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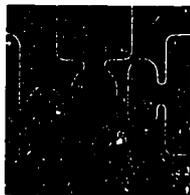
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ABSTRACT

This is a guide for training supervisors in the theory and application of behavior modification using material that has been implemented successfully for many years in companies throughout the country. Procedures for organizing and conducting training sessions in a supervisor training program are presented. The manual, one of four prepared to aid supervisors in training disadvantaged employee groups, is designed for use by individuals with some background in teaching or training. Related documents are available as VT 018 031-018 035 in this issue. (MF)

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HOW TO TRAIN SUPERVISORS

IN BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

Prepared for

Office of Research and Development
Manpower Administration
U.S. Department of Labor

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FOREWORD

The contents of this training manual were tested under U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Administration, Research and Development Contract No. 82-05-70-05. The manual derives from a project known as Operation Pathfinder, conducted in Los Angeles by the Mentec Corporation.

Mentec Corporation extends its appreciation to the five hundred foremen, supervisors, and managers of over one hundred companies and public agencies who since 1967 contributed to the development and success of this project.

For further information concerning the contents of this manual or its utilization in Operation Pathfinder, contact the Office of Research and Development, Manpower Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

This document is one of four manuals designed to aid supervisors in the training of employees, particularly hardcore disadvantaged. Its specific purpose is to enable management to strengthen, broaden and generally maintain an established, operational social reinforcement system.

The three companion documents are:

- Job/Behavioral Analysis Manual
- Supervisory Workbook on Behavior Modification
- How to Maintain a Social Reinforcement Program

Theoretical rationale and supporting evidence underlying these manuals are presented in a report entitled:

- Operation Pathfinder: Shaping Work Behavior of Ex-Offenders and Other Disadvantaged People Using Social Reinforcement Techniques

I. INTRODUCTION

A. GENERAL

This manual is presented as a guide for training supervisors in the theory and practical application of behavior modification. The training program for which the manual was developed has been implemented successfully for many years in over 400 companies throughout the United States.

Stressed in the manual are the procedures we suggest should be followed in the organization and implementation of a supervisory training program. While emphasis was originally placed on training supervisors who would be working with the hard-core disadvantaged population, the principles and techniques are equally applicable to supervisors in general.

The manual is designed for individuals who have at least some background in the field of teaching or training. In general, the totally naive or inexperienced individual is not likely to conduct adequately any complex training program, regardless of the level of detail presented in a manual. Nevertheless, we have detailed rather precisely all of the activities necessary for the proper implementation of the program in order to simplify the trainer's task. Certainly, the more creative and dynamic the trainer, the more interesting and effective will be the program.

We encourage the trainer to study this manual and the accompanying workbook carefully and to follow them as closely as possible during his first few training sessions. After gaining experience and confidence with the conceptual aspects of behavior modification and in leading group discussions, it is recommended that the trainer experiment with techniques that he may develop himself.

B. THREE IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

The manual includes a fair amount of review and redundant material. We have found that redundancy is absolutely essential to learning behavior modification techniques. Although basically simple in nature, it must be realized that the material will be entirely novel to most supervisors and, in some cases, diametrically opposed to their usual manners of interacting with subordinates. We therefore encourage the trainer to provide considerable redundancy, particularly when transitioning from one major concept to another.

A second important consideration relates to the manner in which the training sessions are held. For best results, the trainer should encourage involvement by members of his group throughout the training program. Not only does such involvement provide the trainer with feedback, with respect to how well the group is learning, it also makes the program far more interesting to all concerned - including the trainer.

A final consideration relates to the application by supervisors of the material presented during the training program. This consideration is discussed at length in an accompanying manual, "How to Maintain a Social Reinforcement Program," and is briefly noted here. That is, supervisors are normally given a certain amount of independence as regards their manner of training and interacting with subordinates. Those supervisors who tend to be, and like being autocratic, perhaps because power over subordinates is more satisfying than that inherent in their primary role of leadership, may not wish to apply the techniques presented in this manual, regardless of the degree to which these supervisors may understand the techniques and accept their validity. It is important, therefore, that application of the techniques be approved and encouraged (and even insisted upon) by company management. While the techniques are directed toward modifying the behaviors of subordinates by use of social reinforcement, it is to be noted that the purpose of this training program is to similarly modify the behaviors of supervisors. Thus, both management and the trainer should provide considerable social reinforcement to achieve that purpose.

II. ORGANIZING THE TRAINING PROGRAM

This section contains a discussion of preliminary procedures which are important to initiating a training session effectively. Suggestions for handling certain potential problems which may arise before or during the training sessions are included, as well as a checklist of things to do when organizing the program.

A. NUMBER OF TRAINEES

The group should be small, preferably no more than 15 or 20 trainees. A small group is better for all concerned, since the manual stresses considerable interactions between trainer and trainees and between the trainees themselves. In general, the more individual interactions the more individual involvement and the more rapid the learning process. If more than 20 people have been designated for training, the company should strongly consider offering two or more independent training programs.

B. GROUP COMPOSITION

It may happen that different levels of supervision (superiors and subordinates) are designated to attend the same training sessions. It is best to avoid such a mixture if at all possible, since it is often the case that the degree of participation by subordinates is somewhat decreased when their superiors are present. Superiors tend to dominate discussions and it is important that everyone actively contribute to the group activities. A highly experienced trainer knows how to handle this problem, but for the relatively inexperienced trainer it is best to avoid it altogether.

If a mixed group cannot be avoided, then the following procedures are suggested:

- Seat the trainees by alternating job levels, e.g., subordinate, superior, subordinate, and so on.

This suggestion requires that the trainer seat everyone himself. However, it can be easily and quickly accomplished and it will prevent the formation of undesirable subgroups.

- When the group breaks into small work groups, make sure the smaller groups have approximately equal numbers of superiors and subordinates.

- If superiors continue to dominate the discussion, the trainer should point out this fact to the group in a non-threatening manner.

C. DURATION OF TRAINING

The program presented here is designed for 16 hours of training, divided into four 4-hour sessions. However, the material is easily adaptable to a variety of time blocks. Regardless of the number of sessions, it should be kept in mind that the material in each should be thoroughly learned before proceeding to the material in succeeding sessions.

It is, of course, up to the company to decide at what time of day the training sessions will be held. There are many variations. The company may not want to release workers during the day, so training will have to be given after the work day or on the workers' days off. If the company is willing to provide release time, then the sessions can be held during mornings or afternoons. Mornings are much preferred since employees are far more energetic and receptive than they are during afternoons.

Some companies have policies which require attendance at training sessions during employees' own time and without compensation. However, employees often resent this policy and enter the training session with considerable resistance. Therefore, the trainer should attempt to convince management of the importance of avoiding after-hours training.

D. TRAINING FACILITIES

The training room should be large enough so that when working subgroups are formed they can function independently without noise distractions. The room should be private, quite and well-illuminated, and should have a comfortable temperature. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that many trainees will invariably fall asleep in a hot, stuffy room or focus too much attention elsewhere in a room that is too cold.

E. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

Method of seating is often a subtle factor which significantly influences the success of a training program. The rectangular classroom type arrangement should be avoided. Rather, a semi-circle or round-table arrangement is much to be preferred since they permit each participant to

have ready visual access to other participants, as well as to the trainer. This procedure facilitates discussion between trainees.

F. NAME TAGS

Name tags are important when the members of the group are not well acquainted. Interactions between members are far more spontaneous and frequent when names are known than when they are not.

If a conference table is used, trainees can make their own nameplates by folding a piece of white cardboard and standing it up in front of them. In this case the trainer should make available a supply of such cards.

G. MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

The presentation of this training program does not require a large array of materials, but the following items are highly recommended:

- Chalkboard, chalk and eraser
- Large newsprint pads
- Ease1(s)
- Felt pens
- Tape

Felt pens and large newsprint pads add variety. The trainer can tape the completed pages on the walls around the room and refer to these work sheets throughout the training session as required or desired.

Optional equipment and/or materials is limited only by the trainer's imagination. For example, use may be made of prepared posters or transparent slides. In any event, it is universally recognized that liberal use of visual displays will invariably facilitate the learning process and, concomitantly, provide a more interesting session to trainees.

H. COMPLETING A CHECKLIST

We strongly recommend that a checklist be completed of tasks to be performed prior to starting the first training session. An example of one such checklist is given on the following page.

TRAINER'S CHECKLIST

- ___ 1. Make a list of trainees.
- ___ 2. Determine the supervisory status of each trainee and organize a seating arrangement accordingly.
- ___ 3. Add five to the total number of trainees to allow for unexpected participants.
- ___ 4. List the names of other individuals who may attend as visitors.
- ___ 5. Determine how many sessions there will be and at what time of day and on what days.
- ___ 6. Find a suitable room and make sure that it will be available on the designated training days.
- ___ 7. Arrange the chairs optimally.
- ___ 8. Order coffee and other refreshments.
- ___ 9. Order a sufficient number of ashtrays.
- ___ 10. Find out how to control temperature and ventilation in the room.
- ___ 11. Make name tags and/or obtain cardboard for nameplates.
- ___ 12. Obtain a sufficient number of trainee workbooks.
- ___ 13. Order chalkboard, chalk, erasers, newsprint pads, felt pens, tape and other materials.
- ___ 14. If more than one individual will be responsible for the program, decide who will be responsible for each aspect of the preparations and what role each will assume in the training sessions.

III. TRAINING SESSION NO. 1

A. INTRODUCTION - 15 MINUTES

The program starts with the trainer introducing himself and asking each participant to give his name and department. The introduction should not last more than 15 minutes but it is very important because it not only permits participants to become acquainted, it also acts as a facilitator to relax everyone. Generally people enter training programs somewhat apprehensively and it is up to the trainer to develop a relaxed atmosphere.

The trainer should particularly be attentive when the participants introduce themselves. He should learn all names as quickly as possible and establish a policy calling people by their first names.

In summary, the trainer should consider the following items:

- o This is the group's first impression of the trainer. First impressions can be long-lasting.
- o Be attentive when the trainees introduce themselves.
- o Establish a relaxed atmosphere.
- o Use first names.
- o The introduction is the trainer's tool to get things going smoothly.

B. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES - 15 MINUTES

Following the introduction the group should be informed of the purpose and objectives of the training program. Statements should be clear, concise and simple. It is to be remembered that the trainer's behavior is being judged and interpreted. This is the time for the trainer to loosen his tie and encourage the group to do the same. There is work ahead, but it is best done informally.

The trainer should have a checklist of items he wishes to cover in his statement of purpose and objectives. For example, consider the following:

- Time allocated for the program and each training session.
- Why the program is being given.
- Company's rationale for hiring hardcore disadvantaged (if this is the case).
- The fact that the disadvantaged have developed nonwork-oriented behavioral habits.
- What is expected of the trainees - cooperation and willingness to learn new ways of interacting with subordinates?
- Briefly what will be accomplished during the 16-hour program?
- What the company hopes to achieve by this training program.

To ensure that everyone understands what the program is all about, the trainer should open the floor to questions or comments.

The remainder of the program is presented as a series of exercises accompanied by brief discussions of points underlying the exercises. A didactic lecture approach should be avoided at all costs. The training sessions are designed to promote learning and learning is facilitated by receiving "feedback" from the group and acknowledging the correctness or incorrectness of the group's comments.

The exercises are duplicated in the SUPERVISORY WORKBOOK for convenience.

C. EXERCISES

1. Supervisors - 1½ Hours

The first exercise is designed to set the basic foundation for the rest of the program. The fact should be established that a supervisor is concerned, in a variety of ways, with worker performance. Therefore, a supervisor acts in ways which will ensure himself, the company, and the worker that a job will be accomplished properly within an acceptable time period.

Direct the group to page 2 of the Workbook and have them write under the item, "A Supervisor Is:"

- A teacher of a variety of behaviors

Under the item, "What Does He Do?" have the group write:

- He acts in ways which will ensure that his subordinates will accomplish their jobs properly and within an acceptable time period.

Under the item, "How Does He Do It?" have the group write:

- He communicates with his subordinates verbally and by facial expressions. Both verbal and facial expressions can be friendly, indifferent or unfriendly.

The trainer should now break the group into sub-groups of four or five supervisors and have each sub-group appoint a "captain" who will take notes as well as present his team's findings to the group. The teams should be asked to list all of the important tasks that they believe a supervisor is supposed to accomplish. Thirty minutes should be allotted for this exercise and the trainer should mix with each of the teams and listen in.

After 30 minutes, the group should be reconvened and each team captain should present his list orally to the group. Simultaneously, the trainer should write this list on his easel. When all tasks are listed on the easel the trainer should review the tasks with the group and, by mutual agreement, select the ten most important ones. As agreement is reached, the trainer should underline those tasks which are selected. The group should be directed to page 3 of the Workbook and list the tasks as they are selected.

Although the supervisors may be considered as the experts at this stage, the trainer will need to provide guidance. The tasks selected should reflect a supervisor's concern with worker performance. If the group selects a task which does not reflect such a concern, directly or indirectly, the trainer should question the group as to the importance and relevancy of the task.

After the exercise is completed, the trainer should tear off the page on his easel and tape it to a wall. On the next page he should write the word "performance," and title this page "key words."

Under the word "performance," the word "behavior" should be written. This act represents the transition to Exercise 2.

2. Behavior - 1½ Hours

Concern for worker performance is concern for worker behavior. Certainly, if the job of the supervisor is to see to it that certain behaviors are shown, it is essential that he understand what behavior is.

Behavior is what you see and hear a person do. Two or more persons observing behavior will see or hear the same thing. All that we know about a person is what his behavior tells us. All that anyone knows about us is what our behavior tells them. Everything else that we think we know about other people is our interpretations or impressions of what we have observed them do.

Two people will very readily agree on what they have observed a third person do or say. These same people, however, will often strongly disagree as regards their interpretations or impressions as to why the third person did what he was observed to be doing. Even though both may feel that their interpretations are correct, the chances are that they are both wrong.

Behavior includes such actions as walking, standing, talking, whispering, smiling, frowning, crying, eating, not eating, being silent, looking, putting a foot on the brake of a car, turning a steering wheel, and punching a key on a cash register. Behavior is what you or someone else sees or hears another person do.

The trainer should keep in mind that this training program is designed to make the supervisors more skillful in "shaping" the behaviors of subordinates. He therefore needs to sharpen his skill in observing behavior. Although such a task may seem simple enough, the trainer should be cautioned to proceed slowly during the following group exercise. The supervisors should clearly understand what is and what is not behavior.

Direct the group to page 4 of the Workbook. The page lists eight statements which may or may not represent descriptions of behavior. The trainer should appoint a different person to read aloud each statement, and ask whether or not the statement is a description of behavior. Each

statement should be discussed briefly before proceeding to the next one. Most likely the first few examples will necessitate the most discussion.

At this point in the program the trainer has established a description of the supervisor's job, his tasks, and a definition of behavior. He has also established that the supervisor is concerned with worker behaviors. Indeed, he is the individual who teaches or shapes worker behaviors.

3. Task Analysis - 1 Hour

This topic involves a discussion of behaviors which supervisors require of their subordinates. The group should be sub-divided into teams as before and asked to list subordinate behaviors which are important to accomplishing a job and to maintaining company integrity. The sub-groups should be given 30 minutes for this task and the trainer should again mix with them to be sure they are on the right track.

When the task is completed, the group should be reconvened and the trainer should repeat the procedure used when discussing a supervisor's job (Exercise 2). When the important behaviors are selected, the group should be direct to page 5 in the Workbook and list these behaviors under "Behavioral Objectives:"

- o It is to be emphasized that the items listed should be stated in behavioral terms.

4. Closing the First Training Session

The above exercise ends the first session. The trainer should now open the discussion for questions and comments.

Following the open discussion, the group should be requested to read the "Homework Assignment 1," on page 6 of the Workbook.

Finally, the trainer should reinforce the group for having a good session, and close.

All material developed during the session should be retained and taped to the walls immediately preceding the second session.

IV. TRAINING SESSION NO. 2

A. REVIEW - 45 MINUTES

This session begins with a review of the key concepts that were defined and discussed during the first session. The trainer should immediately involve the group in this review by asking them to discuss the concepts. Two important points should be considered. The first is that the supervisors should maintain or recapture the line of reasoning that had been developed during the first session. The second is that the trainer should receive sufficient feedback from the group in order to determine which individuals, if any, have not yet fully grasped the material presented.

The important concepts which should be reviewed are:

- What is a supervisor? What are his tasks?
- What is behavior? What is an attitude?
- What is observation? How is it used?

B. EXERCISES

1. Required Behaviors - 45 Minutes

This exercise is designed to establish a foundation for the most important part of the training program, namely, to train supervisors in the theory and application of behavior modification.

The trainer should now direct the group to the work they performed in the Task Analysis Exercise (page 5 of the Workbook). He should point out that "behavioral objectives," by definition, are "required behaviors," and write both terms on the top left-hand corner of the newsprint pad. He should then list perhaps four or five of the behaviors previously selected and included in the group's Workbooks. On the top right-hand corner of the pad he should write the term "observed behaviors" and then request the supervisors to discuss problems which occur when the observed behaviors are different from the required behaviors. The point to be made here is that such a state-of-affairs implies that the supervisor must modify the undesirable behaviors of subordinates and strengthen those that are desirable.

The supervisor is a "teacher" and the subordinate is a "student" engaged in a learning process. Behaviors which need to be learned are determined by visual and auditory observations, not by perceived attitudes, inferences or guesses, and learning is best achieved by reinforcing each behavioral act that approaches the overall required behavioral pattern.

Direct the group to Exercise 4 on page 11 of the Workbook, a chart which depicts graphically the learning process. (This chart is duplicated on the following page and a large version of the chart should be drawn on the easel, if one is not already prepared.)

Consider an example of a required behavior which is not being shown by a subordinate, for example, "cleaning up the work site at the end of the work day." The trainer should ask the following question in a manner which does not require a response from the group:

- O.K. How does the supervisor modify or shape the behavior of this subordinate?

It should be pointed out and emphasized that desired behavior is best learned by successive approximations, i.e., rewarding an individual each time he shows an improvement in his behavioral pattern. Thus, when the supervisor observes an improvement, he reinforces him by recognizing and complimenting his progress. Such reinforcement is called "social reinforcement" and, when used properly, is exceedingly powerful in influencing others, particularly subordinates. It should also be emphasized that such compliments should follow the demonstration of the improved behavior as closely as possible.

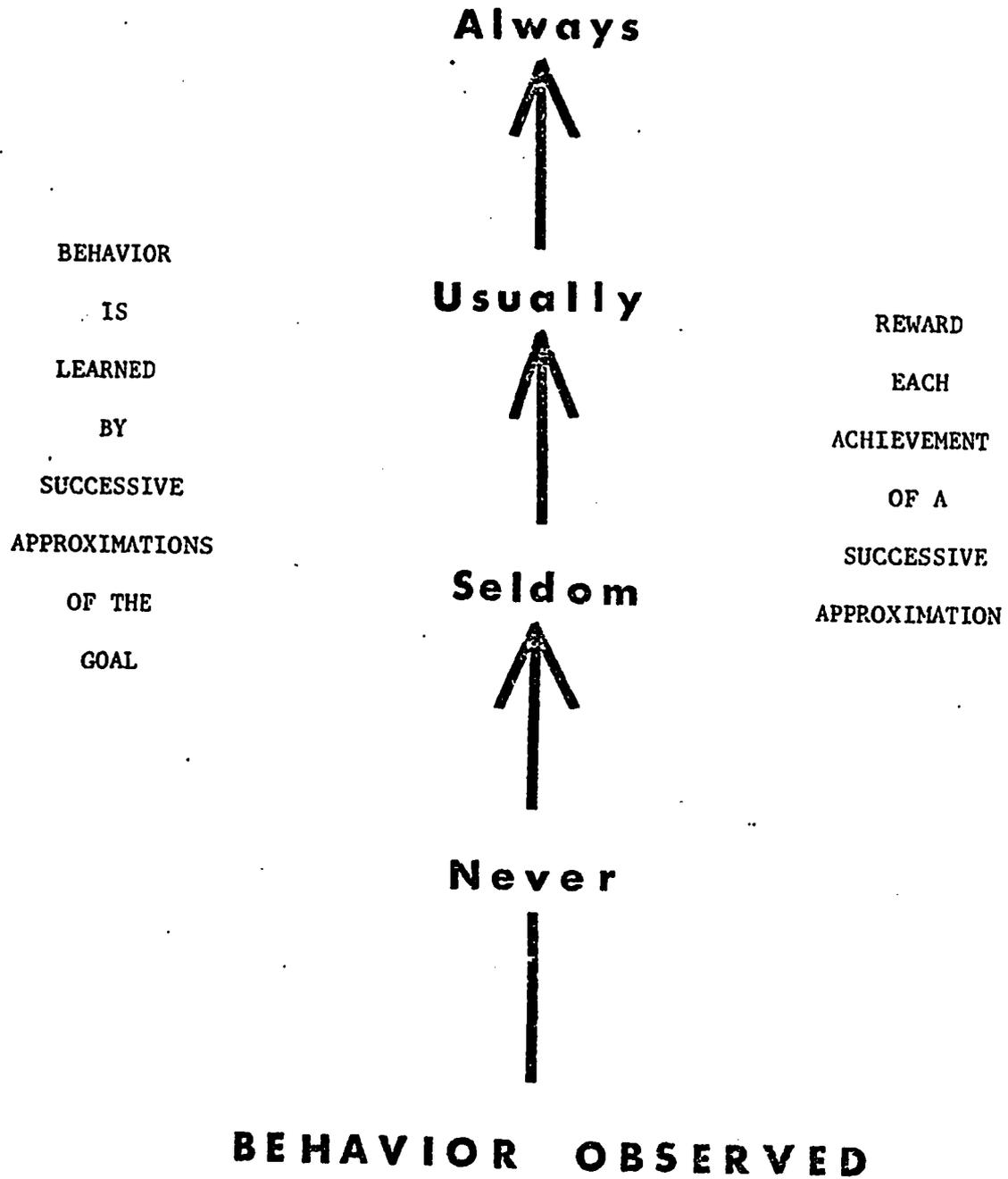
The trainer should indicate that social reinforcement includes all forms of verbal and nonverbal interactions with an individual. For example, a smile at the right time or a pat on the back may often be equally as effective as a verbal compliment. All such actions are referred to as "positive reinforcers."

Criticisms, threats, etc. are also social reinforcers. However, such actions are negative in nature and are classified as "punishers." Punishment will also facilitate the modification of behavior. Unfortunately, however, it has negative side effects. For example, under such influence a subordinate may follow a supervisor's order but he will do so grudgingly. Also, he may perform only at a level which is minimally acceptable to the supervisor, rather than attempt to achieve a level in keeping with his potential.

EXERCISE 4

THE LEARNING PROCESS

BEHAVIOR REQUIRED



Punishment should be avoided as much as possible. In many cases, undesirable behavior can be ignored altogether, the supervisor focusing in on the reinforcement of desirable or improved behaviors only. When such a procedure is accomplished systematically and consistently by a supervisor, it is usually the case that the undesirable behaviors will gradually "extinguish" or disappear. If the undesirable behaviors do not represent major concerns to a company, it is far better to allow them to disappear gradually than it is to punish them.

When it appears that some form of punishment, however mild, must be employed, the supervisor should consider the use of "split reinforcers," i.e., the joint application of positive and negative social reinforcement. For example, consider an employee who is frequently late for work and whose on-time behavior is required in order to coordinate properly the activities of other employees. Thus, the employee's tardiness not only affects himself, in terms of salary, he also interferes with the productivity of other employees. In this case, a split reinforcer such as the following may be used effectively:

"Jim, you're coming to work late altogether too often. It's affecting the work of other people and I'm afraid the company will have to let you go if you don't change your ways. Listen, if you have some problem in getting here, maybe I can help in some way to straighten it out."

The positive aspect of a split reinforcer will almost invariably dominate the negative aspect, with the result being a more rapid extinguishing of the undesirable behavior without the negative side effects common to the independent use of punishment.

The trainer should not hesitate to be redundant during this discussion. He should provide additional examples and make sure that the group thoroughly understands the behavior modification process and the consequences of applying positive reinforcement, punishment and split reinforcers. It should be made perfectly clear that virtually everyone having some degree of authority or power over another commonly employs such reinforcers in everyday life. However, most people do not fully understand the specific consequences and long-lasting effects of their use, nor do they apply them systematically and consistently. It is important to stress, therefore, that the key to effective behavior modification is:

- Understanding the consequences of reinforcers and punishment.
- Applying social reinforcement systematically and consistently.

The trainer should heavily involve the group in this discussion, making sure that the supervisors achieve more than a superficial understanding of the concepts:

- Behavior Modification
- Reinforcement
- Social Reinforcement
- Punishment
- Extinction
- Split Reinforcers

The trainer should also demonstrate the learning process by providing ample social reinforcements to individuals within the group who show evidence that they have achieved a solid understanding of these concepts and the learning process.

2. Behavior Modification Practice - 2 Hours

The group should now be divided into the same sub-groups as before. The trainer should offer the following statement:

Learning requires practice. Let's practice now what we've been talking about.

Utilizing the "behaviors required" list, a behavior should be selected which will be used in role playing. If a required behavior is wearing safety glasses while performing a particular task, for example, assume that a subordinate has not been wearing the glasses. The trainer should appoint one member of each sub-group to assume the role of the supervisor and one member to assume the role of the subordinate. The remaining members of each group should observe closely the verbal interactions between "supervisor" and "subordinate" and be prepared to analyze such interactions with respect to the material learned thus far.

The "supervisor" should begin the conversation, confronting the "subordinate" with the fact that he has not been conforming to company safety policies.

The trainer should have developed a number of role-playing situations which are common and relevant to the jobs related to the supervisors' company. Members of each group should all participate at least once as a "supervisor" and at least once as a "subordinate."

Each role play situation should last between four and seven minutes. The most important consideration to keep in mind is that each role play activity has the specific point of demonstrating the positive and negative effects of various ways of interacting with a subordinate. If this point is unclear or is not made during such activities, role playing will be meaningless.

During each role play situation the trainer should float from sub-group to sub-group, making sure that the activities are proceeding properly but not interacting unless necessary. Following each role play activity, the non-participating members of each sub-group should comment on the manner in which the "supervisor" handled his problem with his "subordinate." The trainer should also become involved at this point, giving feedback on what he has observed. Mistakes should be pointed out and accurate group comments should be reinforced.

The sub-groups should continue role play activities for one hour. If there is only one trainer (assumed throughout this manual), he will have to allocate his time as required to each sub-group. In any event, it should be emphasized that the appropriateness of the "supervisor's" behavior during each role play exercise should be focused on by the groups.

At the end of the hour, the entire group should be reconvened and the role play situations should be briefly discussed.

C. REVIEW AND CLOSE - 30 MINUTES

The final half hour of this session should be devoted to briefly reviewing all significant points thus far presented and discussed, and to setting the stage for the next session.

After reviewing the material, the trainer should open the discussion for questions and comments. Then, the group should be informed that the next session will be concerned with "communication" and the ways it facilitates or interferes with the behavior modification process.

Next, the group should be requested to read the "Homework Assignment 2" on page 12 of the Workbook.

Finally, the trainer should reinforce the group for having a good session and close.

V. TRAINING SESSION NO. 3

A. REVIEW - 40 MINUTES

The role and duties of a supervisor should be briefly reviewed. The supervisor is a "teacher." He teaches required behaviors and observes which behaviors need modifying. Very importantly, he reinforces each behavior which shows an improvement over previous behavior.

The following concepts should again be reviewed briefly:

- Behavior Modification
- Reinforcement
- Social Reinforcement
- Punishment
- Extinction
- Split Reinforcers

The supervisor should not assume that all supervisors within his group have thoroughly learned this material. It is during this review that he should obtain ample feedback from the group and react accordingly. He should also reinforce individuals for correct or near correct responses to his questions and comments.

B. COMMUNICATION - 1 HOUR

Direct the group to page 16 in the Workbook, a chart showing the possible consequences of a supervisor's communication with a subordinate. (The chart is reproduced on the following page and it would be useful to have a large version for exhibition on the easel.)

The chart should be explained briefly. Simply, there is a behavior problem observed by the supervisor. He does something (action) and, as a result of his act, there is a consequence. The consequence may be either good or bad, positive or negative.

| <u>BEHAVIOR PROBLEM</u> | <u>ACTION</u> | <u>CONSEQUENCE</u> |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| | Communication Behavior of Supervisor | 1. Some improvement 2. No improvement 3. Problem solved 4. Trainee quits or is fired |

A problem has arisen regarding the behavior of a subordinate. The manner in which you communicate the nature of the problem and the need to resolve it has much to do with effecting the appropriate change in his behavior. There will always be a consequence resulting from your communication. It may be either positive or negative, depending on the effectiveness and appropriateness of your communication.

If the action you took did not solve the problem, you need to examine what you did and alter your behavior.

The attention of the group should be directed to the middle point of the chart, i.e., action. The action taken by the supervisor is his single most important concern. If he acts effectively, the result will nearly always be positive. If he acts ineffectively, the result will nearly always be negative - for himself, the subordinate, and the company.

The action taken by the supervisor is nearly always in the form of communication behavior. And communication behavior is the primary tool of the supervisor. Subordinates may use machines, technical instruments, or other materials, but the supervisor uses communication. Subordinates are machine and production oriented. The supervisor is people oriented and his interactions with people involve communications.

The following statements should be emphasized and briefly discussed:

- To train is to communicate with people.
- To communicate effectively is to train effectively.
- To communicate ineffectively is to train ineffectively.
- Communication is behavior. Behavior is, in part, communication.
- What does my present communication behavior teach people?

The relationship between reinforcement and communication should be established. Reinforcing a subordinate's behavior means communicating with him in a specific manner.

C. ONE-WAY VERSUS TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNICATION FILTERS - 1 HOUR

Most people often use communication poorly. If we are to understand good communication, we must know something about how it can be and is misused. It is more than a mere conveying of information. The manner in which a message is conveyed and the feedback received regarding an understanding of the message are of vital importance.

The trainer should write the word "communication" on the easel. Directly under it the word "convey" should be written. It should be pointed out that "convey" implies a sender and a receiver. It should be emphasized that communication should be two-way and seldom, if ever, one-way. Two-way communication provides the supervisor with feedback as to whether his message

is actually received and understood. In one-way communication, he never knows for sure because he does not receive feedback.

Simple acknowledgements, such as "O.K., Mr. Jones" or "fine" or "will do," often represent insufficient feedback. These acknowledgements merely indicate that a message was received; they do not provide evidence that the message was received correctly.

The trainer should emphasize this point by writing the words "sender," "receiver," "feedback," and "two-way communication" under the word "convey" on his easel.

The trainer should now ask the following question:

What causes communication breakdowns, even with two-way communication?

If the group has read Homework Assignment 2, and at least some will have, the word "filters" will be stated. The trainer should then ask for definitions of the word "filters." There will undoubtedly be a variety of responses such as:

- Something gets in the way of a message
- A supervisor does not want to hear about certain things
- A subordinate is afraid to reveal his activities
- A filter blocks out some information
- A filter is a protective device

All responses from the group which are correct or near correct should be reinforced by the trainer. When the trainer is satisfied that the group understands the concept, he should write the word "filter" on the easel. If the groups' responses are considered unsatisfactory, after a minute or so, the trainer should volunteer the correct information.

It should be pointed out that filters on machinery let in what you want and keeps out what you don't want. In this case, their effects are positive. In communication, however, filters almost always have negative effects. They falsify or distort a message.

One reason why a filter may emerge is that one or both of the parties engaged in communication may feel that honest replies may be followed by some form of punishment, ridicule, etc. In this case, a filter is knowingly and voluntarily developed. A second reason why a filter may emerge is that a faulty assumption may have been made by either the sender or receiver of a message.

One type of faulty assumption relates to the misinterpretation of a viewpoint. Thus, one person thinks another person is saying one thing while, in reality, he is saying another. A second type relates to the misinterpretation of a feeling. Misinterpretation of an individual's feelings can drastically affect another's perception of the content of a message.

To emphasize the importance of the concept of filters and their causes, the trainer should write the following words on the easel and make sure that the group fully understands how they relate to effect the communication process.

- Voluntary filters
- Assumptions
- Viewpoints
- Feelings.

D. EXERCISE - 1 HOUR

The group should now be divided into sub-groups as in previous training sessions. Using similar job-related situations, the sub-groups should role-play them, giving particular attention to whether or not filters emerge. Following each four to seven minute exercise, individuals within the sub-groups should discuss what transpired, and the trainer should monitor such discussions to ensure that the supervisors are grasping the concept adequately.

Answers should be sought for questions such as the following:

- Did a filter emerge?
- Why did it emerge?
- Does the sub-group understand the mechanisms underlying it?

- How should the supervisor have handled the situation?
- How could it have been avoided?
- Did the subordinate respond appropriately, under the circumstances?

It is usually the case that filters develop during the first few role-playing activities. Subsequently, the sub-groups learn to avoid their development.

Following the role-play exercise, the entire group should be reconvened and the trainer should discuss briefly some of the highlights of the exercises, derived from his own observations.

E. REVIEW AND CLOSE - 20 MINUTES

The final 20 minutes of this session should be devoted to briefly reviewing the importance of communication, the problems arising from inadequate communication, and the relationship between communication and behavior modification. Questions and comments from the group should then be encouraged.

Next, the group should be requested to read the "Homework Assignment 3" on page 17 of the Workbook.

Finally, the trainer should reinforce the group for having a good session and close.

VI. TRAINING SESSION NO. 4

A. REVIEW - 40 MINUTES

This is the final training session. The trainer should quickly review all of the concepts presented thus far:

- Behavior
- Behavior modification
- Reinforcement
- Social Reinforcement
- Punishment
- Extinction
- Split Reinforcers
- Communication
- Two-way Communication
- Feedback
- Filters
- Voluntary Filters
- Assumptions: Viewpoints, Feelings

It is important that the group not only understand the concepts, but also their interrelationships. The trainer should ask numerous questions regarding such relationships.

The remainder of this last training session will be devoted to developing insights into ways of avoiding the formation of filters, and to a final open discussion. More than at any other time the trainer should fully involve the group.

B. DIRECT VERSUS INDIRECT STATEMENT OF FEELINGS - 1 HOUR

In geometry, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. It is no less the case in communication, i.e., the most efficient way of communicating is to state directly how you feel about something. Any other method is "beating around the bush" and is likely to result in the development of a communication filter. A direct statement of feelings gets straight to the point. Both the sender and receiver fully understand the intent and contents of the message. And the consequences of this kind of communication is usually positive in nature.

The trainer should direct the group's attention to page 18 of the Workbook which lists examples of direct and indirect statements of feelings (reproduced on the following page). Individuals within the group should be selected, asked to read one of the statements, and asked to determine whether it is a direct or indirect statement of feeling.

After discussing each of the examples, the trainer should select two participants from the group to role-play one of the above situations. One participant will articulate the statement ("supervisor") and one will offer a reply ("subordinate"). About three to four minutes of dialogue should ensue and then the entire group should be encouraged to discuss what transpired.

C. CHECKING PERCEPTION - 1 HOUR

A direct statement of feeling is one way of facilitating the avoidance of filters in the communication process. But it is not enough by itself. Besides stating one's feelings directly, it is also necessary to check one's perception of what he saw or heard. This simply means that it is necessary to be sure that what an individual has seen or heard is actually what occurred, uninfluenced by interpretations, attitudes or opinions. The point is that if filters have developed, checking perceptions of what has transpired constitutes the best way to detect them. Once they are detected, something can be done about them.

At least three positive consequences may result from checking perception. The first is that by checking one's perception, he is indicating that he is aware of the possibility he may be incorrect. The second is that when checking perception accompanies a direct statement of feelings, an honest, objective understanding of the content and intent of a message is far more likely. Finally, the act of checking perception tends to facilitate use of two-way communication and feedback.

Direct Versus Indirect Statements of Feelings

An employee arrives at work 30 minutes late. Determine which of the following possible responses by the Supervisor are direct expressions of his feelings:

1. "I am glad to see that you like to work around here."
2. "Is there something that you don't understand about the company policy?"
3. "Your being late makes me angry."
4. "I am mad at you now, come back in 15 minutes when I am not so mad and can talk to you about your being late this morning."

An employee gets into an angry discussion with a customer. The Supervisor who overheard it said later to the employee:

1. "How stupid can you get?"
2. "How many times do I have to tell you that the customer is always right?"
3. "Is that the way you think you can get ahead in this world?"
4. "I too got angry at what that woman said to you, but let's talk about a better way of handling it."

The trainer should now direct the group's attention to page 19 of the Workbook which lists examples of appropriate and inappropriate perception checking (reproduced below). Individuals within the group should be selected, asked to read one of the statements, and asked to determine whether the "supervisor" is checking his perception.

Checking Perception

- (1) "You are not paying attention."
- (2) "You are trying to con me."
- (3) "The way you sit there makes me think that you disagree with me. Do you?"
- (4) "You are smiling a lot and I don't know what that means."
- (5) "It seemed to me that you walked away from the job before you completed it. Am I right?"
- (6) "I'll explain it again, stupid."

Inferences about other people's feelings can be, and often are inaccurate. Thus, it is important to check them out. Perception checking responses aim to (1) convey to the other that there is a desire to understand his feelings, and (2) help avoid actions that may be regretted later because they were based on false assumptions regarding an individual's feelings.

The following examples should be considered and discussed as before:

- (1) "Am I right that you feel disappointed that nobody commented on your suggestion?"
- (2) "Did you feel pushed out of line by what George just said?"
- (3) "I get the impression that you are angry with me. Are you?"
- (4) "I'm not sure whether your expression means that my comment hurt your feelings, irritated you, or confused you."

Following a discussion of the above statements, individuals within the group should be selected to role-play several of the implied situations, as before.

D. A FINAL COMMENT - 20 MINUTES

Good communication techniques and social reinforcement can greatly facilitate the modification of subordinates' behaviors. Everyone wants to be understood and everyone needs to be appreciated. No one likes to be ridiculed or otherwise tormented. And no one enjoys uncertainties regarding how to perform a job properly. The degree to which a subordinate will be successful on a new job will depend, to a very large extent, on the behavior of his supervisor. The supervisor is the single, most important influence on the subordinate. He is the company, as far as the subordinate is concerned, and wields considerable social power. How he handles this power will determine his success as a teacher and leader.

The trainer should emphasize that not all subordinates will respond favorably to the sympathetic, people-oriented supervisor. There will always be a few individuals who may continuously take advantage of situations, regardless of the positive efforts of supervisors. In these cases, it is not to be construed that behavior modification techniques will not work. Rather, such individuals have probably developed severe behavioral problems prior to entering the new company and require more personal interaction time than the supervisor and company can afford to allocate. In general, however, the majority of new employees will respond favorably to positive treatment. It is up to the supervisor to determine which of the employees are and are not responding. Such determinations can usually be made within the first few weeks of employment.

By way of summary, the trainer should direct the group to pages 20 and 21 of the Workbook which illustrates the process of behavior change in a work situation (reproduced on the following two pages). Both charts should be discussed briefly. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of social reinforcement, rather than monetary or a similar kind of reward. Very importantly, the act of reinforcing is communication behavior. It is this behavior by the supervisor which shapes the behaviors of his subordinates.

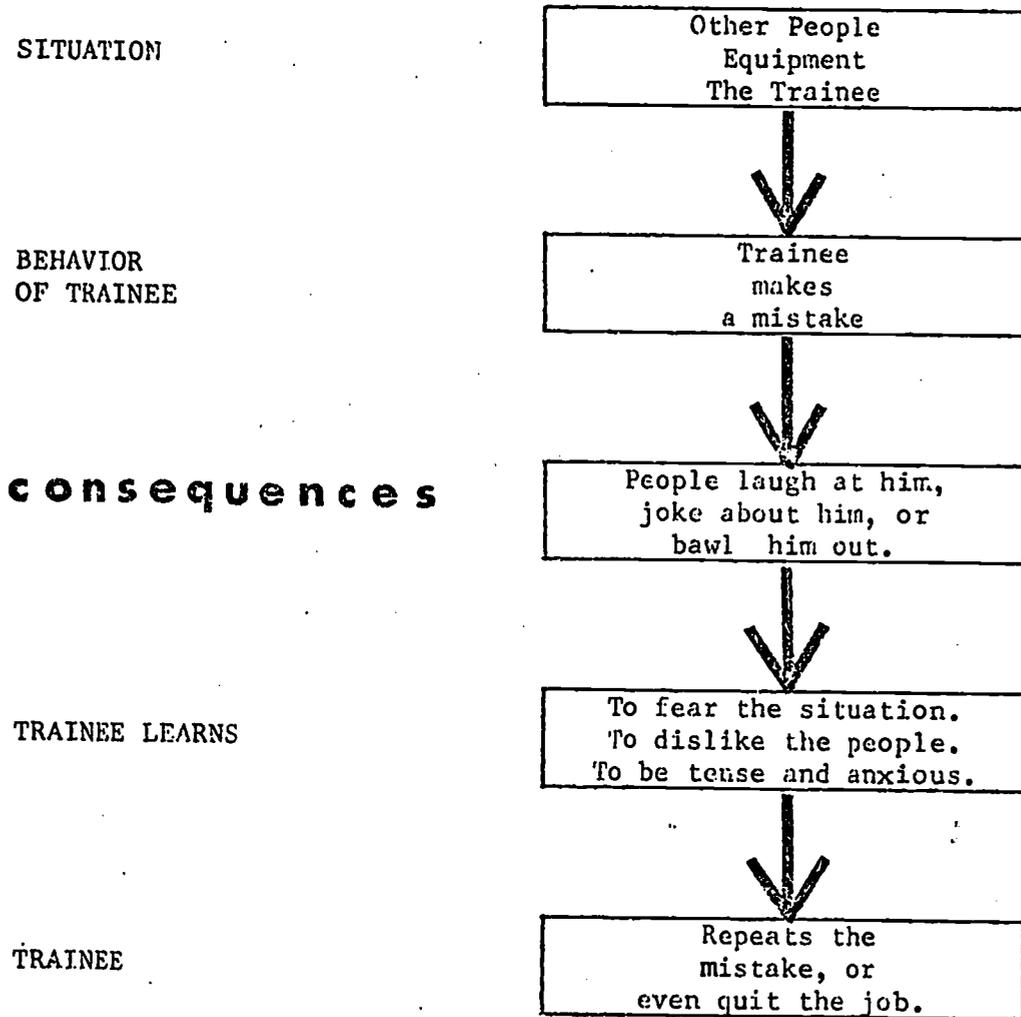
E. OPEN DISCUSSION AND CLOSE - 30-60 MINUTES

This final segment of the training program should be devoted to an open discussion with the group. Questions and comments should be requested and the group should be reasonably satisfied that "closure" has occurred.

When it is apparent that little more can be accomplished by further discussion, the trainer should terminate the session by requesting the group to read "Homework Assignment 4" on page 22.

He should then reinforce the group, wish them success, and close the program.

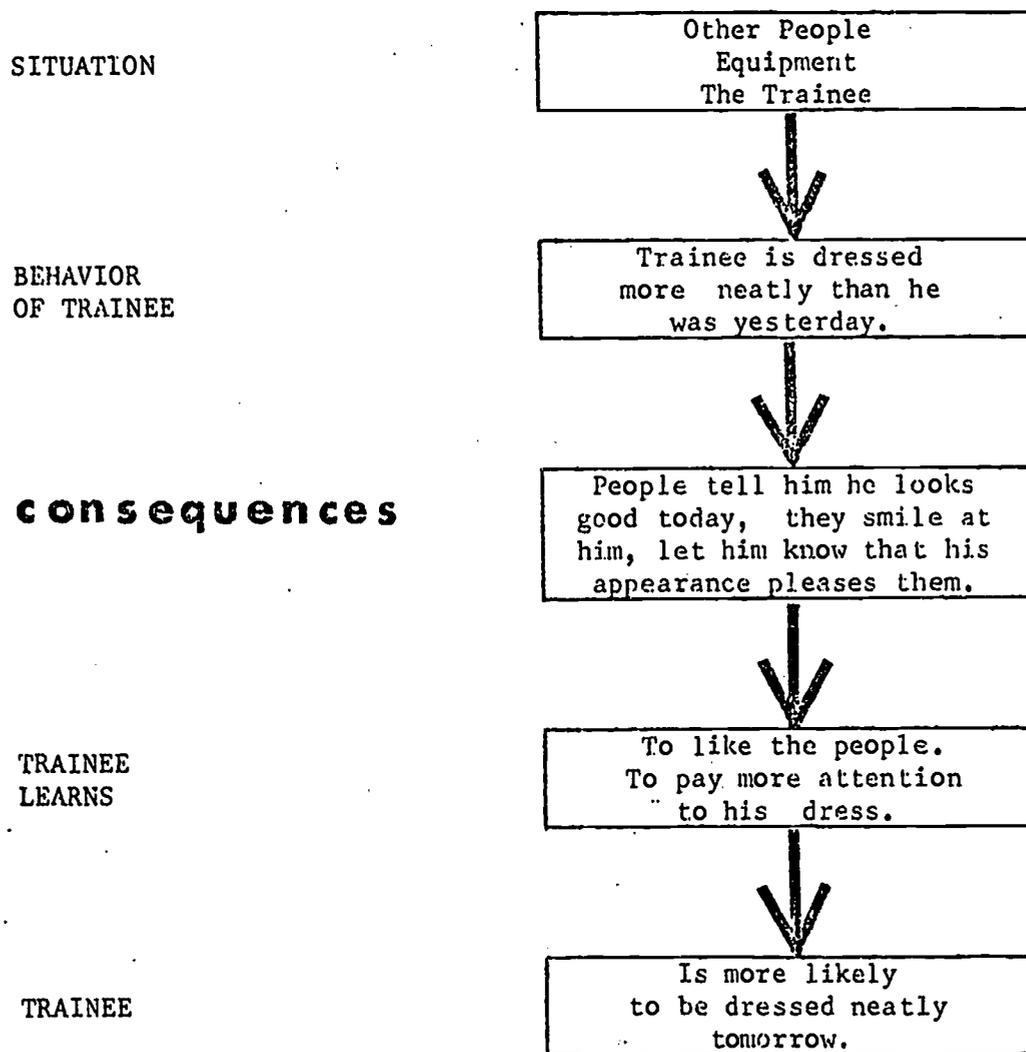
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