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## Navy management at the supervisor level

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NAVY MANAGEMENT  
AT THE  
SUPERVISOR LEVEL

SPRING 1953

PREPARED BY  
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THE GEORGE WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY  
NAVY COMPTROLLERSHIP PROGRAM



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## INTRODUCTION

Human relations, personnel relations, industrial relations, management engineering, and other related terms are predominantly of recent vintage. Although some earlier material is available, the bulk of research and writings on these subjects commenced in the late 1930's and the output has consistently been accelerated to the present time. Even with this vastly increased interest and knowledge of these subjects, it is virtually the unanimous opinion of progressive businessmen that the development of knowledge of people in industry has not kept pace with the continual development of technical and industrial processes.

The organization and training of Navy management at the upper levels not only appears to be in accord with currently accepted principles, but some Navy practices in this field apparently predate by many years what are now considered to be signs of progressive management. As an example of this, all officers of the Navy may be considered to be members of an executive development program. This program commences with an officer's first tour of duty, in which the officer will usually be rotated among several departments of his first ship or station. Subsequent tours of duty, of from one to three years duration, will normally be made in different fields. Consequently, as the officer advances in rank and age, his background and knowledge of the Navy as a whole has been expanded, preparing him for higher management positions.

While many excellent reports, articles and books are now available on management, it appears that the foremost of these have concentrated on the higher levels of management and not on the foreman





or first-line supervisor level. With the ever increasing emphasis on good management, it is not surprising that many companies have instigated programs of management training that not only reach down to, but are planned for the first-line supervisor or foreman level.

Progressive organizations, subscribing to current principles of human relations, realize that any program of management cannot be effective unless good communications exist. This means that all members of management must be on the same team and pull together. If the first-line supervisors are not included on this team, the chances are that many management programs will fail. To the workers, the foreman represents management, and as such, this day to day contact will hold the workers' opinion of the leadership and competence of higher levels of management.

Since any program of developing better management must include all levels of management, effort must be concentrated on what is considered to be the weaker links. It is strongly believed that additional effort must be expended on management training at the supervisor level in the Navy. While the Navy may be considered progressive in many phases of administration, it is felt that a much more efficient organization would result if management consciousness and human relations principals were thoroughly accepted at all management levels.

It has been a personal opinion for quite some time that effective management training has not reached down to the supervisor level among military personnel. Since the Navy is composed of in excess of 800,000 people, this represents a fertile field for further study. If

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supervisors are not effective, the waste of human resources is beyond comprehension. Even if supervisors are mildly effective, it is not hard to imagine what could be achieved with a gradual increase in effectiveness through proper training. Industry after industry has turned to training programs for supervisors; because of the expense involved, this would not have been done if the top management in these companies had not been convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that serious shortcomings existed and that proper training could lead directly or indirectly to increased productivity.

Because it is believed that the military first line supervisors, junior and petty officers, are probably the weakest link in the management hierarchy of the Navy, this report will attempt to review and seek out present shortcomings and search for possible courses of remedial action.



## CHAPTER I

### INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT AT THE SUPERVISOR LEVEL

A more thorough understanding of today's labor-management problems can be grasped if a quick look is taken at labor relations over past centuries to see what type supervisor is the forerunner of today's foreman or first-line supervisor. Available records dating back 5000 years show that slaves toiled under the supervision of the brute strength type of boss; orders were enforced by a lash of the whip or a thrust of a spear. The supervisor had the authority of life and death. Terror, brute force, and death were the accepted tools of supervision.

Although even today there are evidences of slavery remaining in the world, the lot of the working man had improved a bit under the feudal system prevalent in the seventh century. Again, the foreman of the day had the authority to use terror and brute force in enforcing orders. Torture, starvation, and even death were commonplace in the dungeons for workers not pleasing their foreman.

The predecessors of today's labor unions were the early craft guilds, some of which were established during the feudal period. Workers who became highly skilled in various crafts were generally granted extra privileges and soon banded together into the earliest type of union, the craft guild. As these people possessed out of the ordinary skills, apprenticeships were set up and the followers of these crafts were able to gain the extra rights and privileges of the skilled craftsman.

Slow progress in worker's conditions continued through the

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industrial revolution. Even with mechanical power, workers toiled for 16 and 18 hours a day, and supervisors still carried whips or canes to enforce orders. As in past centuries, the foreman was feared and hated because he was the symbol of power and cruelty. As time went on, employees gained more and more rights. The use of physical force by the foreman was gradually replaced by firing or blacklisting employees.

Even though laws insuring rights of workers have been passed by democratic countries, it is not surprising that many workers have an instinctive fear of their supervisors, probably stemming back to the fear that has been passed down for centuries.

During the past few decades, management of the more progressive companies have given increased attention to understanding human relations and its relationship to the efficiency and well being of their organizations. It has been stated time and time again by business leaders of today, that our technical knowledge in industry has far outstripped our knowledge of people. The corollary of this is that increased productivity and/or efficiency can be more easily obtained by emphasizing and increasing the knowledge of human relations. The understanding of human behavior depends on a knowledge of the five basic wants:<sup>1</sup>

1. To feel more important, more worthy, more worth while.
2. To live safely, securely, and comfortably (Self-preservation).
3. To find the right mate and to rear a family.
4. To explore the unknown; to satisfy curiosity.
5. To occasionally escape reality, to be entertained, to play.

While the above wants may be considered self-evident, they are the basis of human relations. Uncountable numbers of books, articles,

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<sup>1</sup>George D. Halsey, Supervising People (New York: Harper & Bros., 1946), 28-35.





reports and studies have been prepared on methods and techniques of utilizing the satisfaction of these wants in increasing employee morale and productivity. The appeal to these five basic wants of people serves as a background to almost all management and supervisor training programs.

Progressive management is cognizant of the fact that good management is a responsibility of all levels of management. Regardless of the excellence of middle or top management, it is the foreman who will make or break the management team. The foreman or first line supervisor is the man in intimate daily contact with the workers, and what he says or does represents company policy to the workers. On this relationship between foreman and worker depend most of the attitudes toward the company. He is in the position, more than any other, to prevent grievances or solve them before they become major problems.

This need for capable leadership among first line supervisors is recognized in training programs conducted throughout private industry. In answer to queries from The George Washington University regarding the Air Force Manpower Management Training Program, over 800 companies forwarded information regarding management training conducted by their company. The largest part of these programs were devoted to training management at the supervisor level.

Even though the need for capable supervision is readily recognized, it is becoming increasingly difficult to interest potential leaders in becoming foremen. Many companies report that workers are not anxious to take the first big step up the management ladder. Among



reasons advanced for this seeming paradox are inadequate pay differentials, fear of responsibility, satisfaction with present job, greater security of rank-and-file job, and the unpopularity of foremen among union workers. Perhaps some explanation of the hesitancy of workers to advance to foreman positions is explained by the following paragraph:<sup>2</sup>

For one thing, he has to "know" more than his old-time counterpart. Any cursory examination of modern foreman training programs will reveal that the modern foreman has to know (and understand) not only (1) the company's policies, rules, and regulations and (2) the company's cost system, payment system, manufacturing methods, and inspection regulations, in particular, but also frequently (3) something about the theories of production control, cost control, quality control, and time and motion study, in general. He also has to know (4) the labor laws of the United States, (5) the labor laws of the state in which the company operates, and (6) the specific labor contract which exists between his company and the local union. He has to know (7) how to induct, instruct, and train new workers; (8) how to handle and, where possible, prevent grievances; (9) how to improve conditions of safety; (10) how to correct workers and maintain discipline; (11) how never to lose his temper and always to be "fair"; (12) how to get and obtain cooperation from the wide assortment of people with whom he has to deal; and, especially, (13) how to get along with the shop steward. And in some companies he is supposed to know (14) how to do the jobs he supervises better than the employees themselves. Indeed, as some foreman training programs seem to conceive the foreman's job, he has to be a manager, a cost accountant, an engineer, a lawyer, a teacher, a leader, an inspector, a disciplinarian, a counselor, a friend, and, above all, an "example."

As a summation of advice obtained from companies whose foremen are ambitious for promotion, as well as from those where workers are reluctant to move up, the following recommendations have been evolved:<sup>3</sup>

1. The first problem is pay differentials. To make foremen's jobs attractive, you must be sure that foremen get significantly more money than the men under them. Be particularly careful that this is true during periods of overtime work. However, don't rely on pay differentials as the whole answer. They are simply a prerequisite.

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<sup>2</sup>Fritz J. Roethlisberger, "The Foreman: Master and Victim of Double Talk", Harvard Business Review, XXIII(Spring 1945), 54.

<sup>3</sup>Harry Lee Waddell, "How to Make Your Workers Want to Become Foremen", American Management Association, Personnel Series No. 145, 1952, 26.



2. Select and train your foremen properly, and you'll go a long way toward removing fear of insecurity and dislike for responsibility from the men you want to promote. And you'll have a much better group of foremen.

3. Really take your foremen into your management group. Let them help shape your policies and decisions. If you do, this will be apparent to all workers in the plant, as well as to the foremen, and will give the foremen a higher social standing worth reaching for.



## CHAPTER II

### THE NAVY MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

It has been a rather recent development that leaders of industry and government have generally accepted the belief that there is a fundamental connection between private industry and government, and that it is to the best interests of both parties to promote cordial relations and the exchange of ideas. This relationship lead the President of the United States to appoint a commission of individuals, commonly known as the Hoover Commission, representing the general public, the legislative and administrative branches of the Federal Government, to make recommendations for improvements of governmental operations.

As a result of part of the Hoover Commission's recommendations, the President's Management Program was created. This program consists of three parts: (1) Improving organization and clarifying responsibilities; (2) Improving government-wide processes, such as personnel management, budgeting, accounting, auditing, records management, etc.; (3) studying the framework within the various departments and agencies to achieve the greatest degree of improvement.

Executive Order 10072 established the Management Improvement Program in all departments and agencies of the government and called for annual reports on this program.

The function of the office of the Management Engineer of the Navy is to ascertain exactly what problems do exist in the naval establishment, to determine the order of priority and to recommend means for their solution. This acknowledges the fact that without continuing systematic reviews with a blueprint for action, any individual



The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the distribution of the income of a firm. It is shown that the distribution of the income of a firm is determined by the distribution of the income of the individual members of the firm. This is a well-known result, but it is not generally recognized that the distribution of the income of the individual members of the firm is determined by the distribution of the income of the individual members of the firm. This is a well-known result, but it is not generally recognized that the distribution of the income of the individual members of the firm is determined by the distribution of the income of the individual members of the firm.

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or organization tends to lose sight of their goals and may sink into a state of lethargy. Since the Management Engineer of the Navy has the broad function parallelling the objectives of the Navy Management Improvement Program, it is only natural that he has the responsibility to monitor and report on this program.

When the objectives of the Navy Management Improvement Program were established, it was clearly recognized that the Navy is a world-wide institution and that any program such as this will not change it overnight. Rather, it has to seek progressive improvement in management, and take into consideration the present practices, processes and methods in use in our complex organization. The management of our vast logistic support establishment presents entirely different problems from that of operating the fleets. In order to obtain maximum military effectiveness from the resources made available, management improvement is mandatory but all problems may not be solved by any overall directive.

The objectives of the Management Improvement Program of the Navy may be generally stated as first, to utilize a systematic orderly review of procedures and materials, to determine the degree of effectiveness of our substantive programs and the efficiency and economy of our supporting operation. The second objective is to have the determination to improve the effectiveness of sub-programs by increasing efficiency and economy of operation. Simply stated, this means doing something about it when you know something should be done. The third objective may be stated as that of encouraging maximum participation of all personnel of the Navy in management improvement methods. Management/<sup>improvement</sup>is a function and



responsibility of all levels of line management, from the Secretary of the Navy down to the lowest level of supervision, without regard as to civilian or military status.

Even though many management staffs are in existence to aid in the management program, line management has the responsibility to achieve an efficient, economic and effective operation. As this is the concept of the Navy, it must be recognized that the Chief of Naval Operations and the bureau chiefs are the real managers of the military and logistics support establishment, respectively. Major achievements of management improvement will necessarily be realized at and below the bureau level. Accordingly, responsibility for development of the program is vested in the bureau chiefs. Thus, the program of each bureau is designed to accomplish the objectives in the manner best suited to their purposes.

Most management training in the Navy is conducted under the cognizance of a bureau chief and will be discussed in other chapters, when applicable. As a means of acquainting senior naval officers and key civilian employees with refresher training in the field of management and industrial engineering, the Management Engineer of the Navy has established the Navy Management Improvement Institute. The Institute conducts an intensive two-week course of instruction in which guest speakers from industry, civil government, military services, and educational institutions bring to the students up-to-date information on the application of proven management principles and techniques that may have a bearing on Navy problems. Approximately 25 persons attend this



institute each quarter. Since the senior officers and key civilians represent the various bureaus, this course provides a common meeting ground and provides a background necessary for a coordinated Management Improvement Program by the bureaus.



## CHAPTER III

### JUNIOR AND PETTY OFFICER MANAGEMENT TRAINING

To understand a review of present management training given to junior and petty officers, it is first necessary to understand what junior and petty officers are. Commissioned officers, by naval custom, are considered junior officers for approximately their first seven years, during which time they will normally be holding the ranks of Ensign and Lieutenant (Junior Grade). Petty Officers are the top four grades of enlisted personnel and rank from Chief Petty Officer down to Petty Officer 3rd Class. These two groups fit into the naval hierarchy similarly to such positions as quartermen, supervisors, assistant foremen, foremen and the like in private industry. In other words, these two groups form the first line of supervision and normally any contact to be made by the bulk of naval personnel will be to these groups. Conversely, opinions of higher management in the Navy will be formed by the actions of these groups in handling the men. Therefore, the capability of junior and petty officers to manage justly and effectively becomes a matter meriting much attention.

In general, most commissioned naval officers come into the Navy by three programs: the Naval Academy, Naval R.O.T.C., and the Naval Aviation Cadet Program. Officers graduating from the Naval Academy have included in their academic curricula a subject entitled Administration. The number of weekly hours devoted to this subject has varied in the past, but recently has been the equivalent of one hour per week for three of the four year course. This may appear to be reasonable at first glance, but a further look at specific courses





under this subject leads to grave doubts. For instance, one of the three years in this subject is spent on military justice alone. When course requirements in the human field for even a liberal arts degree at most colleges are considered, it appears that technical or scientific knowledge is considered primary in the training of a naval officer. This thesis becomes questionable when it is considered that immediately upon graduation, the young commissioned naval officer will step into positions of authority over other men that is seldom realized by civilians of the same age group.

Officers procured through the Naval R.O.T.C. and the Naval Aviation Cadet Program perhaps fare a little better in their academic training in human relations. For the most part, technical subjects will be designated for R.O.T.C. students, but much freedom remains to the individual student in arriving at elective courses. Chances are good that degree requirements will guide him to take courses in psychology, human relations, and administration. Cadets in the Naval Aviation Program are in roughly the same category, as they have all attended college for at least two years and in most cases have followed normal academic programs.

Enlisted personnel entering the Navy attend a 14 week recruit training program in which they are taught to adjust themselves to Navy life. Following this, a portion of the group will be assigned to primary training schools. The curricula of these schools is usually highly technical as they provide the necessary preparation for advancement to Petty Officer 3rd Class in a technical rating in a short period



of time. About one hour per week is spent on administration. Prior to being promoted to petty officer rank, an enlisted man must pass an examination on leadership and administration, but this knowledge must be obtained from experience or study on his own, as there is no established formal schooling for enlisted personnel.

From these methods of obtaining its personnel, it can be seen that leadership or management ability must be developed by experience. When a junior officer or potential petty officer is assigned to capable seniors, this ability will probably be developed satisfactorily. This emphasizes the necessity for good management from top to bottom in order to insure a steady upward replacement flow of effective managers.

Further training in the management field for petty officers is almost entirely dependent upon the command he is attached to. Advanced technical schools for 1st and 2nd class petty officers include an hour a week on leadership and administration, but this is the only formal training in effect Navy-wide. Some management conscious commands conduct schools in leadership, organization, and administration, but there is no supervisor development program as is in effect for naval civilian employees, the Army Ordnance Corps, and many other organizations in the government.

Further training of commissioned officers is provided on a much wider basis, although development of leadership and managerial capabilities depends to a high degree on actual experience gained on the job. For the first seven years of a naval officer's career, short, concentrated technical courses may be taken in highly specialized fields.



Normally, at the end of this period, officers will be assigned to a one year course at the General Line School. It is felt that by this time, an officer should have matured and his experience has given him a practical foundation upon which a general line course can build a strong foundation of professional information. Leadership, administration, organization and human relations are included in this course for about two hours a week. Instruction in these subjects can be very beneficial to officers if principles and policies that have proved so profitable to private industry are properly presented. Often, however, only lip service is paid to current thinking on the subject and, again, the emphasis is on development by experience.

The next period of career development of naval officers takes place during the eighth to twelfth years. This is known as the technical development period, and many officers are sent to post-graduate schools. Courses are convened yearly in Business Administration, Controllership, Personnel Administration, Management and Industrial Engineering, and over twenty other engineering or scientific fields. The courses cited by name naturally emphasize current scientific management practices, but the other courses are primarily technical and, again, managerial abilities are to be developed by experience.

From this point on in the career of a naval officer, additional training is available, but it can be considered as for top management and beyond the scope of this paper.



## CHAPTER IV

### BETTER MANAGEMENT AT THE SUPERVISOR LEVEL

It can not even be hinted that the Navy has failed to develop leaders of men; rather, it must be stated that the U.S. Navy has met the challenge in every war or emergency with flying colors, and its share of outstanding military leaders is substantial. This does not mean, however, that present management of naval forces is either as effective as it should be, or that full advantage has been taken of management knowledge developed in private industry.

Under the Navy's concept that leaders and managers are primarily developed by experience, there appears to be two alternative programs to increase the effectiveness of supervisors. A supervisor development program for military first line supervisors could be initiated. This has been done for civilian employees throughout the Navy by the Office of Industrial Relations and has proved successful. Similiar programs have been in effect in the Ordnance Corps of the Army, other government agencies, and in many companies and industries. Without exception, reports have been very favorable as to the success of the programs.

The other alternative would be to increase the emphasis of management training at the top and especially the middle management levels. This alternative appears preferable and will be discussed in some detail. To be effective, leading and managing men requires a thorough knowledge of human relations. To have a real management-human relations program in any organization, all members of the management team must pull together, from the top man to the first line supervisor. The principles and methods must be understood and, above all, believed in by each





level of management. A lack of cooperation or of merely paying "lip service" to these principles is normally obvious and will adversely affect all echelons below that point. This can often be the case, and consequently a disadvantage, of establishing a supervisor development program without the full cooperation and genuine appreciation of managers in the top or middle management class. Top and middle management must set the example and take the lead in forming any program to further develop management consciousness.

As an example of management policies reflecting good human relations, the Hawthorne Works, of the Western Electric Company, has issued to all employees its ten commandments of management. Adherence by management to these commandments has been very effective in building morale and efficiency. With only slight modifications, these commandments could serve as a guide line for good management in any organization, and as such are quoted:<sup>1</sup>

1. To pay all employees adequately for services rendered
2. To maintain reasonable hours of work and safe working conditions
3. To provide continuous employment consistent with business conditions
4. To place employees in the kind of work best suited to their abilities
5. To help each individual to progress in the company's service
6. To aid employees in times of need
7. To encourage thrift
8. To cooperate in social, athletic, and other recreational activities
9. To accord to each employee the right to discuss freely with executives any matters concerning his or her welfare or the company's interest
10. To carry on the daily work in a spirit of friendliness

It is strongly believed that far too few members of the middle management class in the Navy receive the benefits of concentrated study

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<sup>1</sup>W.E. Parker and R.W. Kleemeier, Human Relations in Supervision (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1951), p. 15.



of modern management practices. This training need not be restricted to the small portion of officers attending post graduate courses, but could and should be given in short concentrated courses to large numbers of officers. As an example, the Air Force conducts a Manpower Management Training Program at a civilian university. Approximately 75 officers attend this three week course eight times a year. As the officers vary in rank from Major to Colonel, this concentrated effort at this level achieves much in establishing management consciousness throughout the Air Force. Relative merits of the Air Force and Navy administrative systems are far beyond the scope of this paper, but personal experience on the staff of a major Air Force command has left certain impressions. Predominant among these impressions is the fact that wherever you go, management consciousness is apparent, and the principles and methods employed are similiar. As the Air Force is a relatively new organization without the benefit of customs, traditions and experience enjoyed by the Navy, it is believed that much of what success has been achieved may be attributed to its program of training and developing managers.

If a choice in the method of training leaders and managers had to be made as between academic or practical experience, there is not much doubt that actual experience is the most useful. This apparently has been the guiding thought throughout the Navy. Innumerable short, concentrated schools and courses that cover almost every technical speciality are in existence in the Navy. Leading and managing men, however, is the primary task of every naval officer; any means of broadening his horizons of understanding and thinking can be of immeasurable value in meeting the tasks of higher command. A sincere interest and



knowledge of human relations and management is a strong means of broadening these horizons.

The development of better first line supervisors depends to a large extent on the competency of management up the line. If middle and top management are ineffective, it is very doubtful if any supervisor development program will succeed. If middle and top management are especially competent and effective, the chances are good that supervisors are not only effective but will be receptive to any means of further increasing their abilities.



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