

sección especial en idioma inglés

developing your management philosophy

the human faculties

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THE FUNDAMENTALS of an organization exist when two or more people come together to combine efforts or activities to achieve some purpose or objective. The structure of such an organization represents the means by which the policies and procedures become effective. For while an organization is characterized by an identifiable group of individuals, the structure is much more. The structure involves the relationship among the functions, or activities to be performed; the human faculties to be used in performing those functions; and all the physical factors to be utilized by the personnel in the accomplishment of their tasks to reach the organization's goals.

When building the structure of any organization, the administrators must first consider the specific kinds of activities to be accomplished and then select the human elements to execute those activities. It is not the other way around. Organizations are built around functions, not around people. Surely a manager trying to form a sound organization would not go into the street and hire a group of people and place their names on his payroll unless he had first determined what definite duties he expected them to accomplish. The manager is, thus, concerned with the precise human faculties or qualities which he wishes to employ. Human faculties refers to skills, education, and knowl-



edge: the attributes of capacities and potentials and of varied experiences are considered. Interests and motivational factors are examples of other human qualities in which the manager must be interested. One of the most important trends in management research today is that of trying to gain a better understanding of the human element involved in various types of work situations.

The Labor Concept

The question often arises as to which is the most important of the three elements which comprise the organizational structure functions, human faculties, and physical environment. Such a question verges on the absurd and perhaps deserves the type of nonsense answers it often receives. All three factors are positively essential, and each must be determined and analyzed with a constant view of the other two. Organizational objectives cannot be obtained without the interrelationships of all of them.

Traditionally, and from the very early stages of civilizations of the world, labor has been largely looked upon as a commodity. In later days we have been guided by the economists in considering labor as one factor of production whose price rose and fell with supply and demand. Such an attitude toward the use of the human element still exists to a much larger degree than the modernist in management cares to admit. Legislation, strikes, unions, and various other restrictions have caused less emphasis to be placed on the commodity concept of labor in this country.

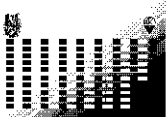
Another important concept of labor is sometimes referred to as the machinery concept. The technicians and industrial engineers have aided in fostering the growth of this labor concept. Since the later years of the last century, managers have often been prone to make comparisons between the anticipated return on dollars spent for human effort and those spent for machines and equipment which can do the work of people: hence the resulting technol-

ogical unemployment found rampant in such industries as that of coal-mining in the Appalachian region where six or eight men are turning out more coal than thirty men produced in the same amount of time three decades ago.

A labor concept called the "natural resources" concept has had some attention since the days of Frederick W. Taylor and his management pioneer associates. (The name of Teddy Roosevelt, the great natural resources conservationist, has also been connected with this concept). Such an approach recognizes that there is a limit to the human resource of labor, and means must be found to conserve it, or at least not to waste it. Taylor spent much of his life looking for more productive ways to use human effort.

But with the coming of the depression of 1929, the commodity concept quickly returned to the process of using human faculties in work situations. And then in a few years the "emancipation" concept of labor took over. This was brought about largely by the passage of such legislation as the NIRA, with its famous Section 7a, the "Wagner Act," the Fair Labor Standards Act, and others. Such legislation, it was charged, shifted the balance of power from management to labor. Labor was finally able to "break its chains", and it became emancipated—what labor did was right. Lobbying by management interests in Washington did very little to change the congressional, and perhaps the American public, attitude toward labor. No significant change took place in federal law until the passage of the Taft-Hartley Amendment to the Wagner Act in 1947, which ushered in an attempt to change the labor concept to one called the Regulatory Concept. The "Right to Work" laws are further attempts to regulate labor.

However, the ineffective efforts of management to get the kind of legislation it desired, coupled with the shortage of labor during the World War II period, helped to nourish and promote the human relations approach to labor so popular with practicing managers and



business school academicians today. This is too well known to need discussion here. Suffice it to say that this approach has been led largely by the social scientists. Stressed are such factors as motivation, leadership by consent, communications, social needs, job satisfaction, etc. But no matter how the human relations approach is considered it is still a labor concept; managers are still interested in securing a necessary return from investment in the labor factor of production. The human relations approach is certainly a logical approach, and it is surely logical for the manager to try to understand as much as he can about the human faculties involved. Of course, the same may be said for the necessity for the manager to understand the functions and physical environment of this organization.

Human Faculties in the Work Situation

Man is indeed a complex organism; and when he is placed in a work unit surrounded by other workers and constantly affected by inside and outside pressures, he becomes more complex. Is it any wonder that even today so much remains unknown about this element of production. Most of the traditional approaches to labor have considered one worker to be pretty much the same as another, and the size of the motivating factor —money— was controlled in the labor marketplace. The primary criterion of the worker was his efficiency in producing. Such views have gradually changed in American organizations. Much of the attention given to attempts to better understand the worker in his work situation hinges about three major factors:

Innate Capacities

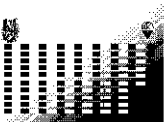
The worker embodies potentials of many and diverse characteristics. He possesses productive powers which the manager must discover in some fashion and which must be used within the framework of the structure. Nor can these capacities be determined by conversa-

tions or general appearances. Almost countless tests have been devised to try to unlock the secret of what a particular individual can do well: The results of even the best intelligence, mechanical ability, or performance tests can give only part of the true picture. Yet if the worker is to contribute his best efforts, the manager needs basic knowledge concerning the worker's capacities in order that proper assistance and encouragement can be given in developing employees. Most individuals are eager to use their capabilities even though they are not fully known even to them.

Interests

But regardless of the extent of the capacities of the worker, results of his efforts are likely to be inadequate if he lacks interest in his work functions. What the individual **can** do and what he **wants** to do may be entirely different things. Such a dilemma often presents a problem when the manager anticipates the promotion of an employee and the employee does not want it. In fact, any change in status of the worker may be inadvisable because the worker may not be interested in such a change.

The problem of motivation is geared largely to employee's interests. Perhaps the primary reason for the difficulty in motivating workers is simply the fact that managers do not know what the workers' true interests are. An employee was recently observed working at an extremely fast pace in an industrial plant. He could not possibly have maintained that pace for longer than an hour or two. A short conversation with him brought out the fact that he was trying to finish his quota as soon as possible in order to leave early and work on his hobby at home. Opportunity for advancement, recognition, good working conditions, good pay, security on the job, good management, fair treatment—these and many others represent things in which the worker is interested. But there is no such thing as the average worker; interests are different, and the



nature of man is such that his interests may change on short notice.

Opportunities

One of the major causes for the mobility of workers is undoubtedly the lack of opportunities available in any given organization. The man who has high capacities and high interests looks for opportunities in which he may use his abilities and do the kind of work in which he is interested. Of course, this does not mean that each individual sets out on his own to attempt to fulfill all his desires; normally he will try to satisfy his wants by coordinating his efforts with others in the work group. But by accepting the common objectives, motivations, and beliefs of the other workers, the employee again indicates that he is a gregarious animal and prefers to cast his lot with others of his kind.

So long as the three components of capacities, interests, and opportunities are somewhat balanced, the worker is likely to cause no serious problems. However, if one or two of these is too far out of proportion, the employee may become unhappy and frustrated and seek other opportunities elsewhere. Recognition of the likelihood of such problems has helped to bring about much investigation since World War II. It has sometimes been suggested that organizations are by no means fulfilling their obligations to their employees in that they don't satisfy all their needs. Out of such line of reasoning arose the "good guy cult" idea, which in essence means that a primary duty of the manager is simply to be a good guy. This approach has certainly been overdone in many business firms. The worker and his needs should be given the utmost consideration, but this does not mean that the manager should neglect his other obligations.

Outside Pressures

While the manager may have some influence

concerning the capacities, interests, and opportunities of the worker as long as he is in his work situation, unfortunately he has little to say concerning the outside pressures. Such pressures are with the worker on his job the same as they are when he is away from it. Perhaps the greatest of these is the individual's family, who can cause him to do many things that he would not otherwise do. Other examples are community interests, the religious organizations to which he belongs, fraternal and social organizations, unions, and political or governmental bodies. Often such organizations become the primary concern of the worker and his job is secondary. When this happens the manager has a real problem with such outside competition.

Recapitulation

One of the three essentials comprising all organizational structures is that of the necessary human faculties to perform the necessary functions and using the necessary physical factors. Management's attitude toward the actor of labor has gone through a metamorphosis from considering labor as a commodity whose price was controlled in the marketplace to the present-day view of the human relationist.

When utilizing the labor factor of production, the manager must consider what the worker is capable of doing, what he wants to do, and whether or not adequate opportunities can be provided which can bring into balance the three components. But the manager must also realize that the employee is the **whole** man; the employee's personality and makeup cannot be cut up into pieces. The economist's phrase of "enlightened selfinterest" is important, yes, but this idea must be carried far beyond the economist's meaning. It must include other needs which are just as significant as are the economic needs. The manager who desires to incorporate a substantial degree of motivation among his workers must be constantly aware of the potency of their needs.

