COMMUNICATION TRAINING IN THE ORGANIZATION:

AN OVERVIEW

by

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An Overview

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What we've got here is a failure to

communicate.

"Cool Hand Luke," screenplay

Chapter One

Chapter One

In his landmark article "Adult Speech Training: Challenge to the Speech Profession, " Harold Zelko (1951) pleaded with the speech profession to become more involved with speech training in business. Unfortunately, the need is still prevalent in the contemporary business environment. A recent communication effectiveness survey conducted by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), and Towers, Perrin, Forster, and Crosby (1983) found that only half the respondents thought their organization's communication was accurate and candid.

Another landmark article (Hicks, 1955) links the importance of effective communication to the need for communication training. In "Speech Training in Business and Industry" Hicks evaluates speech training in the industrial setting. Contemporary authors generally advocate a need for increased communication skills in industry. The growing number of training institutes, management consultants, and in-house training programs give credence to this need. However, there is little documentation discussing the nature of communication training programs in business. This research report will outline the significance and development of these training programs.

Both communication training and the trainer will be discussed in this research survey. Specifically, the four chapters will address the following areas. Chapter One explains the recent study of organizational communication and also will provide a theoretical

justification for communication training in organizational theory. This chapter will also demonstrate the role of communication and communication effectiveness in the organization.

Chapter Two describes basic training programs, both past and present. There will also be a description of current communication training programs on two levels. Most training programs are categorized into on-site or off-site programs. Communication training can be divided further into two methods of instruction: those programs intending to improve self-awareness, and those intending to improve public speaking skills.

Chapter Three will focus directly on the communication trainer, the trainer's training, and corresponding ethical considerations. This chapter will formulate the questions involved in communication training and training the trainer. Because there is no formal education without a teacher, there is also no communication training without a trainer. Yet little study has been devoted to the communication trainer's training.

Finally, Chapter Four will address the changing work force and some pertinent and continual issues in training. This chapter will conclude with suggestions for further research in the area of communication training programs for business organizations.

Communication is essential to any organization. Organizational communication has been called "the lifeblood of the organization," "the thread that ties the system together," and "the force that pervades the organization" (Goldhaber, 1983). The emergence of communication training as an important aspect of organizational effectiveness is apparent from a review of organizational theory.

Chester Barnard (1938) was very emphatic about communication's role in organizational theory, "In any exhaustive theory of organizations, communication would occupy a central place." A brief view of the evolution of organizational theory will aid in the explanation of communication training programs. Training programs were the result of changing organizational theory, and so in examining that changing theory we can better justify the existence of training programs.

The earliest theory of organizations, the Classical theory, is concerned almost entirely with the design and structure of the organization. The Classical theory evolved from the *scientific management* movement in which a worker was described as rational and easily motivated. The motivation was strictly an hourly wage to fulfill an employee's basic human needs. Because they felt all workers were motivated by essentially one source, scientific managers pushed more strenuously than other classical models towards specification of task (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Thus productivity, as opposed to the welfare of the worker, *was the* primary concern, and communication was not perceived as being important.

In the second organizational theory, the Human Relations School, people-oriented variables, rather than production-oriented variables, were stressed. The Human Relations approach can be seen as a compensatory movement where individual motives, goals, and aspirations were viewed as central (Katz and Kahn, 1978). The basic logic of this movement was to increase concern for workers and make them feel a part of the management decision-making process. Friendliness, first-name usage, social activities, and high morales were characteristic of this theory.

The human relations school focuses on the need to attend to basic human needs, although some would say to too great a degree. Rush (1972) accuses the human relations movement of ignoring the reality of economic variables, "...(THEY) equate high morale with high productivity." Opponents soon found that a happy worker is not always productive. Goldhaber (1983) concludes that the human relations school is as rigid in its concern for people as the classical school is rigid in its concern for production. Attention to the extremes is rarely productive, and this is especially true in communication relationships. The sutdy of organizational communication would have to wait for the birth of the final organizational theory.

As with most innovations in scientific theory, the Social Systems approach was developed in order to deal with inadequacies of previous models (Katz and Kahn, 1978). The underlying logic in this school of organizational theory is that all parts affect the whole; every action has repercussions throughout the organization

(Goldhaber, 1983). The introduction of a systems approach gave way to novel ideas about the workings of the organization. "Productivity" and "worker" could no longer be separate entities; rather, the focus was turned to interrelationships. Thus came the term "open system".

Communication training began to gain interest under the systems perspective because communication was viewed as a process. Many factors contribute to the process of communication. Training programs, as a rule, attempt to isolate those factors to improve existing communication. The following section will delineate a few of the more important aspects of business communication to determine exactly what role is played by communication in the organization. Communication research focuses on four major areas of importance: technology, interdependence, employee communication, and the consumer movement. Each of these areas will be covered briefly to summarize the communication role in the organization.

Technology and Communication

The age of new technology is here. The increasing pace of information processing is apparent by the growing number of combined data- and word-processing functions via a terminal found on the manager's desk. Information retreival systems are designed to eliminate the glut of paperwork that plagues the office. Surveys indicate that American businesses now deal with an estimated 325 billion documents annually, and the figure is growing at an estimated 72 billion pieces a year (Goldhaber, 1983). Additionally, advances in information transfer have produced new methods of electronic mailing

and teleconferencing.

Fortunately, leaders in business and industry are realizing the need for a balance between technology and communication. RF Communications, a 1,700-employee manufacturing firm in Rochester New York, conducted an eight-week behavioral training program to establish a humanistic, as opposed to formula, approach to management. Both personnel and management know that in this age of scientific, computer-assisted management, one skill has assumed a special importance. That skill is communication (Keppler, 1978).

Interdependence and Communication   .

The importance of communication also lies in the concept of interdependence. Interdependence stems from the tenets of systems theory; Goldhaber (1983) feels that communication networks within an organization overlap.

Interdependence and the need for integration stimulate communication (O'Connell, 1979). Many contemporary management theories include the concept of integration. Hershey and Blanchard (1969) summarize integration:

> The closer we can get the individual's goals
> and objectives to the organization's goals,
> the greater will be the organizational   .
> performance.

There are many communication skills needed to produce effective integration. Galbraith (1973) states that this resolution process

demands interpersonal competence. Therefore, organization development activities are required to support the team decision process. These team building activities, posit Galbraith, reduce threat and create a climate in which confrontation, thus integration, can be accepted. Harvard professors Lawrence and Lorsch in their work on integration write, "...early writers ignore...the interpersonal skills required to achieve integration" (O'Connell, 1979).

Clearly, the theory behind integration deserves attention. As will be discussed later, communication experts and trainers are continually realizing the need to communicate an organization's interdependence and its effect on employees.

Effective Employee Communication

A third and growing need in the organization is the need for effective employee communication. This need has been translated into legislation (O'Connell, 1979). One act, The Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA), passed in 1974, requires that organizations must communicate clear and complete information about pensions and benefit programs to all employees. Huseman (1978) sees communication programs as trying to accomplish one or more of the following objectives:

1. Make employees aware of benefit programs.

2. Make employees aware of the cost of these programs.

3. Make employees aware that the benefit plan

is competitive to create good will among

employees.

The employee right to know is a legal mandate, and failure to

comply with these regulations could lead to a stiff penalty.

Internally, then, the impetus for managers to communicate

effectively is great. Management must be increasingly aware of the

effect of communication on their employees.

Consumerism and Communication

The final role communication plays is external, through the

consumer. Golden (1975) analyzes the consumer movement:

As they (top businessmen) ride higher, they

forget that the corporation must identify

itself with society as a whole and not with

a single group, that in the final analysis

no business can survive without the consent

of the public.

The consumer movement, with its emphasis on disclosure has forced

many organizations to re-evaluate communication and public

relations policies.

Lahiff and Hatfield (1978) conducted a survey of 500 randomly

selected upper level managers to determine what changes had

occurred in the internal and external communication practices and

compared them to practices of five years previous. The authors

found an increased concern for public image over the last five years evidenced in every industry subgroup. The steps organizations are taking to enhance images are:

1. Receptiveness to communication from the public.

2. Attempts to be truthful in communicating to the public.

3. Increased frequency of communication with the public through executive's delivering public.

Surprisingly, this most important management fundamental is being ignored by some. Says Lew Young, Editor-in-Chief of Business Week, "In too many companies, the customer has become a bloody nuisance whose unpredictable behavior damages carefully made strategic operations, whose activities mess up computer operations, and who stubbornly insists that purchased products should work" (Peters and Waterman, 1982). The problem of misunderstood consumerism appears to be not one of economics or ability to respond, but of management attitude (Webster, 1973).

The previous section has described major areas of communication importance. Now it is essential to examine three areas of communication ineffectiveness. Hunsicker (1972) has identified the technical, behaviorial, and structural levels. By defining communication problems the justification for communication training will become clearer.

Technical

The technical level is where traditional methods of media and

presentation are most apparent. For example, problems of ineffective writing and speaking are the most common, and the most evident. Even college graduates trained in the area of business communication enter the work force improperly prepared. Although all skill areas of communication are deemed important in any organization, Woodcock (1977) concluded that the supervisor is more concerned about the trainee's inability to speak than the trainee's inability to write. Knapp (1969) identified public speaking as the second area of training which foremen thought would advance their careers in their company.

The media revolution has added a whole new dimension in communication skills, or lack thereof. By their own admission, executives in an Industry Week survey ranked themselves very low on their abilities to deal with the media. This stumbling has influenced "business' overall relationship with the public" (Powell, Heimlich, Goodin, 1982). Time's Lance Morrow (1980) mourned the decline of oratory stating that the intrusion of TV cameras into almost every significant public meeting in the US has vastly changed the nature of what the speakers are doing. And the change to electronic media has not been a comfortable one for most executives. Budd (1984) explains, "Perhaps there is a clue in the disappointing fact that more than 60 percent of the corporations in a recent analysis reported that they had no formal communication policy to cope with the new technology".

Other technical skills that are in continual need of

improvement are listening skills, presentational skills, negotiating, and problem solving (DiSlavo, Larsen, and Seiler, 1976). Clearly, the technical level is the source of the most overt forms of communication ineffectiveness. By knowing how to identify these areas that are susceptible to a communication "breakdown", we can more easily assess the continual need for communication training.

Behavioral

Hunsicker's second level, the behavioral, includes the attitudes of both individuals and groups in an organization. Each organization has its own unique combination of philosophy, values, customs, expectations, and attitudes which represent its organizational "climate" or "culture" (Hollman and Campbell, 1984). An ineffective organizational climate can lead to negative attitudes concerning the job and the overall organization. Taliaferri (1975) states that while negative attitudes toward business were always present, they are more visible and dangerous today, "Never before have worker's attitudes and beliefs had such a significant impact on profitability".

Hollman and Campbell suggest that improved communication can play an important role in transmitting climate information to individuals throughout the organization. Recent authors have put managerial supportiveness first in a list of factors influencing climate (Goldhaber, 1983). As will be shown later, there are many methods organizations may use to improve their climate. The importance of the organizational climate is voiced by Redding (1972)

"The climate of the organization is more crucial than are
communication skills or techniques (taken by themselves) in creating
an effective organization". Management has both the ability to
assess communication difficulties at the behavioral level, and to
implement training programs to bring the communication
difficulties under control. Most importantly, though, is the
identification of communication ineffectiveness no matter the
level.

Structural

The structural level, or formal level, can also affect
business communication (Hunsicker, 1972). Daniels (1982) conducted an
examination of information adequacy and job satisfaction and found
that structure is one variable to be considered when measuring
communication effectiveness. Stated the authors, "Organizational
influence...might be speculated to permeate all levels of
relational satisfaction". The study also hypothesized that position
in the organization and levels of information adequacy also accounted
for significant differences on the organizational influence variable.
Structure is not the only, but rather one of the many variables
that determine communication effectiveness.

In any study of communication training programs, it is
important to understand just how they came about and why the
training is still in demand today. This chapter has reviewed the
basis of communication training in organizational theory,
organizational needs, and common deficiencies of communication within

the organization. Chapter Two will describe communication
training programs in the past and then will explore current
training programs. This chapter will argue that management is
still struggling with the intracacies of communication training
programs, and that a conclusive answer to the training problem has
yet to be found.

Untaught we cannot look in the right direction.

-Plato

Chapter Two

A. Historical Communication Programs

B. On-site Programs

    1. Self-awareness

    2. Public Speaking

C. Off-site Programs

    1. Individual Consultants

    2. Communication Consulting Firms

D. Management Development

Chapter Two

An overview of organizational communication, communication's role in the organization, and communication ineffectiveness demonstrates the importance of communication training to the business organization. This chapter will examine past and present communication training programs, beginning with the initial communication training movement. Second, the chapter will explore on-site training, dealing with both self-awareness and public speaking training. Third, off-site methods will be explained in terms of the individual consultant and also communication consulting firms. Finally, this chapter on training programs will describe briefly the latest type of communication training: management development. By examining each of these four areas, the specific role of communication training in the organization will be clearer.

Historical Communication Training Programs

The first training programs were conducted almost solely through an extension of adult education programs. Employees were instructed by accredited college professors while at the plant site, and paid for the instruction with the provision that they would receive a portion of their tuition if a suitable grade were awarded. One such plan was devised at the Seagram Distilleries at Louisville, Kentucky (Tredsidder, 1946). The president in charge of production had come to realize the importance of improving the ability of all Seagram personnel to communicate.

A significant development resulted from the Seagram plan. A qualified teacher of speech ("Consultant in Communication") was hired to implement rehearsals and coaching sessions in organization of material, quality of interest, and effectiveness of presentation (Tresidder, 1946). Zelko (1951) conducted a survey to assess the general picture of interest, need, and practice in speech and related training. The survey suggested that 86% of the industries that replied were conducting Human Relations training and 50% were conducting training in "Effective Speech". Zelko notes that the larger organizations and those with progressive management plans are those in which speech and related training are likely to be considered. Regardless, the National Industrial Conference Board, Ind., reported that the growth in supervisory and management training in American industry had almost doubled from 1937 to 1947.

Hicks (1955) re-evaluated the emphasis placed on oral communication in business and industry. His survey sought to elicit responses concerning the type of training, length of training, the training staff, and overall recommendation. Hicks reported an overwhelming recognition of need for in-service training programs, but the other responses remained diversified.

Again in 1962 Zelko attempted to define the trends in oral communication training. He concluded that the major reason for the increased emphasis on the need for training in oral communications was the combination of current management philosophies, policies, and practices which add up to greater interaction among people

in an organization. Specific programs included university
workshops, adult education programs, in-service training, and
commercial consultants. Zelko also noted the following continuing
problems: the role of the speech teacher, college communication
courses, and the "ideal" training course. The author concludes by
urging the academician to focus on the application of
communication training to the business situation.

Knapp (1969) analyzed the public speaking training programs
in industry, giving a general description of the nature of these
programs. He found that speakers are predominantly trained on
company premises, are usually taught by an outside source, and
for the most part use no type of communication evaluation.
Knapp also included data on those companies not using any type of
public speaking training. It was the feeling of some respondents
that this type of training was the individual's responsibility,
not the company's. One company made the questionable declaration
that "those who weren't good speakers didn't accept speaking
invitations". Others felt that speaking was an innate ability,
felt training had no priority, or stated that training had a
prohibitive cost.

Current communication training programs may be categorized
into on-site and off-site programs. The following section will
define the scope of on-site training programs and will analyze
specific types of on-site training, both on the self-awareness and
public speaking levels.

On-site Programs

On-site (in-house) training methods are those conducted by an employee of the organization (usually a variation of the personnel director) and take place on the business premises. The main advantages to on-site training are that the problems of transfer of learning and training costs are minimized (Wexley and Latham, 1981), while the limitation is that supervisors and co-workers acting as trainers do not always have the motivation or the capability to provide trainees with worthwhile learning experiences.

In-house communication training programs have witnessed a drastic surge in popularity over the last ten years. In a 1978 survey of 118 trainers, eighty percent claimed that their home organizations were more concerned currently about opportunities for communication training than they were ten years earlier (Wasylik, Sussman, and Leri, 1978). This growth of communication training may reflect the organization's efforts to meet the continual training needs of its employees. Managers are quickly realizing that communication skills can be taught, that these abilities are valuable organizational tools, and that such training can improve employee performance.

Self-awareness Programs

There exist many in-house (on-site) communication training programs intending to improve employee self-awareness. Described below are three methods of self-awareness training: sensitivity training, transactional analysis, and Interactive Skills Training.

This is not an exhaustive list of in-house self-awareness training methods, but it will acquaint the reader with the more common approaches. Each section will conclude with an assessment of the training.

Sensitivity training began as a workshop to train personnel in intergroup relations at a small teacher's college in New Haven, Connecticut in 1947. This research project, which studied the motivation behind group change and interpersonal relationships, has grown into an experience that produces observable participant behavioral change (Campbell and Dunnette, 1968). Further developments into the methods and advantages of sensitivity training (often called "T-groups") were sponsored by the National Training Laboratories (NTL).

To assume that a "definition" of sensitivity training could fully explain its parameters would be spurious. Briefly, sensitivity training is an "inadequate phrase that is popularly used in describing a particular theory and methods utilized in human relations training" (This and Lippitt, 1963). Methods used in this type of training usually include unstructured group learning, individual feedback skills practice, and information sessions. Basically, this concept is based on the educational theory that an individual learns best through actual experience that is analyzed for the benefit of the learner.

Campbell and Dunnette (1968) have identified three structures of training groups.

1. Stranger groups - are composed of individuals from differing organizations. The only similarity these participants need to have is a willingness to learn more about themselves and their interpersonal ability. These training groups stress self-insight and increased sensitivity to others as the final goal. Stranger groups may take place on- or off-site.

2. Family groups - are a vertical slice of the organization; for example a work group or certain department. Because the participants here are familiar with each other, the goals become more centralized within the group rather than with the individual. Generally more stress is on improvement of the group process and group interaction.

3. Horizontal groups - include a horizontal slice of the organization. Intact work groups and workers on the same hierarchical level are included here. Generally organizational development rather than group or individual development is the paramount goal for this type of T-group.

One liability inherent in sensitivity training lies in the assessment of when to use this technique. L. This and Lippitt (1963) suggest that when a manager suspects that the organization's

effectiveness and communication is being hampered by one or more of the following problems, then sensitivity training could warrant consideration:

1. When a manager feels his/her relationships in the organization are inadequate.

2. When morale (organizational climate) and productivity is low or on the decline.

3. When the organization's image depends on managerial contacts with the public.

4. When communication in the organization needs to flow uninhibitedly.

5. When there is good reason to believe that the managers in the organization are experiencing a lack of creativity or initiative.

6. When the organization gets its work done in large measure through the use of group meetings or conferences.

There are many risks and problems associated with sensitivity training (Odiorne, 1963). Admittedly many feel that sensitivity training cannot produce the desired terminal behavior, thus leading to participants who are confused and scarred, rather than benefitted, by the experience. Lubin and Zuckerman (1967) found that the amount of anxiety, depression, and hostility increased in the participants initially in T-groups, but

declined significantly once the session ended. Cooper (1975) agrees,
stating, "...T-group training does not cause psychological stress
and may in fact help participants cope better in everyday
situations." He warns, however, that persons with a history of
psychological illness are more prone to suffer from the experience
because the change of increased stress exists.

Another problem with T-groups lies in the lack of theory to
learning experience and learning outcome (Schein and Bennis, 1965).
These researchers assert that it is impossible to predict outcomes
of the experience.

Rakstis (1970) reports the T-group "hangover" as a possible side
effect, leading to disillusioned personnel who try for a more open
environment back on the job and then are fired or quit in
frustration. He concludes that "...although T-groups may alter an
individual's personality, it is likely to have little effect upon
the organization he works for." Despite these inconclusive
assessments, sensitivity training is used as an on-site method
intending to enhance inter- and intrapersonal skills.

Another on-site method training technique focusing on
self-awareness is Transactional Analysis (TA) developed by Eric
Berne (1950). This is a theory of communication between people as
well as between individual personalities. Transactional Analysis
is identified by its use of ego states: Parent, Adult, and Child
(Weirich, 1978).

The Parent state is one that controls, criticizes, and

nurtures. Other indicators of a parent state are a condescending or punitive tone of voice of stature, along with supporting or sympathetic behaviors. The Adult state is rational, analytical, and objective. The Child ego state is often illogical, enthusiastic and creative. This child pertains to the emotional part of our personality. No single state is "better" than the other two, rather all three are important for a well-rounded personality. Problems occur, however, when an ego state is unsuitable for a particular situation.

Transactions of ego states may be complimentary (when the predicted response is given), crossed (an unpredicted response that usually ends the transaction), or ulterior (where a hidden agenda exists) (Wagner, 1981). TA also includes a focus on strokes or feedback, which may be positive or negative, verbal or non-verbal (Clary, 1972). People need and want recognition in the form of positive and negative strokes. However, strokes must be consistent and carefully given. Inappropriate positive strokes can be equally as harmful as inappropriate negative strokes.

Barker (1980) cites three organizational applications of Transactional Analysis. TA can enhance group skills, both in the leaders and the individual members. Stronger relationships can be built in team work units. TA can also improve two-person (dyadic) skills. Some plausible situations that could benefit from this training are sales, customer contact, consulting and advising, interviewing, appraisal, and counseling. Finally, TA can resolve

problems of self-image, difficulties with fellow workers, and can

also encourage use of assertiveness rather than passivity or

hostility.

There are several advantages to TA that make it a more

feasible on-site training method than its counterparts. TA can be

used alone or in addition to existing techniques (Clay, 1972). A

skillful trainer may well combine TA with any other training

method because TA can be adapted to a wide variety of situations

(Barker, 1978).

Additionally, retention of learning is greater because the

training crosses situational boundaries. TA does not depend on the

dynamics and cohesion of the learning group. Once a participant

learns how to identify the ego states and games that people play,

he/she can then deal with them more effectively. Overall, when the

TA trainer is skilled in management and behavioral science, TA can

be used to identify communication barriers and find solutions

(Clary, 1980).

Self-awareness can also be increased by an on-site training

method developed by Rackam and Morgan (1977). Interactive Skills

Training is unique in that each trainee receives feedback from the

trainers as well as from fellow course participants. The content

of the course consists of modules, each of which deals with a

particular interactive situation that is important for managers and

supervisors to handle effectively (Wexley and Latham, 1981).

Currently there exist many "popular" programs, under a myriad of

titles, that parallel the basic tenets of Interactive Skills Training. Mark S. Tauber (1981) describes Supervisory Skills Development as a way to reinforce previously mastered interpersonal skills through additional training. The author states that training should provide the necessary skills to supervisors, and should not frustrate or overwhelm them. Many on-site communication training programs focus on increasing self-awareness using many familiar and unfamiliar titles. The role of the trainer (leader) in this self-awareness process is crucial and will be discussed in depth later in this study.

Public Speaking Programs

Sensitivity training, transactional analysis, and interactive skills training are samples of on-site programs intending to improve employee self-awareness. But in-house communication programs can also improve targeted presentational and oral skills, such as public speaking and small group dynamics. These programs are difficult to isolate into categories. Often the trainer "tailor makes" the seminar to fit the needs of the organization. The following section briefly describes some on-site public speaking training programs.

Whirlpool Corporation has developed programs designed to improve oral communication among its employees. The reason, says W. Gale Cutler, director of corporate research, is "technical people and marketing people generally speak two entirely different languages" (Wolff, 1982).

At Whirlpool Corporation, Cutler teaches a two-day course for every new technical employee, and for the seasoned employee a refresher course is provided. Lectures, preparation, and then finally a video taping with an accompanying critique are the basic elements of Cutler's training course. Other outside training aids (films, slides, video-tapes) are used to supplement in-house communication training.

These "ready-to-use" training and development programs are becoming increasingly popular because they give the training staff an alternative to custom-made efforts. Bass (1977) states that these standardized training programs are likely to be more economical and effective than programs the trainers themselves could develop, unless they have the time and resources to plan, design, test and improve an effective training program. Bass suggests seven qualitative standards by which to judge a "ready made" program. One such program, COMMUNICATION AUDIT, is intended to provide managers or professionals with feedback about the way they come through as communicators to their colleagues. This program is fully computerized allowing rapid feedback. The COMMUNICATION AUDIT can indicate work effectiveness as related to role clarity, information diffusion, two-way communication and manager trust (Bass, 1977). Because this audit, and others like it, can be implemented by the in-house professionals, it remains a method of on-site training.

The popularity of on-site training is mirrored in this remark

by John F. Regan, manager of training at Hercules:

> Many companies today are no longer asking
>
> what it will cost to provide continuing
>
> education for their employees. Rather,
>
> they are asking what it will cost the
>
> company not to train its people and keep
>
> them up to date. (Denton, 1977)

A recent study by Denton (1979) stressed the importance of
in-house communication training by surveying 316 organizations
ranging in size from 50 to 100,000 employees. The responding
companies spent an average of $8999.31 on communication (oral
and written) training in the previous fiscal year. Individual
companies spent from $100 to $78,000 annually. Interestingly
enough, these costs are low compared to the amount of money needed
to supplement off-site training. Most training experts feel that
there exists more potential in on-site training approaches than
anywhere else in the training and development area, if only
managers and supervisors would apply the effort (Wexley and Latham,
1981).

Off-site Programs

There are countless in-house programs designed to increase
both self-awareness and public speaking skills. But any organization
can also choose from countless off-site methods to improve
communication skills. Off-site communication training methods will
be discussed through an examination of both the individual

consultant and the communication consulting firms. Basically any off-site method is a form of consulting, because the organization contracts an outside member to conduct its training. It must be noted that there is a decided difference between a trainer and a consultant. A consultant is one who diagnoses an organizational problem and suggests solution steps, but does not actually implement those steps. The trainer, however, does the actual work of instruction.

A career in individual communication consulting can be a lucrative one. Anyone who can afford a business card can become a communication consultant (Buchholz, 1983); however, not all of these "consultants" are qualified or successful. Nonetheless, there is a significant trend toward providing more communication training to employees and communication training and consulting could grow explosively in the next decade.

Individual Consultants

The most fascinating area of growth relates to the individual who conducts private communication consulting. A forerunner in this field is Arnold Zenker, a Boston-based consultant working with corporate clients who pay him large sums to come in and teach their executives how to do their best when they give speeches or appear on television interviews (Kornheiser, 1983). Zenker's work begins with a thorough study of his client's business. He offers suggestions on content, delivery, and dress for people who give speeches. Zenker comments that many people in business don't

realize that public appearance is a business, "...every bit as much
a business as making a widget" (Thomas, 1984). When conducting
workshops for organizations, Zenker uses a two-day format with
ten to fifteen people paying $525.00 each to take part. He uses
videotapes, role-playing situations, and exercises to relax
his pupils. Zenker's overall advice is to "prepare, prepare,
prepare" (Daviss, 1983).

Thomas F. Daly, managing editor for Vital Speeches of the
Day, states that executives are making themselves much more
available for speeches today, and because of this are studying
harder to become good speakers. Carl R. Terzian of Los Angeles
is another consultant who specializes in preparing executives for
public speaking roles. His fees average $1,500 a month for an
individual executive and can run $10,000 for a corporation.
Arthur W. Sager, an executive speech consultant from North Andover,
Massachusetts, conducts 25 seminars annually in Boston, New York,
Bermuda, Paris, and London. Sager charges $600.00 per pupil in a
four day seminar (1973 figure). Both Terzian and Sager make use
of audio-visuals, the mock question and answer period, and basic
non-verbal communication variables in improving public speaking
talent.

Consulting and training opportunities are also available for
speech specialists in academia. A recent survey (Pace, 1983)
described the types of consulting activities in which speech
faculty could be involved. Three general activities were

presenting seminars and workshops on various communication

activities, organizing and writing speeches, and conducting

communication evaluations in organizations. Although agencies of

the Federal Government were more likely to use their services, the

author also mentions that professional trade groups and businesses

are likely to take advantage of these services. Most consultants

profess to an area of specialization in both content and the type

of organization.

Ritch Eich (1977) conducted a national survey of academic

communication consultants and found that this practice is a

young one; only 23 percent of all respondents had been consulting

for more than 10 years. These specialists consult predominately

for clients in the United States and 68 percent consult within

the framework of a college or university. Generally it was found

that consulting by university faculty is on the increase.

Communication Consulting Firms

Off-site communication consulting can be productive for a

consulting group as well as the individual. Certainly one of the

most well known of these is the Dale Carnegie Course. The basic

course consists of 30-50 people meeting three hours a week for

fourteen weeks. Under the direction of a trained Dale Carnegie

instructor and with the assistance of several "graduate students",

the participants are trained in the areas of public speaking,

increased self-confidence, increased motivation and enthusiasm, and

better human relations. The courses' basic tenet is that skills

are built from strengths, not weaknesses. The trainer is continuously enthusiastic and speaks encouragingly and humorously, even while asking $645.00 for an individual's 14 week session. Six other specialized courses are offered in such areas as persuasion, sales and media training.

Certainly the future is encouraging for those wishing to take advantage of the services offered by an individual communication consultant. Off-site training opportunities are also offered by large communication consulting firms.

Much off-site communication training has become big business for consulting firms. One of the most well known, Communispond out of New York, tries to polish executives who have risen to high levels from low origins and still carry the stigma of those origins in their speech, dress, manners and perceptions. Communispond employs a staff of about 40 communication specialists in three major metropolitan areas (Levinson, 1981).

The United States Chamber of Commerce also offers a popular executive communication development program. The program is described as one designed to sharpen speech skills in business executives to make them more effective spokespersons for their company.

Most large public relation agencies also offer media training for executives. One in particular is J. Walter Thompson which has been active since 1972, training more than 1,600 leaders in business and industry. This service for a group of

eight costs $12,500 and is mainly used by companies for top

executives. (Powell, Heimlich, and Goodin, 1982).

Another category of off-site communication consulting and

training is laboratory training. Dunnette and Campbell (1968)

describe laboratory education as training courses that combine

traditional features (lectures, group problem-solving, role-playing)

with T-group or sensitivity training techniques. A consultant

group or single consultant is called on to lead sessions and

workshops, and usually focuses on the following goals for the

participants:

1. To be more analytical about people

and situations.

2. To be less self-centered and more

aware of their behavior on others

3. To be open to constructive conflict

4. To develop more effective interpersonal

skills

The authors conclude that although there may exist a perception

of change among the participants, the measurement of the so-called

change is practically impossible. There also may exist some

resistance to laboratory training by some levels of management

because the participants see the training as hierarchical

pressure to change. As in any communication training function, an

attitude of resistance does nothing to contribute to the success

of training. The specific roles of the trainer/consultant is

crucial in this regard.

Basically what has been established is that on-site communication techniques are handled by permanent staff members (i.e., personnel departments) while off-site techniques are conducted by individuals or groups from an outside source (consultants). What has not been mentioned is attitude. Sometimes the attitude towards management and on-site training is so negative that outsiders have to be brought in as a sort of "catalyst" of change (Wilson, 1977). One personnel officer from Quaker Oats called consultants "gods" who waltz into his organization and train his employees in the same manner he would have done, but the attitude of the trainees was more positive with an outsider (Chrome, 1985). Because of this element of attitude, management has some difficult decisions to make. The cost of off-site training can become almost unreasonable but in some cases using a consultant produces more visual effects. This issue of cost vs. benefits is a continuous one as trainers and management alike struggle with the choices in training programs. But because of the rapid increase in popularity of communication training programs, the struggle seems to have just begun.

The previous pages have described briefly initial communication training programs, on-site methods, and off-site methods. To understand the scope of communication training we need an examination of a closely related practice, management development.

<u>Management Development</u>

Management development was initially influenced by behaviorists concerned with Gestalt methods, general systems theory, process learning, and other humanistic values (Shaw, 1980). Once a meaningless "buzz word", management development has grown into a necessity for any successful organization. Although not all management development objectives are specifically concerned with communication effectivenss, many do focus on related communication functions. The overall goal of management development is to increase managerial effectiveness, and because some specific programs have been mentioned previously, we need now to examine the worth and future of this training function.

The popularity of management development programs has increased since the end of World War II. Habbe, in a 1935 study found only three percent of the firms he studied had executive training programs. A recent survey (1970) by Clark and Sloan found 75 percent of business and government agencies to have management training programs. These figures should not be surprising. Some management communicators have argued that one year of every five should be spent in an educational capacity (Gannon, 1975). A survey reported in the Financial Executive (1984) found that 63 percent of the respondents felt an executive should spend seven to twelve days per year attending professional development seminars, professional association meetings, or workshops (Dolphin and Grey, 1984).

The challenges that management development programs face are

verbalized quite succinctly by a professional in the field.
Benjamin B. Tregoe, of the organizational development and
research firm Kepner-Tregoe, Inc., believes that the focus of
management development will have to be on the process of learning
rather than the content of subject matter. Because they focus
directly on basic cognitive processes, the team at Kepner-Tregoe
talks about solving problems regardless of what kind of organization
they affect. While the problems of organizations will change, they
contend, the processes for solving these problems are more likely
to remain constant. Tregoe delineates this process as a balance
between information and effective interpersonal relations
(Training, 1975).

Hoy, Buchanon, and Vaught (1981), suggest several criteria
that demand examination in management development programs.
Initially they stress that any programs selected must be
beneficial to both the individual and the organization.
Additionally they discuss the element of change and commitment
that is needed to implement the recommendations of a development
program.

Naturally many criticisms have surfaced regarding the
feasibility of management development programs since the
measurement of the "successes" verge on the intangible. Miles
and Biggs (1979) delineate six major recurring problems that are
avoidable. They include a lack of long range planning, lack of
adequate training methods, a failure to differentiate group and

individual development, and a lack of adequate evaluation of the program. Taylor (1974) and Rechnagel (1974) have also compiled a list of errors associated with management development programs.

Although the reviews on the functions and evaluation of management development programs are not conclusive, these programs will continue to experience an upsurge in use. Quantitative changes in the work force predict a 24 percent rise in white collar jobs over the next decade. The attitudes of this new work force are changing too, as there is a trend toward people to be commited to a lifestyle then finding a job to support that chosen lifestyle, rather than the opposite (Odiorne, 1980). This will create a need for additional training as organizations attempt to mold their needs to those of their employees. As the work place becomes more automated and democratized, people increasingly will recognize the need to communicate competently, and urgency in training these skills will be even more apparent (Buchholz, 1983).

On-site and off-site training programs and management development programs are a relatively recent but rapidly expanding organizational phenomenon. We need an understanding of some common communication training programs to continue the analysis of communication training. The following chapter will examine the communication trainer and his/her role in training.

Chapter Three

A. Examining the Trainer's Role

B. Trainer Programs

C. Ethical Considerations

.

A million zeros joined together do

not, unfortunately, add up to one.

Ultimately everything depends on

the quality of the individual.

C. G. Jung

Chapter Two

There exist a myriad of communication training and
development programs in which employees can take part. Because
no two programs are alike, the roles that the trainers play will
also be markedly different. However, some prerequisites and
personality traits among communication trainers are similar. The
following chapter will explore the trainer's role through
suggested criteria of contemporary trainers and a sampling of
trainer training programs. Finally through a summary of some
ethical considerations we can substantiate the idea that quality
training should be a mandate in the communication field.
Admittedly, the research is scarce:

> Even with the sanction of communication
>
> training as a viable activity, we only
>
> know a modicum about the special functions
>
> of communication trainers in business
>
> and industry (Putnam, 1979).

Nonetheless, what follows is a summary of the available material.

Examining the Trainer's Role

The most crucial step in the development and training of a
successful training or consulting staff is the selection
process. Unfortunately, this hiring process is frequently treated
too lightly by many organizations. Their attitude seems to be that
anyone who has adequate verbal skills and is enthusiastic about
speaking in front of groups can be a trainer (Latham and Wexley,

1981). Many times those employees from major organizational

departments who could not perform adequately in line functions are

transferred to the training department, explaining the often

negative status with which the training department must contend

(Shaw, 1980).

However, the training expert should be one possessing

extensive skills. The position of corporate or regional

trainer requires someone who is a learning specialist, that is,

skilled in the ability to use learning theory and methods to

meet organizational training needs (Lippit and Nadler, 1967).

There are four basic criteria that should be met before a person

can justifiably fill the role of communication trainer (O'Connell,

1979).

The first of these criteria is to be knowledgeable in a

broad range of communication processes. Clearly the duties

involved in communication training and consulting are ambiguous,

so the trainer's knowledge base must be thorough. In her 1979

survey of 200 on-site trainers and off-site consultants, Putnam

found that most were prepared to deal with any type of

communication ill, according to the need of the organization.

On the whole, the correspondence between seminar topics and

communication problems suggested that respondents adapted

training programs to the communication needs of their clients.

Because the scope of communication is so large (and undefinable),

the trainers must be prepared to deal with many differing

organizational problems.

In the face of the growing technological age, the trainer must be aware of, and be proficient in, all areas of communication. The office of tomorrow will be a "communication center", (Buchholz, 1983), and the communication trainer must be responsible for these advancements. One task of the communication trainer will be to help managers become more proficient in oral and interpersonal skills so these people can work more effectively with machine dictation, teleconferencing, and all aspects of computer usage. The communication trainer's skills cannot afford to remain divorced of technological advances.

Some researchers warn, however, that the trainer cannot be seen as administering the panacea to all organizational ills. Lippit and Nadler (1967) have this view of the trainer:

> A person entering a consulting or helping
>
> relationship must have the ability to
>
> diagnose the problem and goals of the
>
> person being helped, and be able to
>
> assess realistically his own
>
> motivations for giving the help.

To achieve a broad knowledge of communication practices, Putnam suggests practical experiences in any and all areas of communication consulting. She is not specific as to how one can receive that experience.

O'Connell's second criterion requires that the communication

trainer have a firm theoretical basis in communication. Every

communication trainer should possess a solid knowledge of the

complexities of the communication process. One segment of the

professional population possessing this firm theoretical base is

university speech faculty. R. Wayne Pace (1983) suggests that

members of Speech communication faculties are qualified to do

consulting in the communication realm. He offers the following

additional criteria that could aid in securing consulting jobs:

an experience in the business environment, knowledge of

organizational behavior, a specialization within the field of

communication, and published research in trade magazines and

journals.

It is unfortunate that not all who profess to be

"communication consultants" are qualified or trained to assume the

title. There is a very real danger that as the monetary and

professional rewards of consulting increase and become obvious to

more people, the quality of service (professionalism itself) will

diminish (Buchholz, 1983). As will be seen later in this chapter

not all communication trainers complete any sort of training program

to give them an understanding of basic speech theory.

The communication trainer's ability to bridge the gap between

theory and application is O'Connell's third criterion. This

lack of transfer between theory and practice has been communication

training's largest criticism by management. Training specialists

must be able to justify the contributions of their efforts to

profits in relation to costs. Management often does not see the direct applications of training, and making the benefits clear should be the responsibility of the trainer. In order for training to be seen by management as an intragal part of an organization's operating plan, it must be viewed like any other business activity (Wexley and Latham, 1981). Unfortunately, computing the advantages of a communication training program according to the "bottom line" is often difficult.

O'Connell's final advice to the aspiring communication trainer is to gain an understanding of basic business tenets. She suggests behavioral courses, organizational structure, finance, marketing, and management. Familiarizing the trainer in these areas will not only command respect from non-training peers, but will aid in understanding the overall impact that training has on the organization. Buchholz (1983) states that the consultant needs to realize that consulting is an art as much as a science, and this realization will come only if the consultant is well-trained in organizational theory.

While describing these four criteria communication trainer, O'Connell, concludes that this training for trainers cannot be "found in courses". So what conclusions can be drawn regarding the trainer's training? First we need a more specific look at the training some communication trainers receive.

Trainer Programs

The two broad categories of communication training are

sensitivity training and public speaking training. For reasons
of clarity, the training of each of these types of trainers will
be dealt with separately. The training of the sensitivity
(small group or T-group) trainer tends to be more systematic than
that of the public speaking trainer. Group trainer requires
substantial sources of knowledge and skill linked to a coherent
set of values and associated ethical guidelines (Miles, 1981).
Sensitivity and group training involves not only learning a new
set of skills, but includes the process of self-discovery and
self-awareness along with increasing the clarity of
self-perceptions (Campbell and Dunnette, 1968). Because these
objectives are less than definable, the leader's role is even more
important.

Miles (1981) suggests the following steps to prepare the
potential sensitivity leader. Initially he/she should
participate in at least two training group experiences to improve
self-awareness. Secondly the would-be trainer should attend a
program focused on trainer development. Such programs are
regularly sponsored by such organizations as the National
Training Institute (NTI), American Management Associations,
University Associates, and members of the International
Association of Applied Social Scientists (addresses are included
in the bibliography). Finally the author suggests a series of
"cotraining" sessions working in the same group with an
experienced trainer.

Shaw (1980) gives additional reasons for training the instructor of sensitivity training:

> Assertiveness training or behavior modeling
>
> in the hands of one who has no well-defined
>
> value system to guide his/her actions may
>
> be dangerous. A facilitator of team building
>
> activities who is uninformed regarding the
>
> theoretical foundation of the instrument he/
>
> she is using is simply unqualified to function
>
> as a trainer.

Tannebaum, Weschler, and Massonik (1961) give several suggestions to the sensitivity instructor. The trainer should be experienced and must provide an atmosphere conducive to open communication. The trainer must facilitate more than teach; also, the trainer should employ intervention and encouraging feedback in only a supportive manner. The trainer should avoid becoming too clinical and individually-oriented.

Unfortunately, none of these trainer guidelines is mandated. Currently there is no well-formulated professional code of ethics for group trainers, although the American body that accredits group trainers (The International Association of Applied Social Scientists) is currently developing such a code (Miles, 1981).

Because the field of psychology is generally well-respected, especially in situations aimed at altering human behavior, many believe a certified psychologist is suited for the role.

Indeed, government and industry are likely to remain growth
areas for psychology for some time to come (Kilburg, Ginsburg,
Jansen, Meid, and Shuman, in press). However, not all
psychologists who enter the business arena do so in the training
area (Kilburg, 1984). Overall the certification process of
communication trainers is weak at best, because no predictable
trends have been set in regard to the "typical" trainer.

Most successful (and respected) group trainers have strong
backgrounds in either psychology or education. HumRRO (Human
Resources Research Organization) is a research and consulting
firm that, among other functions, designs training programs and
trains trainers in business, industry, and government. This
thirty year old firm, based in Alexandria, Virginia, employs 21
on its Senior Staff, two-thirds of whom have their Ph.Ds.
No specific training of these consultants takes place within the
organizational setting because of their extensive professional
training.

There remain many unanswered questions surrounding
sensitivity and group training. Some strong opinions have been
expressed pro and con about sensitivity training by leaders in
the field of management. Dr. Douglas McGregor says this kind of
training can "...bring about significant improvements in the
skills of social interaction," while Dr. George S. Odiorne
indicates that he feels that many human relations laboratories
have become "...perverted into psychological nudist camps

which end up mainly as self-flagellation societies." (This

and Lippitt, 1981). This friction regarding the purpose of

training groups has magnified the problems associated with the

trainer. No training expert would disagree that a "quality

staff is needed," (Tannebaum, Weschler, Massonik, 1961), yet

currently there is still disagreement as to the definition of

quality. Until specific guidelines for trainers go beyond mere

recommendations, the training of the group trainer will

remain.

The training of the public speaking trainer is also without

uniformity. Dale Carnegie leaders are trained entirely within

the Carnegie framework, and many trainers attribute the success

of the Dale Carnegie cause to this training program. The

training takes place at the local level, once the trainee has

completed the initial 14 week course. They must then observe two

more 14 week sessions and are required to pay the full fee each

time. Once selected as a trainer candidate, they must complete

instructor training, consisting of three intensive weekend

training units by a certified New York instructor. Following

this successful completion, the trainees assist the instruction

of two more 14 week courses.

Once approved as an instructor, the trainers are hired only

on a parttime basis. The rationale here is that Dale Carnegie

instructors know "real world" application of their techniques.

As one regional representative stated, "We don't need any of

those egg-head professors." Not surprisingly, the trainers at

Dale Carnegie are not concerned with previous communication

training experience and prefer to mold their trainers. The

training process is a long one. One trainer spent two and one-half

years with the Dale Carnegie program before becoming a trainer

(Sheppard, 1985).

Not all trainer training programs are as clear-cut or

systematic. The training of individual communication consultants

is neither uniform nor predictable. Arnold Zenker, the successful

Boston-based consultant holds a law degree from the University

of Pennsylvania. He has experienced an extensive background

in radio and TV as a talkshow host, news anchorman, and news

manager at CBS news in New York. For 13 days in 1967 Zenker

substituted for Walter Cronkite on the "CBS Evening News."

He has built an enviable reputation in the communication

consulting field without any specific training.

For some, the training of the communication trainer is an

on-going process. This training can take many forms; active

participation in professional societies, reading trade

publications, and attending seminars and workshops on new training

techniques. Larry Wilson is a professional trainer from Minneapolis

and a producer and purveyor of sales and management training courses

totaling four and a half million dollars annually. He states

that trainers can learn from speakers at conventions and seminars.

The trainer can further his or her training by borrowing phrases

and ideas which the speaker has developed and using them in the classroom. Training in this regard, then, is a continual process.

Most on-site communication training programs are conducted by the personnel or human resource department members. What, if any, specific training do they receive in communication? Most personnel representatives have earned a college degree in psychology, personnel administration, or human resources. Some are from such diverse fields as journalism, business or the social sciences. Speech Communication theory is usually not an area in high demand for most Personnel departments, although most do specify excellent "oral and written communication skills" in any position opening. An interviewer from Hallmark Cards, Inc., stated that the personnel and training department is actively involved with development seminars and programs much like the members of management (Brand, 1985). When they return to the organization, they implement the skills learned to their own training functions. As has been said before, the training process is far from static.

Ethical Considerations

Communication consultants and trainers may gain their experiences from many other professions, whether they be law, business, or industry. Because no standards exist for communication trainers (or any other type of trainer) there can be no overall standard for a training process. This lack of uniformity has

forced the issue of ethics in the consulting profession to become

more pronounced. Knowing what we do about a lack of structure,

some ethical problems need consideration. In determining a

standard of quality for communication trainers, we need to examine

the issue of ethics.

Smeltzer (1983) has compared the client/consultant

relationship to the relationship between two young lovers:

always changing and uncertain, but still exciting. An absolute

set of political and ethical guidelines cannot be written for

young lovers, nor can they be established for communication

consultants. However, Smeltzer does analyze certain situations in

which ethical guidelines are called into question. These deal

with how to market yourself as a communication consultant

(although he offers no concrete suggestions), how to analyze

the problem and the available data, how to implement strategies,

and how to evaluate. He states that because "concrete guidelines

do not fit dynamic situations," it is important to develop

personal ethical principles rather than universal ones

(Buchholz, 1983).

Many group trainers consider themselves to be professionals.

Professionals work from a systematic body of knowledge, expect

certain levels of competence from their members, and guide

their work by ethical codes. Miles (1981) offers this "rule

of thumb" list of ethical considerations. He does warn, however,

that this list is not prescriptive, but rather suggestive.

The first consideration regards ethical choice. Ethical choices exist the moment someone contemplates the idea of a training program. The trainer must decide if the program is needed, and if it will benefit both the participants and the organization. Trainers cannot pretend that all organizations need their services, nor can they ignore the idea of ethics all together. As Mirvis and Seashore (1979) remark, "Naivete about ethics is itself unethical."

The trainer must also be cognizant of his/her own power. In any sensitivity or training group the emotions of the participants may become volitile, and can present a situation where the trainer's interventions will have much impact. The trainer is the facilitator of change, and his/her leadership is sometimes looked upon with reverance, if not respect.

A trainer should also be truthful about their training program and the outcome they expect through participation in the program. Training should always be seen as voluntary; trainers should be free of the illusion that they "know what's good for people." Trainers should balance the openness of the training with the privacy of the people involved. They should also keep a "distance" between the participants to avoid a conflict of interest.

A trainer's actions should be congruous with the training involved. A trainer who lectures about openness but refuses to open up to the members will be quickly discounted and labled a

hypocrite.

Miles concludes his list of ethical considerations with a reminder to avoid all situations that may induce psychological harm to the members. Because stress is a component of sensitivity and group training, situations that may aggrevate this psychological stress should be avoided.

Redding (1972), in a semi-humorous explanation of undesirable consultant behavior, identified three broad categories of incompetence: the "Bungler," who is honest but stupid, the "Quack," who is incompetent and careless, and the "Felon," who is highly expert in both incompetence and fraud. Goldhaber (1983) discusses a situation at a meeting of a professional society where he was introduced to a woman professing to be a communication consultant. When pressed for credentials, she admitted having a Bachelor's degree in English literature and a Master's degree in Political Science, but stated, "I read a lot to keep up in the field." Whether or not this woman is indicative of the consultants in the field of communication training, her credentials do raise questions regarding the qualifications and ethics of training.

Hays (1972) defined ethics for the communication consultant:

> ...those principles and standards which guide
> the choices of alternative behavior in the
> conduct of consulting with clients regarding
> the process of communication in the

organization...What in the long range is

judged good for the client, good for the

consultant, and good for the profession will

be the criteria for the dole of ethics

developed by this assemblage.

Certainly this code of ethics is defined loosely enough to

allow much room for individual interpretation. In February, 1976,

the American Society for Training and Development's Professional

Development commissioned a study to determine competencies

required for effective performance in training and development

(Clement, Pinto and Walker, 1978). The intent was to develop a model

of professional roles and competencies, a framework that is sorely

needed in the training and consulting areas. The above authors in

this study described major categories of behavior considered

unethical for training and development professionals.

The most frequently mentioned unethical behavior was "lack

of professional self-development." This conclusion would be

seconded by Buchholz (1983) in his assessment that anyone affording

a business card could become a communication consultant. According

to Clement, Pinto, and Walker, there are many "good old boys"

who are not educated in the training profession transferred

into training. Other unethical actions included violation of

confidences, use of "cure-all" programs, failure to give others

credit, and abuse (physical or mental) of trainees. The authors

conclude that the potential for improper behavior goes beyond

mere lack of effectiveness. In some instances trainers might
cause harm that outweigh benefits obtained through training.

Ellis Hay's work on establishing a code of ethics for
communication trainer/consultants is encouraging to those who
feel this uniformity is needed. But many researchers are not as
optimistic that the code will be established, and warn of the
ongoing problems of unethical consulting:

> Until a code of ethics is prepared and
>
> arbitrary powers are given to a major
>
> professional association, the behavior
>
> of communication consultants is
>
> governed only by the culture of the
>
> organization in which they work and
>
> their own personal ethical standards.
>
> (Goldhaber, 1983)

The International Association of Business communicators
has recently published a book intending to be the most
comprehensive yet in assessing communication training in
business and industry. Its editor, Buchholz (1983) gives the
following description of the trainer, "The communication expert
is entrusted with the responsibility to see that an organization
continues to function; more than that, the communication
consultant seeks better, more imaginative, ways for people in
organizations to connect with each other." Yet even with this
lofty description of the communication consultant, not one page

of the book is devoted to the actual training of the trainer.
Can it be that even the communication field itself has ignored
this most intricate component? The scarcity of literature in
the area of training the communication trainer would suggest as
much. The final section of this research survey will suggest
possible areas of further research and offer conclusions regarding
the possible future of communication training.

I hold that man is in the right who is

most closely in league with the future.

-Ibsen

Chapter Four

A. The Changing Work Force

B. Possible Roles of the Trainer

C. Continual Issues in Training

D. Conclusion

Chapter Four

The preceding three chapters offered a justification for communication training, described several current communication training programs, and also analyzed the role of the communication trainer. It would appear that communication training is a viable activity in a growth industry. The issue that now begs attention is the future of these training programs. Is communication training a stable market or is it just a passing "fad"? Is the continuous cry for "improved communication" only a faulty diagnosis, making a continual need for communication training obsolete? The purpose of this final chapter is to examine the future growth of communication training programs by looking at the key variables inherent in training: the changing work force, the probable role of the trainer, and some issues of training.

The Changing Work Force

The future of training will be shaped in some form by the quantitative changes in the coming work force. A report by the U.S. Department of Labor (1979) lays out a rather clear view of what changes to expect during the coming decade. White-collar jobs will be up 24 percent, increasing the ratio of white to blue collar workers. The rising cost of labor will force a substitution of machines and devices for people. The total size of the work force will rise from 98 million to 114 million (1990) and the average age will be forty, as opposed to 28 years of age in 1975 (Buchholz, 1983). More people will be working for large

corporations, and there will be fewer self-employed workers in the coming decade. Because of this rise in white collar workers, there will be an increased need for professional managers (Odiorne, 1980).

Quantitative changes also include an increased use of automation and advances in technology (Wexley and Latham, 1981). The growth of the high-technology sector of the market (computers, genetic engineering, electrical engineering), will assure a brisk demand for engineers, scientists, and technicians. The service industries will also proliferate. There will be more and more pressure to hire and promote women, minorities, individuals over forty, and the handicapped, giving the labor force, and the training industry, a new dimension to deal with. There will have to be more of a concerted effort to assure that the communication is understandable across these differing groups. The training profession's role in this regard is crucial.

Many qualitative changes will also pervade the work force. The employment statistics suggest that more of tomorrow's work force will be relatively well-educated. Consequently, their expectations of what the work place should offer will be high. They will expect to work in environments that are intellectually stimulating and diverse. Job satisfaction will be less defined in terms of paycheck (though still important) and more in terms of fulfillment (Buchholz, 1983). Moreover, as individuals change jobs because of promotions, layoffs, or

"mid-career" frustration, they will want further training and development (Wexley and Latham, 1981). These authors assert that the organizations spending as much as 15 percent of their total payroll on training and development activities realize the critical need for a human resource department.

Goldhaber (1983) sees the changing work force as a contradiction within itself:

> On the one hand there has been a dramatic decline in the willingness of American workers to work hard and in their desire to take pride in their labor; on the other hand, there is a spreading movement toward improving the quality of work life and of products manufactured by our corporate giants.

The author offers a plausible explanation for this contradiction. The management techniques and philosophies are outmoded and are not in alignment with the social and technological revolutions underway in the contemporary organization. Supervisors will need skills which cover a wider range of supervisory situations than managers of the past required. Supervisors must consider the entire situation-objective, the people involved, and the environment rather than adhering slavishly to a single approach (Odiorne, 1980). Participative management will democratize the workplace. Not only will workers demand to know the reasons for

the organization's actions and policies; but they will also want a

voice in determining them. In short, workers will become

managerial participants (Buchholz, 1983).

The impact of the changing work force has many implications

for training. Training will be seen by employees as "a right

rather than an amusing and interesting sideline which is a

diversion from...their ordinary job" (Odiorne, 1980). Employees

will need training and welcome it in the face of the

"communication explosion." If the trend toward participative

management continues, workers at all levels will need to acquire

(or sharpen) their decision-making abilities. Communication

training will improve interpersonal communication (speaking,

listening, reading, body language), problem identification and

articulation, formal presentation (oral and written), negotiations,

information organization and flow, graphics, multiple-media, in

short, all that can possibly be learned about communication

dynamics (Buchholz, 1983).

Clearly the outlook of communication training will change

because of the inevitable changes in the growing work force.

These alterations also have grave implications for the trainers

themselves. In-house and consultants alike will be forced to

adjust their programs to the needs of the organization.

Possible Roles of the Trainer

The in-house trainer (personnel administrator or Human

Resource Specialist) will be most affected because of a growth in

the marketplace. If the eighties and ninties witness economic

hard times, consultants and trainers can expect criticism unless

their activities can be directly linked to measureable results.

Trainers will have to prove that what they offer is essential

to the welfare of the organization; costs will have to be

reasonable and justified.

The trainer of the 1990's will be more professionally

trained. These trainers will also be more highly paid and will be

closer to the central strategies of the organization (Odiorne,

1980). There will have to be a stronger link between management

and training. People will stay in training and development longer,

and training as a vestibule entry position for personnel

management will become less common. Trainers in effect will have

to become more professional (Odiorne, 1980).

Ultimately the name of the trainer will change to fit this

increased professionalism. Scherman (1980) suggests only the

label Human Resource Development Specialists (HRDS). The HRDS

will have to assume the mantle of change agent if they are to

survive in organizations during the next decade. They will have

to spend greater and greater proportions of their time out in

the organizations they service, developing an understanding of

the problems as perceived by the organization. Training must

be designed based on organizational needs.

Credibility will be the key in becoming a viable change

agent. This credibility is achieved by performing meaningful

work for the service client (Scherman, 1980). If the trainer

cannot solve all of the organization's problems, then the HRDS

must be able to know where to turn for answers. HRDS must be

associated with providing a positive and rewarding service to the

organization, whether the training takes place internally or

externally. Either way, the HRDS will be credited with the

resulting success or failure (Scherman, 1980).

Overall the in-house trainer or HRDS will have to expand and

adapt to the growing need for training and development and will

simultaneously have to justify quantitatively his/her worth to the

organization. S/he must also be able to take the role of the

objective third party--the person who can take the outsider's

perspective. The trainer must be the one to apply theory to

practice. The trainer must function as the facilitator, getting

the trainees to talk about how they can cure the organizational

problems.

The consultant's role will also take on new responsibilities.

Communication consulting is going to become increasingly

competitive as organizations will have a rapidly growing number

of sources to turn to for help (Buchholz, 1983). Many

organizations will work with schools to devise programs that fit

specific communication needs, and communication workshops will

multiply. These programs will be run by small independent

consulting firms or individuals, as well as larger firms such as

the International Writing Institute, Inc., or professional

associations such as the International Communication Association.
As the communication need grows, myriad ways of meeting that need
will surface. Those who profess to have solutions to the problems
will simply have to prove they are better than the competition.

In preparing for speech consulting activities, Pace (1983)
suggests the following. Consultants should have a solid
background in business and organizational theory. Each should have
a specialization within the field of communication and should
have strong contacts with local training institutes. Above all,
prospective consultants must establish a reputation for
themselves by continually publishing research and by studying and
reading contemporary training methods.

The role of the consultant will not change per se, but will
become more defined and intense. The number of communication
consultants will grow, and these consultants must find new ways
of promoting and marketing their skills and services in order
to remain solvent. Because organizations are realizing a need to
continually train their employees, they will be more aware of how
that training money is distributed. Consulting is becoming more
and more like a business rather than a "diversion" from routine
organizational activities. There is a perceived need for
training, and only the most acute consultant will survive and
prosper in this highly competitive market.

Continual Issues in Training

The trainer and consultant will also be affected by the

continual issues in the training profession. The two issues

deserving the most attention include training strategy and

evaluation. Two measurement strategy instruments are described

below that outline the possibilities that a trainer might have

(Wexley and Latham, 1981).

The trainer must be versed and skilled in administering

experimental designs. One measurement strategy is the pre-post

test design used to measure the relative skill and ability levels

of the members of the groups (Bunker and Cohen, 1978). There are

many reasons to include the knowledge of existing skills,

determining the optimal timing for training, and establishing

individual indices of training impact. With a pre-test a trainer

can also determine the appropriate level and range of employee

capabilities. This is critical in establishing training programs

that meet both individual and organizational needs.

The basic two-group experimental design strategy is often

inadequate in measuring training outcome, so the trainer must also

be ready to employ two additional unpretested control groups. This

"extended control group design" allows the maximal use of the

pretest measures because it provides a means of testing the influence

of the training process (Bunker and Cohen, 1978). This extended

control design, however, is open to criticism. Planning for four

training groups is often not feasible, either through time

constraints or economics. A four group design requires that the

trainer allow for an extended training process and also requires

that there are enough employees to make the tests statistically significant.

The trainers also risk a loss of internal validity with a four group test. If subjects realize they are taking part in a control group design, there could be conscious or unconcsious actions taken to manipulate the results. Trainees may also enter a training session with a significant background relative to the subject matter of the course. For some industrial workers, a pretest design may trigger some apprehension. No matter the circumstance, any two- or four-group design is open to invalidity. However, most training professionals will always advocate a statistical measurement of training advances, no matter the experimental design. As Bunker and Cohen assess, "Ignorance is not bliss!"

Another strategy trainers can use involves self-reports of training outcomes. In this procedure the participant initially completes a self-report and behavioral measure. The measurement attempts to delineate the response-shift bias, which is a result of how the training alters a participant's initial view of him/ herself.

There are several advantages to this measurement process over the traditional pre-post test design. The method of testing is easy to administer and requires no modification of questionnaires currently in use. This testing can also substantially improve the accuracy of a management training program evaluation and it can legitimately document the benefits of training. Overall the

self-report style allows the trainer to become self-reflexive,
and become more aware of his/her changed behavior in relation to
his/her original responses.

The training strategy has a direct relationship to the
evaluation process. Communication trainers can learn from the
basic training profession regarding pertinent evaluation issues.
The following segment will explain these current evaluation
issues and how these can transcend positively to the communication
training area. Odiorne, for one, insists that the evaluation
segment of communication training is the most crucial (1970).

Evaluation is a necessity. Organizational leaders have
every right to expect a dollar's return from training and
development for every dollar spent on it (Stockard, 1977), and
evaluation seems to be the optimal measure of justification for
training. An effective evaluation program does not begin when
the training has been completed, however. Below is an overview
of the three major steps a trainer must take to suitably evaluate
any training program.

The first criterion of an effective evaluation is an
identification of training needs, or needs assessment. Too often
training and development programs get their start in orgnizations
simply because the program was well-advertised and marketed, and
not because a real need for the program was shown (Wexley and
Latham, 1981). In determining an organization's training needs,
there are three kinds of analysis: organization, task, and person

(McGee and Thayer, 1961).

An organizational needs analysis to examine the functions of an entire business or department to pinpoint where the training is needed. The original motivation for doing a recent communication skills workshop began during a review of future human resource needs for an entire research and development and engineering (RD&E) function. The vice-president of engineering of a Fortune 500 manufacturing company spent several hours, spread over several weeks, assessing the needs of key personnel (Blakeslee, 1982). This in turn relates to the task analysis, or the general description of the job itself. When there appears to be a discrepancy in that position, then training may be performed to substantiate the critical aspects of the job (Wexley and Latham, 1981).

Finally, a person analysis should be performed to determine who needs training and what kind should be implemented. A recent trend in person analysis takes the form of an asssssment center, a standardized off-the-job simulation of managerial role requirements. Candidates are evaluated on many measureable qualities that are considered important for managerial success. An assessment center may have a beneficial training impact on both the participants (assessees) as well as the staff members (assessors) (Byham, 1971). The impact of person-assessment centers is found in the actual evaluation process, as trainees meet in groups to share and evaluate their decisions and actions

with one another (Byham, 1971).

Lien (1979) agrees that an initial assessment of organizational goals and programs is the only way to evaluate a training program's cost and quality. Specifically he states that prior to reviewing the training programs, management must assess the effectiveness of the training and development organization to expand its activities, develop additional programs and make organizational and procedural improvements to increase effectiveness.

Once the needs of the organization and the individual have been established, the second criterion of the evaluation process comes into being. The trainee's learning must be maximized. In order to do this, the trainer must be aware of the following: trainability, the impact of the training environment, and the retention and transfer of learning.

Initially the trainer must be aware of the trainee's ability to learn. Because the largest component of training costs is the labor cost of the trainer, a reduction of training costs is possible if the trainer can identify those trainees who will benefit most from the program (Ross, 1974). The trainer must also be wary of external conditions of training. These are the environmental arrangements that the trainer can control so as to facilitate learning (Gagne, 1977). Finally, maximizing the trainee's learning depends on the amount of transfer of the training to the actual workplace.

The ability to retain the knowledge learned in training
is communication training's greatest liability. Odiorne (1970)
is one staunch critic of sensitivity in this regard. In good
training the desired terminal behavior can be identified before
training begins. Sensitivity training simply does (or cannot)
do this. A changed behavior through training is justified only
by the possibility that this changed behavior contributes more
to the goals of the organization than earlier behavior.

Communication trainers must come to realize that
organizations demand a transference from training to the job. One
way to achieve this retention is through a precise hypothesis that
verbalizes exactly what the training purports to accomplish. In
the previously mentioned research development and engineering
company, the following hypothesis was offered:

> The communication skills workshop will have an
>
> observable impact on the quality and quantity
>
> of communications among the high-talent
>
> professional group (Blakeslee, 1982).

A firm hypothesis will help delineate specific goals and
strategies that the communication trainer hopes to accomplish.

Several recent studies have examined the impact of
transference in training. Campbell et al (1970) commented on many
inadequacies of management development programs in their review of
these programs. The impact of training on organizational goals
was seldom demonstrated, and most of the studies did not provide

any means for ascertaining whether the training programs resulted in making the managers more effective. The magnitude of change (transfer) was ignored by most of the investigators. Though this transference may be difficult to identify, management must be partially assured that training will complete specified objectives.

The final stage of the evaluation process is the actual evaluation, or measurement of results. Although it may appear strange to plan the evaluation before the training program itself, the link between the two is essential. Program evaluation should not simply be, as it frequently has been, a supplement to program development, but an intregal part of it. Too often the planning of program evaluation has been accomplished after the development of the program, leading to unclear relationships between the evaluation and the program objectives (Grant and Anderson, 1977).

Within the actual evaluation there exist many individual considerations. Kirkpatrick (1959) has suggested four evaluation steps which are still widely recognized and that can be applied to communication training (Goldhaber, 1983).

The initial reaction from trainees indicates the attitude regarding the training program. Reaction criteria measure how well the participants liked the program. From the needs assessment, the reaction objectives can be established. Unless the trainees (and the trainer!) know what the objectives of the training are, irrelevant data are likely to be gathered (Hamblin,

1974). Reaction can also be measured through a post-test, or "then" measure after training.

Actual learning should also be evaluated. Any test may be employed that measures concepts or skills learned. Ideally any test is administered both before and after training to allow for attributable score differences to training (Goldhaber, 1983).

Actual on-the-job changes are measured through behaviors. As mentioned before, transfer of learning is an intricate segment of training. Behavioral measurements may be long and/or short term. For example, there may be a short term behavioral evaluation that is informally administered, followed by a more formal long-term (six months or longer) behavioral evaluation (Blakeslee, 1982).

The final evaluative step involves actual organizational results. One extremely time-consuming and expensive way to measure results is to conduct a posttraining audit of a communication system. An overall estimate of results is whether the organization's communication policies are being implemented (Goldhaber, 1983). Unfortunately, because of the amount of time needed to complete such a measurement, this method is sometimes ignored.

The evaluation of training programs is a much talked-about subject, but it is infrequently conducted or reported (Blakeslee, 1982). Most trainers, facilitators, and consultants point out that the day-to-day demands of the work environment

make it almost impossible to do thoughtful evaluation. This says almost nothing about the difficulties associated with developing valid and reliable evaluation designs. But while these difficulties face all trainers (not just communication trainers) they are not insurmountable and must be dealt with. Management needs to be persuaded that it is getting its money's worth from evaluation as well as from training and other organizational functions (Grant and Anderson, 1977).

Communication trainers face a number of obstacles in the performance of their jobs. These challenges, while real, sometimes remain ignored. If there exists a propensity to continually improve the quality of organizational communication and training programs, then managers and trainers must meet these problems directly.

The preceding pages have delineated the construct of organizational communication and its place in the organization. Communication training programs and the nature of the training profession were also examined in order to gain a broad understanding of their place and direction in the modern organization. A review of the available research makes clear that communication and training play a key role in the contemporary organization.

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COMMUNICATION TRAINING IN THE ORGANIZATION:

AN OVERVIEW

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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Abstract

This survey of research examines the recent phenomenon of communication training in the organization. A background is provided for the impetus of communication training and a justification is given for continued organizational communication research. A summary of contemporary communica-training programs is provided and the role of the communication trainer is discussed. Several pertinent issues in training are offered as future concerns for the communica-trainer.