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ABSTRACT

Adult distributive education is designed to prepare out-of-school youth and adults to enter, progress, or improve their competencies in marketing and distributive occupations. Gainful employment increased job efficiency, eventual promotion, and better understanding of the economic activity in a selected field are the immediate outcomes of the adult program. Prepared by a committee of educators, this booklet discusses the goals of an adult distributive education program and provides suggestions for: (1) program planning and development, including assessing the need for a program, role of advisory committees, staffing patterns, and sources of financial support, and (2) program implementation and evaluation, including promotional activities, scheduling, instructional facilities, teaching techniques and materials, and evaluation techniques. Sample promotional devices and a student evaluation form are appended.

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ADULT DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION

American Vocational Association

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Chapter I Introduction

We have entered an age in which education is not just a luxury . . . (but) a necessity without which a person is defenseless in this complex, industrialized society.

Lyndon B. Johnson

Adult distributive education is a level of instruction within the distributive education program designed to prepare individuals to enter, to progress, or to improve their competencies in marketing and distributive occupations. It provides education for the entry, supervisory, and managerial levels. This program is committed to the advancement of education for distribution for out-of-school youth and adults of all ages regardless of ability or geographic area.

Gainful employment, increased job efficiency, eventual promotion, and a better understanding of the field of economic activity in which the person is engaged constitute the immediate outcomes of the adult distributive education program.

More specifically, the goals of adult distributive education may be stated as follows:

1. To provide specialized educational programs which will assist in developing and upgrading individual employment competencies, thereby providing the individual with the knowledge and skills required for advancement and the self-confidence to assume greater responsibilities.
2. To offer educational programs which provide the field of distribution with a source of better-qualified personnel to meet business needs and demands, thereby contributing to improve efficiency in the marketing process and to reduce business losses.
3. To provide formal instruction to individuals to supplement on-the-job employee, supervisory, and management training.

Marketing in the American Economy

Production, exchange, distribution, and consumption form the four major processes in the American economy. Within these economic processes, four kinds of utilities must be created: form, time, place, and possession. Marketing serves to

create three of these, namely, time, place, and possession. Marketing ties production, exchange, distribution, and consumption together through a continuous process of (a) determining consumer need and demand for a product or service, and (b) directing the flow of those products and services from the producer to the consumer.

Until the turn of the twentieth century, over three-fourths of our labor force was employed in agriculture, the extractive industries, construction, and manufacturing, with fewer than one-fourth employed in all other industries. This employment pattern reflected a basically agrarian economy. The movement of goods from producer to consumer was relatively simple, and the limited variety of goods required modest effort by the distributive segment of the economy.

With the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the introduction of mass production in this country, the distributive segment grew in importance and complexity. Today, more than 50 percent of the labor force is employed in the broad field of marketing and distribution, now the largest single segment of our economy.

The marketing component in a given retail price today represents over 50 percent of that price and an equivalent amount in value added. There is

every indication that this trend will continue, as our capacity to produce far exceeds our capacity to distribute. The importance of distribution and marketing in our economy is further emphasized by the fact that each of America's more than four million business firms has a product or service to sell. The security of the investment, stability of employment, and profitability and success of each business is dependent upon the effectiveness of its marketing process.

The Distributive Education Program

Distributive education is a program of occupational instruction in the field of marketing and distribution which is designed to prepare individuals at any educational level to enter, to progress, or to improve their competencies in distributive occupations, or in an occupation requiring competency in one or more of the marketing functions. Emphasis is on the development of attitudes, skills, and understandings related to marketing, merchandising, and management.

Distributive occupations can be defined as those occupations followed by employees engaged in marketing or merchandising activities when (a) distributing to consumers, retailers, jobbers, wholesalers, and others the products of farm and in-

dustry or selling services; or (b) managing, operating, or conducting retail, wholesale, or service businesses. Distributive occupations are found in such areas of economic activity as retail and wholesale trade, finance, insurance, real estate, services and service trades, manufacturing, utilities, transportation, and communications.

At the secondary level, the distributive education program serves students who are generally 14 years of age or over and who are usually in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Many states, however, have joined with other vocational services in providing exploratory programs at the junior high school level. These are usually prevocational programs of instruction which offer the student an exposure to a wide array of career opportunities and selected "hands-on experiences." Such preparation provides the student with a more objective basis upon which to make a tentative career choice when he enrolls in the senior high school program. At that point, the distributive education program becomes vocational in its objectives, as it is designed to prepare the student for gainful employment at the entry level.

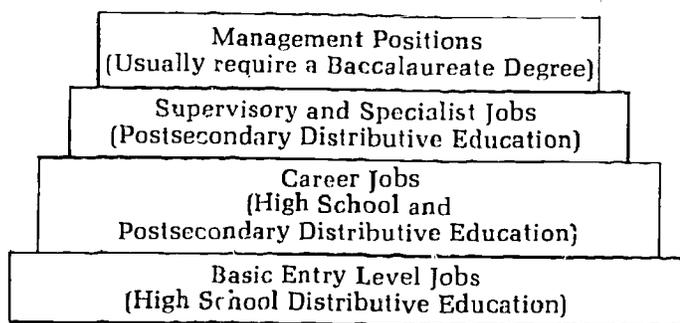
Ordinarily, the postsecondary distributive education program serves students who are past high school age and are available for study on a full-

time basis. The students have a stated career objective in the field of distribution and may have a specific distributive position as a goal. The program is usually more specialized than the high school program, normally leads to an associate degree or a certificate of completion, and prepares the student for employment at the middle-management level.

The distributive education curriculum may be directed toward preparatory instruction, in which students generally enroll on a full-time basis to prepare for gainful employment in a distributive occupation. The curriculum for preparatory instruction may be classified as *basic job curriculum*, generally offered at the high school level; as *career development curriculum*, offered at the high school and postsecondary levels; or as a *specialist job curriculum*, at the postsecondary level. Each of these corresponds to a level of employment responsibility and is identified with the degree of competency needed in a specific distributive occupation.

Supplementary instruction in the distributive education program is available for those wishing to refresh and update competencies needed in their employment and for those seeking new and

specialized competencies necessary to continuing employment or promotional opportunities. Such training is offered in updating courses and in advancement curriculums for employed persons, who usually attend classes on a part-time schedule. Individual courses may be offered to meet an immediate need. For example, sales training for persons employed on a temporary basis during the Christmas season or programs of instruction comprised of a number of courses in a series may be offered to develop a higher degree of competency in a given area such as sales management.



Levels of Employment in Marketing and Distribution

Figure 1

The adult distributive education programs are designed to prepare individuals for vertical advancement through the employment hierarchy, such as from bank teller to bank cashier; for horizontal transfer within an employment level, such as from buyer of men's furnishings to buyer of women's ready-to-wear; and for continuous upgrading of competencies in a particular job classification. Each element is tailored to meet the individual's needs, abilities, and interests. Thus, distributive instruction for adults provides a complete range of learning opportunities extending from short courses for special or urgent needs to comprehensive curriculums covering a period of several years.

Trends in Adult Distributive Education

Prior to the passage of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, distributive education programs for adults were limited to supplementary education in which upgrading and refresher courses were made available to adults who were already employed. The 1963 Act removed the restrictions from the adult distributive education program as it provided vocational education for persons of all ages regardless of their employment status. In revoking current employment as a criterion for enrollment,

the Act mandated preparatory instruction for adults wherein basic job competencies could be developed.

Since that time, there has been a marked increase in the number of preparatory programs offered for adults. The enrollment in adult distributive education has increased substantially in the past eight years, as has the number of course offerings in supplementary instruction. Currently, preparatory and supplementary instructional classes for adults constitute approximately 55 percent of all distributive education enrollments. The major portion of adult enrollments, however, continues to be in refresher, updating, or developmental classes for persons already employed.

Although programs for adults have been designed primarily around employment opportunities in general marketing, merchandising, retailing, and management, there is a significant increase in attention and efforts given to the design of specialized instructional programs for all major commodity lines. Course offerings are being expanded in food distribution, apparel and accessories, food services, hotel and lodging, real estate, banking and finance, insurance and the other major commodity lines within the marketing and distribution classification.

Summary

Numerous economic and social forces in our society necessitate change not only in the distributive sector of our economy, but in our educational system as well. Technological change and increased utilization of automation, together with changing ownership patterns, increased credit buying, changes in consumer buying habits, and emphasis on service merchandising, mandate an intensification of efforts in the preparation of qualified manpower. One medium through which this may be accomplished is the adult distributive education program.

Distributive education programs for adults are designed to meet the needs of out-of-school youth and adults who are employed, underemployed, or unemployed, but whose circumstances preclude regular full-time school attendance. Instruction is provided for those who wish to enter a distributive occupation, to improve in their present job, to change to a related type of work in distribution, or to open a business of their own. Adult instruction, based on these objectives, constitutes an essential element in the total program concept of distributive education.

Chapter II

Planning and Development

It seems to be clear from all the evidence that adults, even more than children, are interested in the application of what they learn. Adults seem to be more interested in the directions in which their learning is taking them. The motivation of adults, since they engage in most activities from free choice and not by law, is dependent upon their being convinced that progress is being made toward some goal. For all these objectives, evaluation is essential.

J. Roby Kidd, "How Adults Learn"

The goal held in common by adult distributive educators is to help persons obtain, keep, and advance in distributive occupations. The role of the adult distributive educator is to provide instructional offerings for occupation preparation and advancement to a wide range of adults of differing age, background, ability, interest, and need; and he must do this in the most effective and efficient manner possible. This requires managerial expertise in planning, organizing, directing, and con-

trolling the various resources or inputs of the program in a manner that will yield the results and outputs congruent with the objectives to be attained.

Assessment of Need

Adult distributive education programs that have proven successful are staffed by persons who are aware of, and responsive to, the needs and desires of out-of-school youth and adults. Two major sources should be assessed in determining the demand for an adult distributive education program and the need for specific instructional offerings:

1. The prospective adult learners. In an assessment of the characteristics, interests, and occupational needs of this group, such items as the following may be included:

- a. How many persons in the community are unemployed or underemployed? Of those, how many are interested in preparing for employment in a distributive occupation?
- b. How many prospective adult learners can be identified as "disadvantaged" or "handicapped"? What is the nature of the special need or handicap?
- c. What level of proficiency have the adults attained in basic skill development and/or

- d. How many adults currently employed in a distributive occupation are interested in supplementary instruction to upgrade their employment competencies and/or to advance themselves in their chosen career?
- e. What are the unique needs of the prospective adult learners?
- f. What are the major occupational interests of the prospective adult learners?
- g. What unique characteristics or problems of the prospective adult learner would discourage their enrolling or would hinder their succeeding in an adult distributive education program?

2. The business community/employer clientele. As the major objective of distributive education is to prepare individuals for gainful employment in distributive occupations, attention must be given to the employment needs and requirements in the business community. Priority may be given to programs of instruction developed in occupational areas in which employment demand is high and is projected to continue or increase in importance. Careful consideration must be given to the specific requirements, duties, and responsibilities inherent in the distributive occupations if the adult learner

is to be successfully employed upon completion of the program.

Such information as the following is required in making this assessment:

- a. What are the major employment trends in the distributive occupations in the business community? in the area? in the state? in the region? in the nation?
- b. In what specific distributive occupations has demand consistently exceeded the supply of qualified applicants?
- c. What are the projections for future employment in the distributive occupations as affected by population shifts, new industries moving into the community, and other factors?
- d. What is the rate of employee turnover in the distributive occupations?
- e. To what extent are excessive business expenses attributed to inefficiency of currently employed distributive personnel?
- f. What percentage of the operating budget of most businesses is allocated to the costs of training distributive personnel?
- g. To what extent can adult distributive education assume the responsibility for em-

ployee training and to what degree would the training costs be reduced?

- h. What are the specific requirements for employment in the distributive occupations? What are the duties? Responsibilities? Tasks?

In some instances, conflict of interests and needs may appear in the assessment process. One source provides "learner-centered" data, while the latter is a "job-centered" analysis. When examined more closely, however, what appears to be a conflict is often the same concern or need expressed differently because of the different vantage points and perspectives of the persons involved. It is the role of the adult distributive educator to interpret the assessment findings, ascertain the actual differences, and plan the program in such a manner as will effectively meet the unique and mutual needs of both groups.

The adult distributive educator must rely heavily upon community, social, and professional associations in identifying the needs of potential learners as well as the needs of the business community. Active cooperation of employers as well as potential employees is required.

Organizations such as the National Alliance for

Business, state and national welfare agencies, state and national employment agencies, the United States Office of Economic Opportunity, and others can assist in the identification of adults with special social and economic needs.

In determining the employment demands and needs of the business community, such agencies and groups as the following can provide helpful assistance:

1. Merchants and trade associations
2. Better Business Bureaus
3. Chambers of Commerce
4. State departments of commerce
5. Professional sales and marketing groups
6. Small Business Administration
7. Central offices of chain organizations
8. Owner/managers of independent business firms
9. Employee groups
10. Former students.

An accurate, continuous assessment of these factors will determine the broad structure of the adult distributive education program, its role, purposes, and general objectives; and it will enable the adult distributive educator to identify the inputs and resources required to assure program effectiveness.

Advisory Committees

An active advisory committee is an essential component in the adult distributive education program. Besides assisting in the assessment of employment demand and educational needs, advisory committees can provide pertinent advice as to course objectives, course content, and appropriate sequence of instruction. They may recommend instructors for specific classes, special guest speakers, and prospective adult learners who may be in their employ. The advisory committee may not only recommend needed resources, but, in many instances, may actually provide or make available excellent instructional materials, equipment, and facilities. Also, the committee can play a vital role in the evaluation of the program's effectiveness.

Depending upon the size of the local community, educational policy, and the scope of the adult distributive education program, the advisory committee may be general in nature and serve the entire spectrum of the distributive classification. In other instances, a number of specialized advisory committees may be established, each serving the unique needs of an individual program of instruction, e.g., insurance, banking and finance, or real

estate. Where feasible, the latter practice is recommended, as the committee members possess the specialized occupational expertise which will more adequately insure relativity and program effectiveness.

The advisory committee should be composed of members whose background and experience are representative of the distributive occupations to be served. Managers and supervisors holding middle-level positions should be included, as well as entry-level employees and former students. The members should be respected, recognized experts in marketing and distribution who can speak for their particular field as well as for the community.

Typically, the advisory committees have from five to nine members with the adult distributive educator as an ex officio member. Committee appointments vary in length depending upon the nature and purpose of the specific committee. Appointments to general advisory committees may be for a three-year term with rotation of appointments so that only one-third of the membership is replaced each year. Specialized committee appointments may be made for an indefinite period of time or until the specific purpose of the committee has been served.

Staffing Patterns in Adult Distributive Education

State Level

The staffing pattern of the adult distributive education program at the state level varies. Some states provide staff consultants who are responsible solely for the supervision of the adult distributive education program in their respective states. Others charge their entire distributive education staff with the responsibility of supervising the adult distributive education program and for providing consultative assistance to local educational units as one part of their total responsibility. In still other instances, states provide for itinerant instructors on their immediate staff. These persons usually have no supervisory authority, but instead provide field services in locations where it would not otherwise be possible to bring them.

Regardless of the staffing pattern utilized within any given state, it is of utmost importance that the state supervisor make budgetary provisions for the adult distributive education program, and that a person or persons be given the specific responsibility of providing consultative assistance to the local educational units in planning, developing, and

evaluating the adult distributive education program.

Local Level

Local staffing patterns are as diverse as those found on the state level. In many of the large metropolitan areas, an *adult distributive education supervisor* is provided on the county staff to supervise and direct the program. Some counties provide a *distributive education supervisor* with a staff of assistants, one or more of whom is given the responsibility of supervising the adult distributive education program while the others devote their attention to the secondary programs.

Many of the large cities throughout the country have formed their own city school system. In these locales, a city supervisor of adult distributive education may be provided.

A relatively new concept in educational institutions—and one which is rapidly expanding—is the area vocational education center, which may provide vocational programs of instruction to persons across several school districts. These centers may be separate institutions unto themselves, or they may constitute the vocational department of a community or junior college. A distributive education supervisor or an adult distributive educa-

tion supervisor is often found on the staff in these educational centers.

Acceptance of the total program concept in distributive education means that one has a belief in the importance of the adult distributive education program. All personnel involved with distributive education at any level of instruction—including the high school teacher-coordinators, the post-secondary instructors, and the community or junior college teacher-coordinators—have a responsibility toward enhancing the effectiveness of the adult program. Active involvement in the adult distributive education program can enhance the confidence placed in a local teacher-coordinator or instructor, and can portray him in his business community as an authority in distribution and as the one responsible for seeing that the community keeps abreast of the growth in the field of distribution.

The local teacher-coordinator is aware of the employment patterns in the community, and is in an excellent position to help determine training needs. The business community gains more confidence in the coordinator's ability and in his program when he shows his desire to be of assistance in establishing programs which will directly benefit the adult employees in his area.

The responsibilities of the local teacher-coordinator in the adult distributive education program may be outlined as follows:

1. To convey the breadth and scope of the total distributive education program to the students in the classroom and to the businessmen during coordination visits
2. To become alert to and anticipate possible training needs in the local community and either investigate the situation further, with the purpose of stimulating a program, or convey this need and interest to the person responsible for the adult distributive education program in the area
3. To publicize the total program concept of distributive education through all available media
4. To promote and assist in surveys to determine the educational needs of the occupations in distribution
5. To encourage, initiate, and assist in carrying out research projects in the areas of distribution
6. To work with advisory committees in long-range planning for adult distributive education programs.

The Instructional Staff

Classes for adults in distributive education may be taught by any of the following: (a) specialists employed on either a full-time or part-time basis by the state, (b) local instructors employed on a full-time basis, (c) high school or postsecondary teacher-coordinators, or (d) part-time instructors employed by the local school system on an hourly or per-session basis.

Selection of Instructors

In locating prospective instructors qualified in the field in which they are to offer instruction, consideration should be given to local business establishments having persons in their employ who are thoroughly familiar with their particular line of work and who are vocationally competent to conduct classes. The adult distributive educator must seek out prospective instructors and not wait for them to come to him.

It has already been said that, as a major factor in the development and strengthening of the program, the problem of securing well-qualified instructors is one for the advisory committee's consideration. Full use should be made of the broad experience of this group, representing as it does a cross section of business, civic organizations, and

trade groups. Care must be taken to maintain the standards that have been set for employment. To do otherwise is to invite serious instructional problems.

It cannot be taken for granted that the individual suggested will necessarily want to teach. A number of appeals can be made in talking with a prospective instructor, such as the prestige that comes from teaching, the opportunity to meet people in business and to gain new ideas, and the personal satisfaction that comes from teaching and rendering a public service.

To be successful in teaching adults, the instructor must have the social and occupational experience which will qualify him as an expert in the field. He should be in good standing in the community, should be an emotionally mature person, and should have the respect of the business leaders in the community. He should also have the type of outgoing personality that will encourage the class members to respond, and the ability to evoke enthusiasm and initiative on the part of the adult learners.

Preparation of Instructors

It is recommended that an educational program be established to familiarize prospective instructors

with teaching techniques which would enable them to present subject matter in the most effective way to groups of adults. This educational program may consist of upgrading instruction for those with prior teaching experience. It may serve as a refresher for those who have been away from the teaching situation for some time, or who need to improve some special phase of their teaching.

Most of the preparation of adult instructors will be on an individual basis to meet individual need. Some instruction will be given before the individual starts to teach; the remainder will include on-the-job instruction carried on during the instructor's period of employment. Group instruction, however, has the advantage of permitting the pooling of experiences which tends to weld the members into a professional group. Regardless of the method used, the program should include orientation to the distributive education program, the learning process of adults, techniques of teaching adults, evaluation, application, and practice.

In conducting this program, the adult distributive educator should be aware of the following precautions:

1. Avoid too technical terminology.
2. Adapt the content to the time available.

3. Make the training specific.
4. Encourage learner participation.
5. Use visual aids.
6. Provide for further study.

Recognition of the importance of instructor preparation is the first essential. Acceptance of the responsibility for this task by the adult distributive educator is next. Appreciation of what that preparation entails is the third, for without it a superficial job is likely to be done.

The preparation of the adult instructors is a responsibility that can be shared by the local educational agency, the state department of education, and the teacher education institution. Distributive education personnel may need only a short time to adapt their public school teaching techniques to the unique needs of adults. Persons who have never taught before, or who have taught only on a limited basis, may need a more extensive preparatory program.

One of the most effective techniques which can be used in the program is to teach one lesson to the potential adult instructors as they in turn would be expected to teach it to their class. After the lesson has been completed, the theories of learning, the plan for teaching, the teaching techniques

should be closely examined. Following this discussion, the potential instructor should reverse the roles and teach the lesson to the adult distributive educator. A second discussion period should follow this practice teaching session.

It may also be desirable for the prospective instructor to observe the "expert" teaching the course, and gradually to increase his participation until he himself is actually doing the teaching. The length of the preparation program, and the time and expense devoted to it, however, should be proportionate to the length of the course or program to be offered.

Financial Resources

The adult distributive education program has three primary sources of financial support: (a) course fees, (b) local funds, (c) state funds (from state and federal vocational education appropriations).

Local and state policies will frequently establish priorities among these three sources. For example, in some communities an attempt is made to keep course fees at a level which does not deny enrollment to people with limited financial resources. If this philosophy exists, local and state funds will provide the major portion of financial support for

the program. On the other hand, many adult educators have reported that the more the adult involves himself through fees and participation, the greater is his return. In addition, with a monetary investment in the program, the adult is more likely to expect the best and to appreciate it more.

It is recommended that a budget be developed for each course or program of instruction in order to determine the total cost of the adult distributive education program. All consumable supplies, including handout materials, instructional materials, and promotional materials or expenses used by the class members and the instructors, should be included in the budget. After determining the availability of funds from the local and state educational agencies, the adult distributive educator may elect to prorate any excess costs among the class members by charging a nominal registration fee. Travel and/or honorariums for consultants may be either reimbursed by the local educational units or included in the registration fee, depending upon local regulations.

Chapter III

Implementation and Evaluation

Why shouldn't every person have the opportunity to obtain the education our society has failed to provide him as a child and youth? What right do we have to deny any citizen the opportunity for learning, irrespective of his age, past mistakes, or indiscretions?

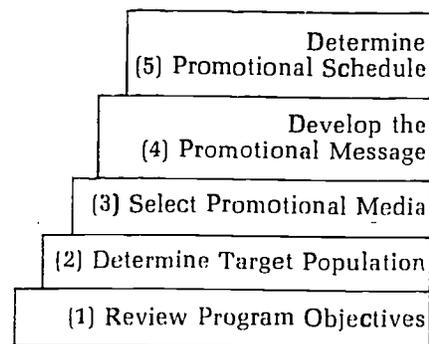
Robert Finch

Promotion

Promotional activities and procedures play an important role in the implementation of adult distributive education. Even though an instructional program may be critically needed by members of the business community, it may fail to attract those persons for whom the program was designed. In an ideal situation, the class will consist of only those who need and can profit from the instruction. Too, it is necessary to attract at least the minimum number of adults to hold the class. The minimum number of registrants will usually vary according to the cost of instruction,

classroom size, and local administrative policy.

Figure 2 outlines five important steps which should be followed when promoting an instructional program. The first step, review of program objectives, will determine the tenor of the entire promotional effort. These objectives will directly influence the direction, scope, and intensity of communication to the potential enrollees. If specific objectives are not available in written form, it will be impossible to develop effective promotion.



Steps in Developing Effective Promotion

Figure 2

The review of program objectives sets the stage for the next step, that of determining the target population. In most cases, the goal is to attract a homogeneous class membership. Those who enroll should have common educational needs and these needs should be directly related to the program objectives. If the objectives are carefully outlined in the promotional literature, there will be less risk of attracting enrollees who will not benefit from the instruction.

Once the target population has been identified, it is necessary to select the most appropriate promotional vehicle to reach this group. The following promotional methods, used singly or in combination, should be considered:

1. *Direct mail*—This is one of the most effective media available to publicize an adult distributive education course. The direct mail approach has the initial advantage of reaching a specific group of people. The risk of attracting enrollees who cannot benefit from the instruction is minimized.

Business owners, managers, and employees are accustomed to direct mail communication and will usually take time to review correspondence which is personalized. In the final analysis, direct mail may be the most economical means available, even

though there is some expense for printing, postage, and other supplies.

2. *Personal contact*—A personal visit or telephone call has the important advantage of allowing for two-way communication. People frequently like to ask questions about course offerings before making a commitment. Personal contact can serve as a follow-up to direct mail correspondence or other forms of promotion.

3. *Newspaper*—This is an inexpensive and effective method of stimulating interest in adult education. A well-written news story, accompanied by a picture, if possible, will reach a large audience in most communities. Sometimes it is possible to publish several news articles which describe various phases of the instructional program, from initial planning and first-night enrollment through graduation.

4. *Radio and television*—The local radio and television stations have a public service commitment to the community and will usually broadcast information about local adult education offerings without charge. A spot announcement or an interview with someone who is administering a course can be very effective.

5. *Brochure*—Most public school adult education

programs publish a printed schedule of course offerings and distribute it to individual families and business firms throughout the community. Although this medium is usually more effective for promotion of general interest courses, it should not be overlooked as a supplement to the total effort.

6. *Chamber of Commerce Publications*—The local Chamber of Commerce is usually anxious to publicize educational programs which will be of interest to the membership. School officials should not hesitate to seek their support. Most Chamber of Commerce offices publish a weekly or monthly newsletter; a short announcement in this publication may be very effective in developing interest in a specific course. In special cases, this agency may agree to sponsor a direct mail promotional effort.

The type of promotional message used to announce a specific adult instructional program will depend, in part, upon the media selected to communicate this message. An effective message is both interesting and informative. It will be interesting if it contains information related directly to the needs of the target population. The promotional letter which appears in Appendix A is calculated to develop a high degree of interest and motivate immediate action by the receiver.

An informative promotional message is one which answers most or all of the basic questions which might be raised by the recipient. The following information would be provided in most cases: (a) Objectives of the instructional program, (b) Name and qualifications of the instructor, (c) Starting date, time, and length of course, (d) Major topics to be covered, (e) Location of meeting place, (f) Cost of instruction and materials, (g) Enrollee qualifications, and (h) Registration procedures.

The news release which appears in Appendix B provides the information outlined above. The format used for this release can be adapted to a wide range of adult distributive education instructional programs.

Once the promotional message is prepared, it is necessary to consider the promotional schedule. The timing of promotional activities is very important. People employed by business and industry are generally quite busy and need advance notice in order to make arrangements to attend. A good rule of thumb is to announce the instructional program at least two weeks in advance of the starting date. Problems can arise if the message reaches the target population too early. Potential enrollees may not feel any urgency to enroll, and

with the passing of time, they are apt to forget about the program.

It is always wise to request advance registration in the promotional message. This approach has two important advantages. First, the person who administers the program has an opportunity to screen out persons who should not enroll. It was mentioned earlier that efforts should be made to attract a homogeneous class membership made up of persons who need and can benefit from the instruction. Secondly, class size can be controlled, thereby avoiding a situation where the class becomes too large. Advance registration will also lessen the possibility of canceling a class because of insufficient enrollment. If enrollment is less than anticipated, the promotional effort can be intensified.

The promotional activities and procedures outlined thus far will usually need some refinement if the instructional program is designed to serve out-of-school youth and adults with special needs. Participants at the Third National Adult Distributive Education Conference made the following suggestions:

1. Members of this population group do not have frequent contact with newspapers, television and

radio programs, and other common sources of information. In some cases, they will not have a telephone. Therefore, we must place greater emphasis upon personal contact.

2. The promotional cost per enrollee will usually be greater for this population group. The sponsoring agency should anticipate this factor and consider the use of special funds which may be available from government agencies, civic organizations, and other sources.

3. Members of this population group may be skeptical of educational programs sponsored by public schools and for this reason, the promotional effort may need to be broader in scope and made more intensive.

4. Many public agencies have frequent contact with this target population. We should enlist their support in recruiting students.

Scheduling

Several important decisions must be made when scheduling adult distributive education instructional programs. During the initial planning stages, one must determine the number of hours of instruction needed to accomplish the objectives of the program. Haines and Mason offer the following suggestions:

The principle factors in determining the length of an adult course are the needs of the students and the demands of the subject matter to be taught. An adult education program must use courses of varying lengths if a complete vocational program is to be provided.

These guidelines preclude the arbitrary determination of course length without regard for course objectives and student need. A shoplifting prevention clinic, for example, may require no more than two or three hours of intensive instruction, while a management development program might extend over several months or years.

The length of each class meeting will usually range from one to three hours. Rarely will an adult class exceed three hours. It is a good practice to plan one or two breaks during long class sessions.

In the past, adult education was offered primarily in the evening. In fact, the term "evening school" was often used as a synonym for the adult education program. Today we recognize the importance of offering instruction at the time that is most convenient for the enrollee. Some classes will be better attended if they are held in the morning; others should definitely be held in the afternoon. The final decision should be made by those who plan the program in conjunction with the persons

who are being served by the program.

Throughout the year, there are certain periods which should be avoided by those who schedule adult courses. An instructional program designed specifically for retail store personnel would likely fail if held during a period of peak retail activity. Some salesmen sell seasonal products and services; instruction must therefore be scheduled for these people when they have the time to attend regularly.

A comprehensive adult distributive education program will often encompass a series of related courses leading to a certificate or diploma. Those who plan and administer this type of instructional program need to be concerned with both the timing and the sequence of course offerings. Persons who enroll in these programs need assurance that individual courses will be available on a regular basis and at a time which is convenient. Long range planning will greatly improve the potential success of such programs.

The scheduling of adult courses, in the final analysis, must be approached systematically. The goal of maintaining flexibility in program implementation should not overshadow the need for deliberate planning.

Instructional Facilities

The extreme diversity of instructional offerings encompassed by adult distributive education precludes the development of rigid guidelines for instructional facilities. Each program of instruction must be assessed independently, and appropriate facilities will necessarily depend upon the occupational area being served, and the objectives sought.

The location of the classroom and the way in which the room is equipped are two important variables in the selection of adult education facilities. Decisions made regarding these areas should be based on accepted principles of adult education, not on administrative expediency. The meeting place should be easily accessible to potential enrollees. In large metropolitan areas, nearness to public transportation may be an important consideration. When instruction is extended to out-of-school youth and adults with special needs, classes may be better attended if held in areas where these persons live.

The instructional setting for adult distributive education should not be limited to public school classrooms and instructional laboratories. In some cases, classes may be held close to the center of business activity, whether this be a downtown

business district or a shopping center. Many business establishments, e.g., commercial banks, savings and loan institutions, and public utility firms, have meeting rooms which are available as a public service. Those who administer adult education should consider these and other classrooms located throughout the community.

The way in which a classroom is equipped can help create a favorable mental and emotional feeling toward the instructional program. Generally speaking, any physical discomfort is distracting to the student. The meeting place should feature good lighting, adequate ventilation, temperature control, and flexible seating arrangements. Ideally, adult learners should be seated at tables and chairs which can be moved to facilitate small and large group discussion. Fixed seating will place serious limitations upon the inventory of instructional methods available to adult instructors.

The use of audio-visual aids as a supplement to other instructional methods is strongly recommended. This means that the classroom should be designed and equipped to facilitate the use of the overhead projector, film strip projector, and other commonly used types of instructional equipment. This equipment should be in good working order and readily available to the instructor.

Adult learners usually seek instruction on a voluntary basis, so the instructor has the initial advantage of serving persons who are enthusiastic about learning. Instructional facilities should be carefully selected in order to sustain this positive attitude and insure the existence of a good climate for learning. The extra time devoted to this area will reap large dividends in terms of class members' initial and continued attendance and receptivity to learning.

Instructional Techniques and Materials

Paul L. Essert has noted that the educational process among adults is a distributive educational operation. This viewpoint is shared by most adult educators. There are certain instructional techniques and materials which have a unique role to play in adult distributive education, and the instructional staff must be prepared to use them in the most efficient manner.

The adult learner should be viewed as a primary teaching resource. Generally, he has a good foundation of past experience upon which to base new learnings. He has lived longer, faced more problems, and accumulated more experiences than his youthful counterpart. This means that the adult

instructor can take advantage of the psychological principle which states that new learnings can be acquired more easily when they are related to past experience. These past experiences will also frequently be of value to other class members. Adult instructors should, therefore, place considerable emphasis upon teaching techniques which tap the experience of the adult learner.

Those who plan, administer, or teach adult distributive education courses should be aware of the need to select instructional materials and learning activities which are appropriate for the type of adult learner being served. This is not an easy task when one considers the wide range of course offerings which may be included in a comprehensive adult distributive education program. The following variables must be considered in the selection and/or development of instructional materials and learning activities:

1. Competencies to be developed during the course
2. Level of education, work experience, aptitude, and ability possessed by the learners
3. Appropriate sequence of instruction to assure development of identified competencies

4. Length of time required to develop competencies
5. Teaching methods, strategies, and techniques to be utilized
6. Evaluative criteria to be used in measuring the degree of accomplishment by each learner.

Adults are quick to reject instructional materials and learning activities which appear to have little application in the real business world. They generally require experiences that are conducive to immediate practical application.

The instructor has an obligation to diagnose each adult learner's motives in the development of the instructional program. It is important that every person realize a sense of accomplishment at each class meeting. The instructor should develop short-term achievable goals which can be reached during each session.

Educational psychologists define learning as a change in behavior. Furthermore, this change in behavior should occur in three distinct areas:

1. Cognitive (knowledge of information, facts, concepts, and the ability to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate)
2. Affective (attitudes, feelings, and values)

3. Psychomotor (muscular action, skill, and dexterity).

Learning then, in the full sense of the word, is a three-dimensional activity. It requires sublearnings in each of the above areas. Learning in any one of these areas does not guarantee learning in the other two. For example, it cannot be assumed that rote memorization of facts will result in improved skill or a change in attitude.

It is important to maintain some degree of balance among the three sublearning areas. This is not to suggest that equal time be devoted to changing the adult learner's attitude and only a moderate amount of time to the psychomotor and knowledge areas. Each learning situation is unique and requires careful planning on the part of the instructor. Also, it must be recognized that certain teaching techniques are more appropriate in effecting a change in one of the three sublearning areas than in others. The following are some suggestions:

1. Cognitive
 - a. Programmed instruction
 - b. Lecture
 - c. Reading assignment
 - d. Worksheets
 - e. Case problems.

2. Affective
 - a. Role playing
 - b. Field interviews
 - c. Guest speakers
 - d. Group discussion
 - e. Instructor's personal example.
3. Psychomotor
 - a. Practice and drill
 - b. Demonstrations
 - c. On-the-job training
 - d. Simulated performance.

It should be noted that in some situations, a combination of the above teaching techniques should be used to bring about a positive change in one of the sublearning areas.

Malcolm S. Knowles has stated that participation by the learner in an active role is the dominating concept underlying the new adult education methodology. To achieve a maximum involvement by class members, the instructor should use a variety of "participating" teaching techniques:

1. *Programmed instruction*—This method of instruction is especially effective when it is necessary to present introductory material of a routine nature. These materials are well suited for a group of adult learners with diverse abilities; they indi-

vidualize instruction so each person can progress at his own rate. Frequently, the sponsoring agency will need to schedule a limited number of group meetings to provide orientation and develop unity of purpose.

2. *The penetrating question*—This is the oldest, yet one of the most effective ways of promoting individual and group involvement. Effective questions seldom develop spontaneously; they need to be carefully planned prior to class time and logically integrated into the instructor's presentation.

3. *Role playing*—Role playing is especially well suited to exploring situations in which the reactions and feelings of individuals are involved. This instructional technique will be effective only when it is used thoughtfully and appropriately. The instructor should be familiar with all of the steps which must be taken to create a successful role-playing situation.

4. *Group discussion*—One of the principal techniques of getting class participation is involvement by discussion. Effective group discussion is the result of advanced planning and regard for proven discussion techniques.

5. *Small group discussion*—By dividing the class

into small groups, it is possible to realize nearly 100 percent participation by class members; this is a worthwhile goal in adult education because each person should have the opportunity to express his views and engage in meaningful dialogue with fellow class members.

6. *Dyad*—This is a variation of the small group discussion techniques. Class members are divided into groups of two persons each. One adult learner may assume the role of teacher, the other that of student, in a skill-building situation. One person may take the "pro" and the other the "con" during the discussion of a problem or issue.

7. *Triad*—A triad is used in the same manner as the dyad except the class participants are divided into groups of three persons each.

8. *Case problems*—Case problems can be very effective because they present concrete situations, either actual or hypothetical, with which the group can identify.

9. *Brainstorming*—Participants are encouraged to list for a period of time (five to ten minutes) all the ideas that come to their minds regarding some problem or topic of interest. Each class member is encouraged to offer as many ideas as possible, without regard to the practicality of their sug-

gestions. Critical appraisal of these suggestions comes during the post-brainstorming session.

10. *Field interview*—The adult learner is asked to interview (outside the classroom) a person or a group of persons who can supply information relative to a problem or issue. This type of out-of-class assignment can be used to supplement classroom instruction.

Educational research has demonstrated that adults learn faster and retain new learnings longer when information reaches them through more than one sensory channel. The following conclusion was reached by Bodenhamer upon completion of his study of adult learners:

Adult audiences presented with an informative speech supplemented with visual aids learned significantly more, as measured by immediate recall, than did adult audiences presented the same informative speech without visual aids.

Every instructor should consider the use of the overhead projector, flipchart, slide projector, flannel board, video tapes, and illustrated handout to heighten the net impact of the lecture and other verbal exposition. Some of the more common educational advantages attributed to audio-visual

aids are listed below:

1. They obtain and hold the attention of almost every person in the group.
2. They stimulate interest in voluntary learning.
3. They facilitate attitude and behavioral changes.
4. They illustrate inaccessible presentations, materials, etc.
5. They provide objectivity in the study of technical or controversial subject matter.

Although the adult learner's past experience is usually viewed as a positive factor in adult education, it should be remembered that these same experiences may cause the adult to develop some fixed patterns of thought which can serve as a barrier to new learnings. In other words, most adult learning will involve unlearning. A special effort should be made to help the adult learner develop more flexible thought patterns. Demonstrations, group discussion, films, and resource speakers may be employed to change fixed attitudes and opinions.

The adult learning atmosphere should be warm, friendly, and above all, free from those forces which threaten the individual learner. If a member

of the class does not feel comfortable in the learning situation established, and if he does not feel accepted by the group, he is apt to drop out. An "adult" learning atmosphere will provide comfort, security, respect, and the right degree of challenge for each individual person.

The adult instructor must be "person-centered" rather than "subject-centered." Harold Howe II, former U.S. Commissioner of Education, noted that we have traditionally regarded as good teachers those with a good command of the subject they are teaching. He said it is a fairly recent notion that a teacher's primary job is to teach students rather than subjects. This view of teaching is widely accepted by adult educators. In the final analysis, the most effective adult instructor will be student-centered, yet possess a high degree of competency in the subject area he is teaching.

Evaluation

The most basic goal of program evaluation is program involvement. Systematic evaluation, conducted on a continuous basis, provides information needed to strengthen the adult distributive education program. This information should reflect the degree of progress being made toward prede-

terminated objectives. Thus, if program objectives are clearly defined, the basis for a meaningful evaluation has been predetermined.

E. L. Thorndike once said that whatever exists at all, exists in some quantity and can be measured. This statement should be viewed as a challenge by those who have the responsibility for evaluating educational programs. It should also prompt the program administrator and the instructor to search for the most appropriate evaluative methods and procedures.

Systematic evaluation at the local level is a two-dimensional effort involving the assessment of ends as well as means. It is important to evaluate the ends, i.e., whether or not the objectives were attained and to what degree of success, as well as the means, i.e., the purpose and procedures which were implemented to lead to the attainment of the objectives. For the evaluation process to be meaningful and for the findings to be usable, it is imperative that all persons concerned with the program be involved in the evaluation process. This includes the program administrator, the adult instructor, the learners, and the employer clientele.

The following steps should be taken in evaluating an educational program:

1. State the objectives in specific terms so that evidence of the degree to which objectives are being achieved can be obtained.
2. Secure evidence of the degree to which objectives are being achieved.
3. Secure facts about what is being done to achieve the objectives.
4. Develop ideas about what factors might be helping or hindering the achievement of objectives.
5. Secure evidence for or against these ideas.
6. On the basis of the evidence obtained, revise the ideas about what is helping or hindering the achievement of objectives.
7. Develop and try out methods of remedying weaknesses in the program.

There are three types of program evaluation data which should be collected in the process:

1. *Inputs*—Part of the evaluation process is a comparison of the description of the intended inputs with a description of the actual input to degree of congruence. These inputs include the learners, the instructors, the administrators, and the materials.

2. *Transaction*—The transactions include those

activities that produce changes in the learner's knowledge, skills, and attitudes to achieve the educational objectives.

3. *Outcomes*—The more immediate stage of outcomes describes the direct changes that have taken place in the learner's knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The long-range outcomes may be stated in terms of benefits to the community. One major aspect of the evaluation process is to ascertain the extent of congruence between the intended outcomes and the observed outcomes, or the degree to which the objectives have been achieved.

A combination of the following evaluation techniques should be implemented in assessing the effectiveness of a given adult distributive education program:

1. *Evidence of change in people served*—The success of an adult distributive education program is measurable, to a very large degree, by the changes which have taken place in the people served. Specifically, an evaluation must be made to measure how far the learner has progressed from where he was at the beginning to where he is at the end of the course, and the degree of congruence between program objectives and his achievement as a learner. This evidence may be

obtained through one or more of the following procedures:

- a. A diagnostic instrument administered at the beginning and at the conclusion of the course to provide an objective measure of progress
- b. A demonstration of skill by class members under real or simulated employment conditions
- c. An objective self-appraisal, either oral or written, by the class members. In some instances, changes in behavior may be difficult to measure. Attitudinal changes, such as a greater degree of self-confidence in the adult learner or a more positive attitude toward education, are important outcomes but they may be quite difficult to measure with a diagnostic instrument.

2. *Follow-up of dropouts*—An effort should be made to determine the characteristics of those persons who dropped out of the program before completion and to assess their reasons for leaving. This may reflect the need for change in the sequence of instruction and/or in teaching techniques.

3. *Learner opinionnaire*—An anonymous end-of-the program opinionnaire may be given to the class

to elicit their attitudes, reactions, opinions, and recommendations relative to program objectives, sequence of instruction, teaching techniques, appropriateness of facilities, class schedule, and the instructor's effectiveness. An example of this type of opinionnaire is included in the Appendix.

4. *Follow-up of program graduates*—Within a few weeks following the completion of the program, and again after several months, a follow-up study of the program graduates should be conducted to determine their employment status, their degree of effectiveness and efficiency in job performance, and the personal satisfaction they derive from the job.

5. *Employer clientele analysis*—Adult distributive education is a program of occupational instruction of which the business community is a primary benefactor. If the program is meeting the employment needs of that community, it will receive continued encouragement and support from community members. It is important, therefore, to analyze the employer clientele of the program graduates to determine such factors as the reduction in training costs, the reduction in losses attributed to employee error, increase in sales, and their recommendations for program improvement.

6. *Cost-effectiveness study*—It has been stated earlier that it is important to evaluate the means as well as the ends of an instructional program. It is important, therefore, to conduct a cost-effectiveness study comparing the effectiveness of various teaching techniques in terms of costs, achievement, application, motivation, and the appropriateness of the facilities used in relationship to the accomplishment of the program objectives.

The extent of the evaluation procedures implemented should depend on the importance of making sounder administrative and instructional decisions. There must be a balance between the costs of the evaluation and the benefits received.

Appendices

Appendix A

Sample Promotional Letter

Dear Mr. Johnson:

How important is the human element in the operation of your business? Although such factors as employee morale, employee motivation, and employee loyalty are difficult to measure, they do influence the profit and loss statement of every business. In fact, authorities in the field of human relations say millions of dollars are lost each year because of various types of human relations problems.

Employee relations in any business are usually good or bad depending upon the attitude of those who hold supervisory positions. To familiarize supervisory personnel with the major principles of supervision, the Distributive Education Division at Newman Community College is offering a special adult D.E. course. The enclosed news release provides complete details.

For additional information, please contact Mr. Tom Reed, Coordinator of Distributive Education at the Newman Community College. If you desire to

enroll today, please complete the enclosed card and return it with your enrollment fee.

Sincerely,

Appendix B

News Release

COURSE TITLE:

Principles of Supervision

SPONSOR:

Distributive Education

Division

Newman Community College

OBJECTIVES:

1. To review the basic principles of supervision and their application in a retail store setting
2. To provide an opportunity to improve leadership skills

TOPICS:

1. Understanding and motivating people
2. Employee evaluation
3. What every supervisor should know about training
4. How to handle gripes, complaints, and grievances

5. Delegation—or how to get greater results through people
6. Maintaining discipline

INSTRUCTOR:

The instructor will be Mr. Jones, personnel manager for the Mason Department Store. Mr. Jones has held his present position for ten years. During this period he has conducted numerous in-store training programs in the areas of sales, supervision, and management. Mr. Jones has taught several adult courses for Newman Community College in the past.

COURSE FEE:

The enrollment fee is \$10.00, which includes the cost of instruction, classroom supplies, and all reading materials.

REQUIREMENTS OF ENROLLEES:

The course is designed for owners, managers, and supervisors employed in the field of retailing. Each enrollee must currently perform su-

pervisory duties as a part of his regular work.

DATE:

The class will meet each Wednesday evening from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. for six weeks beginning January 19, in Room 42 at Newman Community College.

CLASS SIZE:

Enrollment is limited to 20 persons.

REGISTRATION:

To register, call Mr. Tom Reed, Coordinator of Distributive Education at Newman Community College (266-3829) or return the registration card along with the registration fee.

REFRESHMENTS:

Coffee will be served at each class meeting.

Appendix C

*Student Opinionnaire
Evaluation Form*

Please complete the following form in detail. It will serve as a means of evaluating this instruc-

tional program and as a guide for planning future classes.

I. *Class Organization and Scheduling*

For this subject, do you think the number of sessions was:

Sufficient _____ Too few _____

Too many _____

Would you prefer:

Daily sessions _____ Weekly sessions _____

Morning _____ Evening _____

Comments _____

II. *Course Content*

Indicate the most important things which you gained from this course: _____

Was the course as informative and helpful as you had expected?

Yes _____ No _____

If not, how did it differ from your expectations? _____

III. *Instruction*

Was the instruction: Well organized _____

Satisfactory _____

In need of improvement _____

Was the presentation: Interesting _____

In need of improvement _____

Boring _____

What changes would you suggest? _____

Did you feel the instructor was well qualified _____ Sufficiently qualified _____

Needs more background experience _____

Comments _____

IV. *Future Classes*

Are you interested in attending future classes?

Yes _____ No _____

If your answer is yes, please describe the instructional program you would like to attend: _____

Rating Scale for
Adult Distributive and Office Education Classes

NAME OF CLASS

DATE

CITY

INSTRUCTOR

1. How well is the course organized?
 a. Unorganized; sometimes incoherent
 b. Poorly organized in spots
 c. Fairly well organized
 d. Good organization
 e. Unusually well organized
2. To what extent are practical applications of the course mentioned?
 a. No practical applications given
 b. Few practical applications given
 c. Practical applications often mentioned
 d. Practical applications stressed
 e. Practical applications continually given

3. As an over-all rating, the course was
 a. Poor
 b. Fair
 c. Average
 d. Good
 e. Excellent
4. Do you feel that any part of the course should be eliminated?
 a. Yes
 b. No
If yes, please indicate which part by naming sessions subject
5. Should some other topic have been discussed or given study?
 a. Yes
 b. No
If yes, please indicate by name or an idea
6. Would you have preferred less lecture material and more discussion—or vice versa? Or do you believe there was a sufficient amount of each?
 a. Less lecture material and more discussion
 b. More lecture material and less discussion
 c. There was a sufficient amount of each

7. Please indicate the two most important things you gained from the adult course.
8. Was the course as informative and helpful as you had expected? If not, how did it differ from your expectations?
____a. Yes
____b. No
9. Discuss your job and things gained in relation to your work.
10. Name the two most interesting things we have done.
11. Name the two most boring things we have done.
12. Other comments you may have:

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