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ABSTRACT

Staff development, one of the nine main functions in personnel management, is not an isolated function. Administrators with whom the ultimate responsibility for personnel management rests, determine the extent to which the personnel and staff development specialists can be utilized. The staff development specialist has three major roles, as identified by Leonard Nadler in "Developing Human Resources": learning specialist, consultant, and administrator. While these roles are largely the same for the personnel specialists responsible for the other personnel management functions, subroles may vary and competencies are necessarily different. Conditions in an organization important in developing effective training programs include several mentions of personnel, programs, and budget. An added condition is a strong, continuous, and well-defined working relationship existing between line managers and staff people responsible for personnel management functions. (SC)

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT TO PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

I am honored to be on your program today for three reasons: First, I recognize that you represent some of the finest and most dedicated professional people this Nation can provide. Your presence here for this personnel management conference indicates something of your leadership ability and your devotion to the sound ideals of Extension education. You are an important group and literally standing in for several thousand fellow Extension workers for whom you provide leadership, support, and assistance.

Second, I am pleased to be with you because of the rich memories it stirs within me. About twenty-five years ago I began my career in the Cooperative Extension Service. It was there and then that I began what has become a deep and abiding interest in the growth and development of people. The staff development and personnel management specialists were my first contacts in Cooperative Extension. It was the induction orientation conducted by staff development leaders that set the framework and laid the foundation for building a career in Extension and a belief in informal adult education.

Third, I want to share with you some thoughts on the important and urgent need for a viable staff development and personnel management effort. Call it staff training, personnel development, research and training,

Remarks by Dr. C. A. Williams, Deputy Administrator, Program and Staff Development, ES-USDA, at Comprehensive Personnel Management Conference, Panama City, Florida, March 21, 1973.

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research and development, human development, or whatever name you find desirable for your location -- the opportunities and potentialities for strengthening Extension programs are great. Dealing with crises and problems of social relations, quality of the environment, and technological obsolescence which deepen around us demands creative innovations, new methods, improved strategies, and relevant technologies. The responsibility for leadership in these areas must rest firmly with those of us who are leaders in personnel and staff development.

I want to speak to you about the relationship of staff development to personnel management. Staff development and personnel management are closely related -- as most of you would probably be quick to agree. But explaining exactly how they are related is a tougher question, one that's not covered in any text books. It's a little like trying to trace your family tree. You may know that John Doe is related to you, but is he your second cousin or your third cousin?

Simply defining staff development and personnel management won't help us much, either, because definitions are so susceptible to argument. And no official definitions have been formulated, since these two fields do not belong to any well-defined, agreed-upon academic discipline.

Maybe the best way to approach the problem is on a functional basis. I see nine main functions involved in personnel management: 1) performance evaluation; 2) recruitment, selection, and placement; 3) manpower forecasting; 4) labor relations; 5) personnel records and reports; 6) employee benefits; 7) wage and salary administration; 8) job descriptions; and 9) staff development.

First, let's look at how the total personnel management job fits into the overall organizational environment. The line manager, of course, is ultimately responsible for all nine of the functions. For many reasons, however, including the varying amounts of staff support available, each manager will carry out these functions in a different way.

Some Extension organizations have an extensive support staff for one or more of these personnel management functions. Others may have only one or two support staff members who are responsible for all nine personnel management functions.

Regardless of staff numbers, however, certain relationships exist--or ought to exist--among these nine functions. Since staff development is our main concern here today, let's use it as a basis for discussing these functional relationships.

Staff development is not carried on in isolation -- separate and apart from Extension's educational programming mission. Neither are the other eight functions. All are interdependent with each other and with the educational programming function. How well one is performed affects the degree to which the others are meaningful and productive.

Take Sam Jones as an example. He is an accountant in your budget department. His performance evaluation shows that he is not doing a satisfactory job because his previous training didn't prepare him to handle the recent changes instituted in your accounting system. Shouldn't this be a guide for what sorts of training may be necessary for Sam and others through the staff development program in the near future?

And then suppose that you foresee a greatly increased need for pesticide specialists on your staff in the next few years to help cope with changing environmental standards. Or you realize that 20 percent of your staff will reach retirement age soon. Does the process stop with the realization of the manpower needs? Of course not. You probably will communicate these needs to those responsible for recruitment, selection, and placement, and for staff development.

These two illustrations amplify the importance of close cooperation and open communication between the personnel specialists and the staff development specialists as they work with line management. How well these two specialists are able to help will depend on how well the personnel management support functions are coordinated and integrated.

The basic responsibilities of the personnel specialist and the staff development specialist are very similar. Those of you in administrative-supervisory positions may have wondered what these responsibilities are, or ought to be. And those in staff support positions may have raised the same questions.

One document presents a clear set of guidelines in response to this question as it pertains to staff development personnel. The 1968 National Policy Statement on Staff Training and Development cites four overall responsibilities:

- to confer with and advise administrators and others on objectives, policies, and procedures for staff training and development in Extension,

--to provide leadership in initiating, planning, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating training for Extension personnel,
--to develop effective processes for informing staff of professional improvement opportunities and for counseling with individual staff members in developing professional improvement opportunities, and
--to serve as a problem-solving consultant to the management of the Extension organization.

Leonard Nadler, in his book entitled "Developing Human Resources," suggests that the human resource (or staff) development specialist has three major roles: learning specialist, consultant, and administrator.

The learning specialist role includes three subroles: instructor, curriculum builder, and methods and materials developer.

A consultant role encompasses four subroles: advocate, expert, stimulator, and change agent.

The administrator has four subroles: professional development of the staff development personnel, supervision of ongoing programs, maintaining relationships with management, and arranging for facilities and finance.

The roles of the personnel specialists responsible for the other eight functions really are not any different from the three major roles of the staff development specialist identified by Nadler. But because the subroles may vary, the competencies needed for a personnel specialist are not the same as those needed for a staff development specialist.

While one may not think of the personnel specialist as a learning specialist, he definitely must have a command of certain specialty areas,

such as performance evaluation; labor relations; recruitment, selection, and placement; manpower forecasting; records and reports; employee benefits; wage and salary administration; and job descriptions.

The personnel specialist will use these competencies in a consultant role with line management. His subroles here would be the same: advocate, expert, stimulator, and change agent.

Those giving leadership to personnel management functions do have an administrative role, which may include developing the competencies of the personnel management staff, supervising personnel management activities; maintaining relationships with management, and arranging for facilities and finance.

The ECOP policy points out nine conditions within an organization which are extremely important in the development of effective training programs. Note the number of times that these conditions mention personnel, programs, and budget. The nine conditions are:

- 1) Administrative support to create an organizational climate in which staff members can grow and develop in their work.
- 2) A budgetary commitment for resources and materials so that training personnel can be creative.
- 3) A recognition of the importance of staff training and development prior to implementation of new programs and/or activities.
- 4) An awareness that persons assigned responsibility in staff training and development should be kept fully informed of

and involved in major program decisions in order to design training programs commensurate with program emphasis or direction.

- 5) Professional titles for training and development personnel which are commensurate with their responsibilities and which help others understand their responsibilities and roles.
- 6) Clearly-defined position descriptions for staff training and development personnel.
- 7) Effective procedures for planning, implementing, and evaluating staff training and development programs.
- 8) A recognition of the significance and role of induction training, inservice training, and graduate study in a total program of staff training and development.
- 9) An awareness of the importance of a total training program which would include a balance between the behavioral sciences and the biological and physical sciences.

I am adding a 10th condition to this list which I believe is extremely important for effective staff development programing:

--A strong, continuous, and well-defined working relationship must exist between the line managers and the staff people responsible for personnel management functions. The larger the staff, the more important this relationship becomes.

One crucial aspect of this relationship needs to be emphasized and clearly understood -- the day-to-day and the ultimate responsibility for all

of these functions rests with the line manager. Support staff are precisely that. While they may give leadership to ideas; advise the line staff on decisions; handle routine procedures and details; help the line managers perform more effectively; and develop better methods, all ultimate decisions rest with line management.

So much for the relationship between the staff support personnel and the line managers. Now let's focus more specifically on the relationships among personnel management staff.

At this point, it becomes clear that it is probably unrealistic to expect one person to handle all nine functions. As I pointed out earlier, for example, a staff development specialist needs quite different competencies than other personnel specialists.

Expecting an individual to maintain a high level of professional competence in each of the nine personnel management functions is unreasonable. I believe it is also unreasonable to expect line management to keep up-to-date and fully knowledgeable about all these functions. Add to this the laws and policies relating to equal employment opportunity and civil rights, and the enormity of the responsibility becomes apparent, as does the need for close cooperation.

How can we tie all this together? Maybe some examples will help. As a technical consultant to line management, the personnel specialist may provide one-to-one assistance in the eight personnel and management function areas. If the administrators decide that several staff members need to improve their personnel management abilities, the personnel specialist and

the staff development specialist may work together to develop some in-service education for them.

Personnel specialists can help line managers determine ways to assess present manpower capabilities and project future manpower needs. If this is done in cooperation with the staff development specialist, he can help develop needed staff competencies on a long-range basis.

The records and reports the personnel specialist accumulates on individual staff members provide a valuable source of information for the staff development specialist. They help him see what skills and competencies are being brought into the organization with the hiring of new personnel.

Less direct relationship exists between the two specialists in the areas of employee benefits and wage and salary administration. The areas where close cooperation is needed most are performance evaluation; labor relations; recruitment, selection, and placement; manpower forecasting; and job descriptions.

In closing, I leave you with this thought. Whether you are a personnel specialist, a staff development specialist, or an administrator, you have a responsibility for personnel management. How well the personnel management functions are performed is not the lone responsibility of any one staff group -- it must be a team effort.

The ultimate responsibility for personnel management rests with administrators. But support staff, whether they are personnel specialists or staff development specialists, must provide dynamic and progressive consultative leadership and assistance to those administrators.

Staff development should not be an isolated function of personnel management, just as the total personnel management support function should not be isolated from administrative functions. Those of you in supervisory positions will determine the extent to which the personnel and staff development specialists can be useful members of the team.

At the end of this conference you are likely to ask: Where do we go from here? How will we keep our ideals from growing cold and unachievable? What can we do to translate these ideals into realism - action? These are questions of the highest importance to all of us. Now is the time to deal with them.

The present is so important because it is the only time we really have. The past is history, but the present is opportunity. There are some alternative courses of action, each with its consequences, we can take:

- We can do nothing.
- We can ruin either the past or the present by looking at them with the wrong attitude.
- We can live so much in the past that we miss our present opportunity.
- We can allow the habits of the past to make the present a carbon copy of what we are or have been.

OR --

We can move boldly ahead to make the best possible use of the combined competencies of staff development and personnel management specialists.

I want to conclude as I began by saying that you represent a great resource of leadership for Cooperative Extension. This is the time in which our highest resources and competencies can come to their best expressions and be more than equal to the problems of the present.
