to learn these things and remember that you can learn a lot by following the example of other officers. Keep an eye open always to see if the best clerks in the office can give you any pointers on work methods. Ask questions of them, if necessary.

Here are some important points regarding Work Methods -

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Orderly desk.                         | 4. Plan your work. Do it in batches. |
| 2. Keep work up to date.                 | 5. Do not keep a "hard" basket.      |
| 3. Reduce moving from desk to a minimum. | 6. Take responsibility.              |

What a lot could be said about all these things. Much of what is written hereunder may seem just commonsense to you in your normal procedure, but <sup>we</sup> can all gain some ideas from a study of Work Methods.

1. Orderly Desk. You can tell how good a clerk is very often by the appearance of his or her desk. Here are a few points on this subject.

- (a) See that your desk and the drawers of the desk contain nothing that is not essential to the job at the present time. Get rid of any junk, such as old instructions, old lists, obsolete stationery etc. You are responsible for everything on your desk. See that you know why everything is there and what you have to do about it. Ask your Section Clerk if you are not sure.
- (b) Do not hold files unnecessarily. Remember, some other officer may need them. The correct place for a file not in use is in the filing system with a bring-up if necessary. Do not hold on to files awaiting replies to correspondence. I might mention here, however, that there can be a danger in the bring-up system. Files should not be placed to bring-up solely to get them out of the way and postpone action on them. One writer has said in this respect "The man who believes he is up-to-date in his work but who has a lot of postponed work in the office filing system, is deceiving himself. His files have wings and invariably leave their pigeon-holes and come home to roost on his desk."
- (c) Keep all work on your desk and not in drawers or pigeon holes where it could be overlooked. If it is in front of you, you must keep it all moving.
- (d) See that you keep a sufficient supply of forms, but only those in everyday use. Have them within easy reaching distance and easy to obtain quickly. Stamp up supplies of forms with location and other stamps to save yourself time when issuing them.

- (e) Keep in-coming forms such as monthly renewal forms, in numerical order. If you keep lists, see that completed pages are clearly marked as such and that current and non-current lists are kept separately.
- (f) Have no scrappy notes on your desk. You may go off sick and such notes would mean nothing to others. I will enlarge on this and remind you here of the necessity to commit all information received to paper as soon as possible, and thus make a record for the file. All senior officers do this. The file should provide all the information held by the Department regarding a beneficiary. Such notes should be recorded on the printed forms of Minute Sheet and should be signed or initialled and the date given. The source of information received should always be shown.

A lot of difficulty has arisen in this Department through members of the staff not recording information received.

- (g) Keep all written instructions received on your desk file with copies of "guide" letters. See that obsolete instructions are removed from the file.

You may think of more points on this subject.

2. Keep work up to date. I do not think all the staff of our Department fully realise the great advantage of keeping work up-to-date. I know that it is not always easy, but do keep in mind that late work always means extra work, quite apart from the fact that we have a duty to the public to ensure that there are no hold-ups in the payment of benefits or pensions. Take a monthly benefit renewal, for instance. It is not renewed in time for payment to continue without a break. What a lot of extra work is caused - stopping payment, advising the beneficiary, answering enquiries about it and then all the business of resuming payment again. Keep ahead with your work as much in your own interest as that of the beneficiaries.

3. Reduce moving from your desk to a minimum. There are some officers who seem to be looking all the time for an excuse to get up and leave their desk and they are the ones who are always behind in their work. It is amazing what a lot of work can be got through by just determining to stay put as long as possible. Do not mistake me here. We must leave our desk, if necessary, to deal with the public. One Minister of Social Security complimented the Department on the fact that beneficiaries can always get access to staff behind the counter, and are not choked off by our counter staff, but you can see what I mean. - you cannot get your work done by tripping here and there on the slightest pretext.

4. Plan your work - do it in batches. Here is the key to the problem of some officers. They will deal with each single little thing separately, and this is time consuming. Accumulate a batch of the same sort of actions and do them all together. For this it is necessary to plan your work ahead and make preparations. Here I might add that the morning when you are freshest is the best time for most people to deal with difficult matters.

You can plan to read manuals and circulars at say 8 a.m. each day. You can arrange a set time each day to give your dictation to a typist. You can have a practice of assessing benefits after morning tea each day and so on. It must be your plan, but remember, plan, prepare and do work in batches. This cannot be carried to extremes, however. There will always be interruptions to attend to beneficiaries or to carry out urgent work.

5. Don't keep a "hard" basket. One Permanent Head of this Department had a reputation that he never "held over" any matters submitted to him. He might, of course, ask for further information where necessary, but he dealt with everything as it came along and gave a decision immediately. Not easy for a Permanent Head with weighty matters to decide, but it should be possible for all of us to deal with all our work as it comes along and not hold it up because it is difficult.

One of our problems is that in the more difficult cases the necessary enquiries take a long time and they are even then likely to be put aside for easier work. Delay in such cases has happened time and time again, and gives the Department a bad name. One thing we have to be careful about is, that we don't institute one or two enquiries which loom up as important regarding an application or renewal and omit to take action on smaller matters; then when the major difficulties are over we have to turn round and take more time obtaining further information. Let us make two rules regarding difficult cases:-

- (i) Make doubly sure that everything is covered when enquiries are being instituted and follow up enquiries promptly. Ask your Section Clerk to check, if necessary, to ensure that all necessary information has been requested.
- (ii) Don't delay assessment as the process of assessment may bring to light other matters requiring attention.

If, say you are doing a batch of assessments, tackle the toughest ones first. That is the antidote to the natural human tendency to stall. Remember, you are dealing with the means of income of individuals who have little or nothing in reserve. Even if beneficiaries have money in the bank, it is understandable, I think, that they are loath to draw on reserves for current living expenses.

To sum up, don't keep a "hard" basket on any account. A further summing up is found in an article which appeared in the Magazine, "Public Service", Volume 2, No. 3, 1952. The writer, after going through a number of different methods of coping with work on the desk, stated as follows:-

"FIRST IN, FIRST OUT. This is the method which with minor variations to suit particular cases (usually urgent cases) is probably the best for most of us. It is also fairest to our clients. It requires no 'hard' basket. It is simple to organise. It is efficient. And when we pack up for the week end we can be sure that although we are leaving a desk laden with work, none of it is old".

One other point, remember that you are responsible for everything on your desk. If some action is delayed and the file or papers are on your desk, then you will be held to blame. The best way is to look at everything that comes on to your desk as 'hot', i.e. to be handled and passed on as soon as possible. Don't be left 'carrying the baby', as the expression goes. If you don't know what to do about something on your desk ask your Section Clerk.

6. Take responsibility. Now I think that our juniors are prepared to take responsibility as much or even perhaps more so, than their predecessors. There is however, in the back of the minds of some basic grade officers, the fact that if a thing is not right, the Section Clerk will pick it up. What we want you to develop is such a sense of pride in your work, that very few errors are found. Believe me, I know that it is often easier for a checking officer to pick up mistakes than to do the work correctly himself, but we should all try to reduce the errors in our work to a minimum. As a general guide, it can be stated, that it is much better to ask your Section Clerk for advice than to put up faulty work. If a controlling officer has to deal with work which has a lot of mistakes, he loses confidence in the member of his staff concerned, and is apt to get more particular than ever. If you write a letter or prepare a memorandum, check the typing carefully, including the name and address of the person to whom it is going, and the heading, and initial the copy in the left-hand corner just underneath the script. Remember also, that letters or memoranda should not be submitted for signature without the file, unless of course, the file is missing. We should avoid dealing with loose letters or memoranda. They should always be related to the file so that the whole history of the case is available. If you are doing authorising or assessments, give your work a look over before you put your name to it - silly errors can thus be avoided.

Make a practice of checking both names and numbers of beneficiaries and pensioners on files and other records. Look back over files where necessary. There is a common tendency in our Department not to look back through a beneficiary's file when problems arise to see if something can be found about it. Enquiries are often instituted when the information required is already on the file, and this causes annoyance to solicitors and employers.

Have a go at making decisions or recommendations in all kinds of difficult cases. You will learn by your mistakes and it is good practice. Here again, don't be over-confident. It is better to have your work checked before typing, for instance rather than causing a lot of re-types. And lastly, do refer to the manual or manuals which concern your job and try to find out the answers to problems yourself, and save referring to your Section Clerk any more than is necessary. Your Section Clerk is there to help you with your work, but not to do your work for you.

DICTATION

1. Good dictation saves time, effort and materials; bad dictation wastes them. Dictation is not a contest between typist and dictating officer to see who made the most mistakes - it is a piece of co-operative work between two people. Dictation is a skill which only constant practice will develop.

2. Prepare your work:

Carefully read the letter you are answering.  
Make sure you know what the writer wants.  
Note all the points which require attention.  
Gather all the relevant facts and papers.

Prepare notes:

If inexperienced use full notes, but not a complete draft, until you gain confidence. Reduce notes as you become more proficient.

Fix Dictation time:

and keep it. If you are called away, tell the typist.

3. During Dictation.

Be friendly and considerate - typists are human beings & not machines. Give her time to get ready and make sure she can hear you.

Avoid interruptions - especially long telephone conversations. If necessary tell telephone operator you are dictating.

Use your notes and concentrate. Lack of notes and concentration produces officialese and padding.

Don't smoke, chew or put your hand over your mouth - it clutters up your speech and makes you difficult to be understood.

Don't fidget - it distracts the typist. And certainly don't walk about.

Speak clearly, evenly, naturally, quietly TO THE TYPIST. Occasionally ask the typist if you are going too quickly or too slowly and if she can hear you.

When necessary dictate file numbers, headings and addresses.

State whether the work is a memo, letter or report; the number of carbons and whether any special paper is to be used.

Ask for a draft if you think corrections may be necessary.

Indicate paragraphs and important punctuation. The typist will put in ordinary punctuation (if you have used careful phrasing).

Spell unusual words and proper names - many common names are spelt in more than one way.

Enunciate figures clearly - if the typist does not hear a word distinctly, she can perhaps guess it from the context. She cannot do this with figures.

State which work is urgent. The typist then knows which work to do first. It is a good idea to arrange your work, before dictation, in priority order.

Identify enclosures and quotations to be typed. State who will sign the letter.

Encourage questions - make sure the typist knows what she has to do.

4. After Dictation.

Collect urgent work and process it immediately.

Check returned work.

Make minor alterations lightly on the carbon copy in PENCIL. This allows the original to be altered.

Acknowledge your own errors.

Don't send out letters altered in ink unless minor amendments can be done neatly.

Give praise for good work.

5. If you observe all these points, you will dictate a good letter and earn the thanks of your typist, who will do her best to please you with good quality work.

KEEP THESE NOTES ON YOUR DESK FILE  
FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

Self Analysis for Supervisors1. Mutual respect of Supervisors and Subordinates.

Do I enjoy the respect of each individual under me? Have I done any specific thing, by act or word to demonstrate conclusively to each person that I respect him or her? Do I ever take any ungentlemanly liberties with women subordinates?

2. Open-minded in disagreements and toward suggestions.

Am I glad to have subordinates come to me with their suggestions? Can I remember having been stubborn about accepting a viewpoint of any of my subordinates? Do I listen patiently, and without annoyance, when a subordinate presents an idea with which I disagree?

3. Understanding with subordinates of what is required.

Does each person know what he is supposed to do in order to win advancement? Have I sat down with each person and had a full and frank talk with him about himself and his work? Do I do this at least once a year?

4. Approachability.

Do subordinates approach me timidly? Do I consciously try to make it easy for my subordinates to take up personal matters with me? When a subordinate approaches me with something on his mind, do I keep him standing, waiting until I finish the task immediately at my hand, or do I give him my attention at once? Do I ever avoid the approach of a subordinate by putting on a busy air?

5. Self-control.

Do I indulge in arguments with subordinates? Do I ever let my personal grouches affect my manner of dealing with my people? Can I control myself under trying and irritable circumstances? Do I ever lose my temper?

6. Keeping promises.

Do I ever make promises, the fulfillment of which is dependent upon the approval or act of someone above me? Do I ever make a promise with the intention of finding some logical way out of it before the time to keep it arrives? Do I ever have to be reminded by my subordinates of promises I have made to them? Have I any outstanding promises at this moment?

7. Patience.

Do I become irritable when subordinates do not live up to the better of my expectations? Am I willing to repeat instructions to subordinates who are slow to grasp new ideas? Am I greatly annoyed by minor mistakes?

8. Fairness, impartiality.

Do I allow personal likes or dislikes to alter my treatment of individuals? Do I have any special arrangements or dealings with individuals that I could not explain logically and satisfactorily to others under my supervision? Have I the strength to be honest and impartial under all circumstances?

9. Understanding of Human nature and Sympathy.

Do my subordinates ask me for help with their personal problems? How many times have they done so in the last year? Do I read books and articles on handling people? Do my subordinates show sympathy to me? Do I fit the job to the worker as well as the worker to the job? Do I make allowance for worry, bad health or sorrow?

10. Loyalty.

Do I put my personal interests ahead of the interests of my workers? Do I accept full responsibility for the mistakes of my Section, or do I lay the blame on individuals under me? Am I as sincerely loyal to my subordinates as I want them to be to me?

11. Appreciation.

Do I show pleasure when work is performed unusually well? Do I express satisfaction to the person doing a consistently good job or do I only mention outstanding jobs? Do I express my appreciation to others than the one doing the good work?

12. Consistency.

Do I ask for too much work sometimes and too little at others? Do I give privileges some days which I will not give at other times under similar conditions? Are my requests consistent with the difficulty of the work? Are they consistent with the ability of the workers?

13. Reasonableness, Standards of quality and quantity.

Do I ask my subordinates to do things I would not care to do myself? In assigning tasks I have never actually done myself, do I give careful consideration to the amount of work I can reasonably expect a subordinate to turn out? Do I require anyone to put in more overtime than I do myself?

14. Observation.

Do I know upon what work each subordinate is working each day? Can I write down in detail the way work is handled on my Section? Are infractions of rules or of good practice usually called to my attention by others or do I usually observe them first myself?

15. Aim.

Do I have a definite goal in my Section or Division? Do I expect to get out a certain volume of work? Do I have a standard of accuracy which I aim to reach? Do I aim to develop my subordinates by a definite plan?

You can check where you stand if you state yourself 3 on each of the foregoing points where you feel you are distinctly above average; 2 on those points where you are above average, 1 where you are below average; and 0 where you feel you are negative in the particular quality.

30 would be average; 15 poor. Below 15 you will probably never make the grade as a supervisor.

The fairer you are with yourself the more will the rating help you.

Better still - give the scale to one of your friends and ask him to rate you; but make sure first you can take it.

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