



HUMAN RELATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION

Dr. Kenneth D. Benne

NOTICE

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Reviewed by: Colonel Tom W. Sills, USA

Date: 8 October 1959

INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE OF THE ARMED FORCES
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COLONEL SILLS: General Houseman, Gentlemen: As we begin our series of lectures in executive development, it is fitting that the first subject we will discuss is "Human Relations and Individual Motivation," for in all our future careers one of the important things is that we bring into play the full potential of those who work for us. I feel that it is a challenge to us to create an atmosphere in which men, regardless of their level of talent, will gain through their association with one another.

To bring us this subject this morning we've found a speaker who has made a career out of studying, writing, lecturing, and researching in human relations. I don't know of anybody who is better qualified to speak to us on this subject than our speaker this morning.

I first met our speaker in Bethel, Maine, back in 1958. The College sent me up there to take a course in group development. They ran the thing pretty much as we do it here. We had lectures the first thing in the morning, after which we organized into training groups. The lecturers were largely from the big universities which have big courses in human relations, and I was deeply impressed by our speaker this morning, who lectured to us several times during the course. I made up my mind then that if I could ever get him down to the Industrial College, I was going to do it, so that we could get the benefit of

his wisdom and experience in this important field. Well, I succeeded, and we have him with us this morning; and I can hardly wait to get from here down there and listen to him again.

So it's with great pleasure that I present to you the Director of the Human Relations Center, Boston University, Dr. Kenneth D. Benne.

DR. BENNE: Thank you, Tom.

I think I should probably warn you in advance that one thing I have great difficulty doing when I am talking is standing still. I hope that doesn't annoy you. I'm not going to stop it, because this is one of those things I have tried to retrain and never been able to. And in training work like I do, I think it's good to have something to make me feel humble. I've been told about this many, many times, but some way I can't alter it. So all I can do is to forewarn people to whom this might be a distraction and perhaps reduce the effect in that way.

I had some engineers in my audience one time, and one engineer estimated the length of my stride. He was quick to tell me that he did this in samples of five minutes. He didn't want to tell me that he wasn't listening all the time. He made an estimate at one time and computed that I had walked four miles during a 45-minute lecture. So I've had many friends trying to work with me on that, and I think it suggests that training has its limitations and sometimes you just have to learn to live with things you can't change, because I think with all of our

emphasis on changing people and making them better, which is extremely important, I think part of the counsel of humility is that there are some things you can't change and then the wisdom is trying to learn to live with them.

All right. I've warned you. You might ask what is my motivation for walking. That I do not know. Perhaps if you can give me some psychiatric help on that after observing me, maybe the feedback that you give me will help me to get nearer the heart of things.

I don't think I need to talk much about why managers--and I'm using that collective term for people with executive responsibility--in organizing and leading the work of others in achieving various kinds of goals-- I don't think I need to emphasize why individual motivation is a central concern to them. A manager cannot actually do anything to really direct or influence the people that are working under him and with him unless he can tap some of their motivation, unless he can tie what it is that they are doing in to the motivational system, which actually is the motor of the person.

He may have a beautiful steering mechanism, going back to the analogy of a car; but if he can't engage the motor of the person somehow to the movement and the activity, then it's like sitting in a car with the motor turned off and being unable to find the switch to get the motor going. He may have the most beautiful plans, the most beautiful

steering mechanism, and yet nothing moves, nothing happens, unless somehow this motivational system of people can be tapped.

I would like to talk a little bit about the way in which I think, at least, of motivation. I think all of us have various kinds of need systems. They represent lacks in us. And when there is some kind of lack in the economy of the person, he will engage in activities to try to reduce that lack. That's roughly what I mean by a need.

These needs are various. I'm not going to try to settle what the students of motivation have not yet settled--Are all needs eventually based on certain kinds of biological, organic needs? They don't agree on that. Some would say that eventually they can all be reduced down to such things as hunger or sex or some of these organically based ones. Others would say that new needs are generated as people grow into membership in various kinds of groups and associations, as indeed they become socialized. I'm not going to raise that question, because I can't settle it. The best students are still arguing about that. But, at any rate, people find themselves with needs, and their activities are generated more or less in attempting to satisfy those needs.

Now, I'd like to come back to the manager here. How can he tap the motivational systems, the need systems if you will, of people? I think he has, first of all, to be able to know what some of those needs

are. If he's guessing wrong as to where the switch to the motor is, he'll never get the thing in motion. Right?

But it's not just a matter of knowledge, because in all of the needs that people have, some of them are under the influence of the manager and some are not. In some cases the manager is actually able to affect some of the need satisfactions of people. Others they cannot.

Let me try to illustrate that. We've been working with the United States Department of Labor doing employment security in the State of Massachusetts in some training programs. There the executives have nothing to say about the promotion of people in those offices. That's all handled by another agency in civil service, and they don't even solicit the recommendations of the immediate superiors of the people who work there.

Now, wanting to get ahead in the organization is a need for many people. But can the managers in that setup control that need satisfaction? It's out of their hands. Therefore one of the motivations that many managers are able to affect--this wanting to get a better job in the organization--is entirely out of the hands of these managers. And therefore their approach to motivating people cannot assume that they have any control over this channel of need satisfaction. Right? Whereas in another company, where the immediate superior's recommendation was one strong element of data in whether a person shall be promoted

or not, then the manager in that second case is able to affect the need satisfaction with respect to promotion of a given subordinate or employee.

Do you get the point generally? Even though there are needs, they are not always those where the manager can either threaten a person with reduction of need satisfaction; or promise him that he is able to augment his need satisfaction. So he has to assess these needs, both in terms of charting what they are, as well as assessing those which are effectively under at least the partial control of the manager if he is going to tap these particular areas of need and therefore tap the motivational systems of the people who are working with him.

Or let's say the man may be having extreme marital difficulty and that may be affecting the quality of his work. Well, it's a rare organization in which the manager could directly affect this area of frustrated need for the person. Oh, he might help him a little bit through counseling and so on, but that's outside of the range of motivations that he can tap and use.

I think I have made my point then. There are two kinds of assessments that every manager must make: What are the needs at work which might be tapped, and which ones are somehow inaccessible to him, either to threaten the person with a reduction of need satisfaction unless certain behaviors are forthcoming; or to promise to augment his need satisfaction if a certain level of performance is available. So we have to assess it both in terms of what actually are the needs that

this person would be motivated to satisfy, plus the practical judgment as to which of these are accessible to us as managers in actually attempting to influence, and hopefully to upgrade, another person's work.

Well, so much for that. Now I'd like to turn a little bit to make clear to you some of my assumptions about motivation, and then I'd like to talk about two familiar and traditional motivations that managers have used that are no longer either available to them, and that are affecting our whole thinking about managerial operations; and then talk about two areas of motivation that are acceptable to management, that they are now beginning to think, both in public and private administration, about.

But before then, I make these assumptions about these needs of people: First, I don't think needs ever operate singly. Almost any behavior that you see a person making is probably an attempt to satisfy a number of different needs. Our tendency is to say: "Oh, this person is just motivated by getting ahead in the organization." Nine times out of ten, when you say that, it's an oversimplification and you may be missing other elements in his motivation.

Only under artificially produced conditions, like some of the hunger experiments that were conducted through the voluntary cooperation of conscientious objectors during the war--you probably know of those--to actually get people so hungry that the only need they had was to eat--that was hard to do. Even under conditions of starvation

it was awfully hard to sift the motivation down to just getting food. All these others--standards and values, the need to live up to a certain kind of standard--were still with people; and people had to be awfully hungry--and some people never did get to the point where you could say their whole behavior was motivated by their hunger need.

So first I am making an assumption that typically, needs are multiple, and that in interpreting a given person's behavior or some deficiency in his behavior or what-not we usually make a mistake by trying to reduce it to a single motivational factor. That's one assumption I am making.

Another one that I am making is that needs are never observed directly. You can see what a person does, but the motivation behind what he does is always an inference, where we, the observer and interpreter, play our parts. And we bring a kind of set of assumptions about what motivates people's behavior to bear in interpreting why this person is doing as he does.

We never see a need walking. You know the old song "Have you ever seen a dream walking?" Well, have you ever seen a need walking? Nobody ever has. And I think we ought to remember that--that motivations are always inferred. They never can be directly observed.

And that turns us back to look at our own map of conceptions about why people behave as they do. When we say, "This person is motivated

this way," or "This person is motivated that way," we are really bringing our own conceptions about motivation; and our interpretation of the other fellow's behavior may be as much a picture of ourselves, and may be even more so, than it is actually of his own inner world of needs which this action is satisfying. I think that is something we ought to remember.

And a third assumption: These conceptions by which we interpret people's behavior--we'll say, "well, he really is just motivated by-- Harry here in this group hates Bill's guts and the only reason he's doing that is to get back on Bill." Well, you see, that involves a conception of why Harry is behaving as he does. My first assumption says that is probably only a piece of it. It may be well a piece of it, but there are other things at work too. My second notion is that motivations are always inferred, never observed directly. And my third point is this: that the conceptions we bring to interpreting why people are behaving as they do are not only just academic things, because on the basis of those we erect our notion of, How should Harry be dealt with? Get the idea? We build our whole technique and strategy of dealing with Harry around our interpretation of why Harry is behaving as he does.

And therefore this gets great practical significance--the kind of map of human motivation, the kind of picture of what is it that moves men, motivates them--our conceptions at this point get great practical significance. I think I'll try to show in just a few minutes how whole

systems of management theory as well as practice have been built on inadequate theories of human motivation. And now, when they're falling on their face, one place to begin to turn around and look is not to blame the unions, the Soviet Union, the racial problem in the South, or whatever is the scapegoat, but to begin to turn around and look at our own maps, our own conceptions, of human motivation to see whether we don't have to reconsider at some point traditional practices and theories of managing the organized efforts of other people.

Those are my three assumptions, then, and you may wish to challenge them later in the discussion. And if you don't I'm going to be awfully disappointed, because if I can't learn something, I always think it's an inadequate experience. I'm only going to learn when, after the break, you begin to push me around. So I hope you don't hesitate to do that.

Now, let me move from these. So far I have actually tried to suggest why some understanding and assessment of motivation is essential to the functioning of a manager. And then I tried to suggest some assumptions that I am making about the nature of motivation. Now I would like to look at two oversimple conceptions of motivation which have influenced the theory and practice of management very, very greatly and that are now in the process of being reconsidered widely in management circles, both by students of management and by practitioners of management.

One assumption is that men are primarily motivated by economic motivations; that you reduce motivations down eventually to problems of economic survival and of economic gain; and if you can tap this set of needs for economic gain, that becomes your principal way of actually controlling. Either through threat of taking away the economic base or through promise of augmenting the gain, that becomes the major tool of management.

Students of the history of ideas have called this the notion of economic man. It is very, very prominent in management thinking. It is very, very prominent not only in American thinking but also in Soviet thinking.

For a long time the students of motivation, especially since they began to study both psychology and the behavior of people in cultural groups, in anthropology, have for years been criticizing this as an oversimple picture of the needs and motivations of people. But I don't think it was just the critique from the academy that has more and more led managers to say: "We cannot build our strategy of management control and direction upon this theory of motivation. And why? There are practical reasons, as well as theoretical reasons, why this oversimple theory of motivation has fallen into disrepute.

If a manager is going to primarily get another person to work by threatening him with a loss of his job, or by threatening him with

taking away his subsistence, what will be the result? At one time that was a very powerful tool of management. It is no longer. Why?

Well, first of all, if you have a prosperity economy, where if you lose this job, there's another to go to, that immediately takes part of the control of this need--which is an admitted need--away from the manager. Isn't that right? All right. If you push me around, even fire me, I'll get another job.

Or, another thing that has grown up is a set of union supports to people. You can't push people around and fire them without reckoning with another kind of force, backed by a contract and with grievance procedures. All right. That's again taking the control of this motivation out of managerial hands. The activities of government in putting a floor of security, through unemployment insurance and so forth, under the work force of this country, has tended to take that motive out of the effective control of most managers.

When I was serving in the Navy during the war, I used to talk this thing over with my executive officer, who was quite a student of motivation, and he said: "You know, the Armed Forces are losing their big advantage. Once they could offer economic security, pension systems, and so forth. Now all other areas of employment are catching up with us. We can no longer use that as a primary motivation for getting career work. We'll have to appeal to other needs and other motivations of men if we're really going to build a career organization."

He was talking about the same thing I am talking about right now; and yet when you look at management theory and practice the assumption that this is the major motivation to be tapped and controlled in stimulating and directing the efforts of men, this notion of economic man is still a very, very powerful one, and many of our management theories have been built on it--that this is the major need system--the need for economic survival, the maintenance of economic subsistence, or the augmentation of either economic income or security. Many would say traditionally that is the major tool; and I'm saying it is not the only one, because the students of human motivation have shown that that is a far too simple explanation of why people behave as they do, of why people are motivated to act in one way or another. It is not only the theoretical critique; it is also the fact that practically, government, labor, and prosperity markets have taken that motivation somewhat effectively out of the control of the managers of human behavior. It's no longer available to them to control.

Let's take another one. I think it is true that many people have a need to rise in status, in position, within the organization in which they work. The strength of this need differs from person to person. Some persons would rather remain a noncom than to attempt to go higher. But other people are strongly motivated by a need to move upward in the status system of an organization.

Now, other theories of management behavior have counted on this motivation: I am not denying that either the economic motivation or this one are real. I'm saying they are real. But they count on this as primary and so the main base that we use in influencing and directing the behavior of others is either the promise of promotion or the threat of nonpromotion or even demotion. Now, I am not saying those are not sometimes effective, just like I'm not saying that the threat of loss of job or the promise of raise in pay is not effective. But this is a two-edged sword.

In a competitive process leading to promotion, for every one person who succeeds, you may have a dozen or more who don't succeed. So while this can become an effective motivation, the very fact that most organizations have a kind of a pyramidal structure, except the Mexican Army, by repute means that for every person who can be continually motivated, other people are rendered increasingly apathetic and denied the need satisfaction if you depend on this as a major emphasis or as even a sole or primary emphasis in the motivational system to the need systems that you tap as managers.

So here are two very powerful motives--for economic gain or the loss of economic gain and for rise in social status, which meet the needs of some people in different degrees, but they are more and more being questioned by both students of management and by practitioners of management.

Well, where do you turn? Here they're even beginning to think that psychologists have something to say to practical men, because they have been saying for these many years that there are many more motives than these. But you have to set up organizations, and you have to learn to function within an organization, in different ways if you are going to tap motivations other than those that are the oversimplified notions of "real motivations" of individuals.

And more and more I think, as I read management literature and as I work with managers, that they are beginning to think of two other motivations that can be tapped if you can learn how to do it as managers.

Was somebody talking to you about the Hawthorne experiments this morning?

COLONEL SILLS: Yes.

DR. BENNE: What needs of people did those experiments highlight? Well, you can talk about it in different ways. (writing on blackboard) "The need to belong to a group of which you are proud and in which you count for something." And within the beautifully engineered system of job allotment and classification the students of Western Electric--and this has been borne out at all heights--what kind of organization grows up to supplement the formal organization? An informal organization of people who band together to serve other needs than those that are written into the strict analysis of duties, responsibilities, and job sheet performance.

That's a powerful thing. The studies of Saupher and others of the American soldier, for example, I think make this point. Where did most enlisted men in the Army get their feelings of identification and loyalty or their opposite to the Army? Was it to the Army as a whole? No. It was to their own immediate outfit. And if they could get a sense of belonging, and if they count for the guys in their squad or their company, then the Army was a pretty good place. This attempt to spray on loyalty to an agency from the top and neglect what is happening in the immediate group life I think runs against all of these things we are saying. Not that P. R. at the top isn't important, but it will fall on stony ground pretty largely unless something is happening to develop leaders throughout the organization that can tap this motivation of people to belong to an outfit of which they are proud and in which they count for something.

So I think a lot of management has been impressed. They're turning from the exclusively economic or status striving motivation--not that those still don't have their place--but they're turning to think: How can we tap this deep motivation of people. And, of course, that has turned them directly to thinking about the relationship of people and the relationship laterally among the people in an organization, as well as up and down the line--the relation of the status leader to the people under him, as well as the relation at the same tier level in the organization.

How do we really learn to build and develop this in our organization? And that puts a new demand on them. Oh, I'm sure many managers, many leaders almost naturally work this way. I'm sure that's true. This is not a new thing. But if a person doesn't sort of naturally work that way, how can you help develop him, with the understanding and the skills to build groups which will satisfy and tap this need of people and at the same time keep the group alive to the job and work demands of the organization of which he is a part?

Now, let me repeat. It isn't just because it's being nice to people, or that we want to make just a happy ship that doesn't do its work well. Those ideas of human relations, I think, are vulgarizations of human relations. They belong better in Norman Vincent Peale's sermons and Dale Carnegie's inadequate book than they do in any sober treatment of human relations. The organization still has work to do which requires the combined efforts of people. And that is the primary reason they operate. But how can we tap the motivations of people when some of these traditional motivations, either are two-edged swords, like the competitive striving for motivation as the primary motor, or the threat of economic dismissal or the threat of nonraise of pay? Where are you going to turn to get the motivation which is necessary to get people into an organization that will both do its work and still satisfy other needs?

It's a practical condition, gentlemen, and not just a "do good" story that has led management, I think, not primarily through humanitarian motives, although I think this squares better with some of our humanitarian motives than some of the others. I think that's true too, and that's a bonus--but it's practical, not because they have read books and found out that the oversimplification of economic motives was just not borne out by any studies--it wasn't either theoretical or moral. It was practical failure of management principles built exclusively upon inadequately narrow conceptions of motivation that has led students and practitioners of management to turn to other motives.

Let me get another one up here (writing on blackboard "2. Need to grow and learn.") Every healthy person wants to grow in some way, wants to learn something. They may not want to learn what we want them to learn. And then we immediately say they're lazy, apathetic. They're just tired. Over time they may have been--instead of tapping their own needs to grow and learn in whatever respect as persons, they may eventually turn and resist our efforts to get them to grow and learn, but that isn't because there aren't other areas in which, if we are smart enough to listen and find out, that people want to be better in their performance than they now are.

And a lot of effort is going on in management circles generally now to say, not, "How can we turn over to our training department the

management of this thing?" but, "How can we handle our working relationships right in the organization so there are opportunities for growth and learning right in this on-going line operation of our activity?"

We are asking managers now to begin to think not only as group developers and group leaders, but also in a sense as educators. And the dimension of leadership which has to do not alone--certainly the primary one is still to organize the effort to get the job done--but in addition to that, how can that happen and at the same time the person, the leader, the manager provide the conditions under which people can have a feeling of learning and growth?

And so to do that, managers, and especially line managers, have to begin to think like educators as well as coordinators and stimulators of productive effort. And that again is no accident, gentlemen. Today it is not dictated primarily by humanitarian motives or by the study of the literature of psychology and anthropology. It is, rather, an effort to say, "We must learn to tap as managers individual motivations other than the traditional ones, which for various reasons have been found wanting." And that immediately puts new demands upon the functioning of managers as they work with the people they are leading.

Let me now just in a very sketchy fashion--and you may want to check this--talk about what are some of the implications if managers are going to begin to tap these motivations, which seem to be more

available to them under present economic conditions than some of the more traditional motivations on which traditional management theory and practice are based. What are some of the implications of management for beginning to build upon and tapping these motivations of men (indicating the two on the blackboard)?

I would say that first we're going to have to reconsider that precious organization chart (drawing an organization chart on board) and think about it in a different way. Is this familiar? Under the stress of work simplification and scientific management emphasis--and I'm not saying it is good or bad, but based on it--under the stress of that we began to think of organization as if this allocation of duties and responsibilities and control were an actual description of the way behavior functions in that organization in maintaining itself and getting work done. Of course the Hawthorne studies show that that "just ain't true." It doesn't work that way.

Let me make one assumption now. Here it seems to me that the assumption is that here (indicating on chart) is a person in charge; and at each stage you can find another person in charge, and the primary relationship is between this person and that person down to these persons, each individual job defined out of relationship with the parallel jobs. At least you try to get it so nobody tramps on anybody else's toes. So this is your job, this is your job, this is your

job, this is your job. But the relationship is always person to person to person to person to person--a chain of individuals, communication, and control.

Now, those who have studied the growth of group life within organizations are getting a different picture of the organization chart. (drawing lines around boxes so as to divide them into groups). They are beginning to think of the unit of organization as basically a group rather than an individual, the group, of course, being made up of individuals--in which this guy--picking him for example--is in the group with his boss and his other department heads where he functions as a member. But he's also in this group (indicating), made up of the people who report to him, where he functions as a designated leader. And so we can think of organizations as kind of linked groups--groups of various kinds linked by the managerial person from level to level.

Now, this organization chart concept is now almost up to the point where you don't even feel respectable unless you can draw an organization chart for your particular operation. But I think we're going to have to reconsider that if we really want to tap this motivation.

Now, what is the job of this guy? The job of this guy is to learn to function effectively as a member with his boss and his peers, being able to get a picture of more of the total mission and demand of the outfit, being able to represent the state, the conditions, the problems of his unit to this higher-up, and in turn being able to build a group

which is willing to take this larger point of view into account as people together work out the problems of production at their particular level of organization.

So we begin to put upon the manager, the need for cultivating the skills of handling dual memberships. And many of the communication blocks come when this guy may be so identified with this group that he takes himself out of membership in this group. Isn't that right? He's only a front office man, and then a lot of the talk that should get to his ears goes on among these guys without him ever hearing it. Can that happen? The other disease is for him to become so much one of the boys that he shuts himself off really from any influence with his peers and his superiors. And that's just as unhealthy--to become one of the boys--as it is to become one of the front office at the expense of "my boys."

How does he handle, how does he develop, the personal stability to handle this built-in dual membership? which at times is going to mean conflict in loyalty, conflict in identification, and yet he must learn to be mature enough to handle both of those memberships and do justice to both. How does he develop the skills of being an effective member--that's another way of putting it--as well as an effective leader in building and developing groups which may satisfy this need to belong?

Am I getting through at all on that? That breaks off into questions for management development about the skills and the understandings and the ability to assess self in relation to group which I think now management people are beginning to talk about.

Let me just talk about these names, because my time is just practically up. Let me name just another couple of implications for this.

I have said the first implication is the need to reconceive the picture of relationships within an organization. And while indeed this organization chart as a picture of legal responsibility up and down the line, is still probably a very useful thing to have around-- I'm not saying, "Throw them out"--as a description of how the work goes on, it is probably one calculated not to stress this. In fact, a guy working with the old table of organizations would say: "My job is to get the job of my outfit clearly in mind, to divide it up, and tell this guy what his part is, and this guy what his part is, and this guy what his part is." Isn't that right? "I don't bring them together to decide these things. That's my job. And, more, if I bring them together, they'll get to fighting about jurisdiction. I can't afford that."

Well, if you look at this (indicating blackboard) you'll have a different notion. Maybe they should get together and clear their minds. Maybe it won't always be easy. Maybe they will have to fight things

out. But isn't it better to fight it out in public, with some responsibility and, I hope of rational outcome, and build a stronger group as a result; or do you just still persist in making it just a man-to-man operation? Well, I'm just saying that if you take this motivation seriously, you'll give a different answer to what things should be handled in groups and what things should be handled in two-person situations as you face organizational problems.

Now let me get one other implication. I said as an assumption that the motivations of people are complex things; and if we tend to impose our own filters on explaining why another guy is behaving as he does, it may be a very oversimplified picture. Sometimes it will click. Sometimes we will hit it just right because we're enough like him that it works. I have put myself in his place and, by golly, I've doped out what it is that's wrong with him, whether he's doing too little or too much.

But suppose it doesn't click. Suppose you're enough different from this other guy that when you try to project your own picture on why he's behaving as he does, you make mistakes. And then you build actions on your picture and you really don't get through to him at all. Not only are you not communicating, but you're rather ineffective really in influencing him, in changing him, in directing his thinking and his actions.

But it seems to me that somewhere along the line the manager is going to have to learn two things. One is to learn to stretch his notion of motivation to include motivational patterns that are quite different from his own.

I was talking with General Houseman just before we came over here about the difficulty of the average engineer to accept the place of the kind of a weird original genius in science and engineering and really learn from him and work with him. He said, "But he's a screwball. He just won't play with the team." But he may have the idea that will break through on some problem and really get it solved, or even put the problem in a new light that has a much better outcome. How do you learn to work with these crazy people, because everybody is a little strange who isn't like us. The old Quaker story about "Everybody's queer but me and thee and sometimes I think thee is a little queer" is just sort of describing the sort of untutored reaction of all of us toward people who don't click and aren't motivated quite in the same way we are. How does the manager stretch his notion so he can imaginatively see that there are other patterns than his own and honestly then relate to, learn from, and give to people of quite different motivational patterns? That's something that I think he must learn to do.

So he has to become a diagnostician continually of not just rejecting the guy as just crazy when our own interpretations of his behavior

which are really projections of our own pretty much, don't fit, but begin to take him as a puzzle and as a problem and try to understand why he is behaving that way. That doesn't mean you have to become like him. That's silly. You are what you are.

So how do we become better diagnosticians, that stretch our naive notions that everybody is really like us? And then how do we find ways of setting up an environment in which a variety of people, guided by a general problem, can bring their different and unique efforts to bear upon a better clarification and solution? How do you build a community which is not bought at the price of complete conformity, but a community that is built on the assumption and the acceptance of the fact of different talents, different specialties, and, indeed, different motivational systems? How can the manager learn to build that kind of group?

An odd thing is, a lot of that learning is not going to be just learning about other folks. It's also the learning about me and what are my blind spots? What are my quirks? What are my tendencies to distort the motivations of other people in the image of my own? It seems to me a lot of management development is now moving toward finding ways of getting this sort of self-objectivity, self-understanding, and self-acceptance, not just in order to be a yogi, a sage, but in order to become a better diagnostician of people who happen to be different from us and a better organizer of efforts that are based upon the fact of difference, rather than upon a kind of dead level conformity of one kind or another.

That's more or less what I have to say at this time.

COLONEL SILLS: Gentlemen, Dr. Benne is ready for your questions.

QUESTION: I'm not sure whether you covered it or not. I haven't heard it if you did. But it seems to me that you have left out what I regard as the most important motivation of all, and that is pride of accomplishment. If you can build in the group a pride of accomplishment--and practically everyone is susceptible to this--if you can do that, you're in. We've got a softball team here. We're going to beat the War College. Why? Not for any of these reasons but just pride of accomplishment.

DR. BENNE: I think that's awfully important. I sort of telescoped that, and I'm glad you brought it out so I can pull it out.

I put that together with this need to belong. I said that we need to belong to a group that is accomplishing something and in which we count. Let me separate those two things now.

Thurston Deblin, that eccentric economic genius in American economic thought, wrote a book on the instinct of workmanship; and he argued that one of the main motives of people to work was to do a good job of something that they felt really was important; and that more and more the organization in the 19th century of industry particularly, with its division of work, its separation of work into pieces,

was almost running against this instinct of workmanship. He was wondering how we could recover this primary motivation, which, as he believed--and I think he was right--in the days of the crafts and the craft guilds was a major motivation, whether a person was a shoemaker, a carpenter, a builder or whatever he happened to be. But in the rationalization of industry, with all this division of labor that accompanies it, the division of work into little pieces, a lot of this was being destroyed in that fact. I fully believe that.

But now I don't think we're going to go back to the point where there isn't division of labor. If anything, division of labor has increased rather than decreased with the growth of scientific knowledge and its application in science and technology. Isn't that true? So how can one recover the instinct of workmanship and still be the specialist?

I think we'll do it through a team that is sharing the knowledge of the total product, of which mine may be a part--do you get the idea?--so that the need to belong has now almost come, in my mind, to be associated with this instinct of doing a good job.

I'm glad you brought it out. There are some individuals who can do better work by themselves. We were talking about that too. And, although most of the major accomplishments, both in development and in production, probably are, even in research, going to be increasingly team in character, there still is a place for the guy who can reflect and think and come out with an unconventional construction on things.

They still need the team to develop and test the thing, but how are you going to fit him in so they don't reject his ideas out of hand, but at least listen to them and then put them to the further test of development?

I don't know whether I'm communicating or not, but I think I'm trying to say that more and more the conditions of work, not only on the production line or on the engineering development side, even back to the research side, have more and more reflected this increase in specialization. So how can we recover this instinct of workmanship for individuals within a team effort which simultaneously satisfies need to belong and the need for the best means of accomplishing something?

QUESTION: We read in our reading assignment that the social science of human relations is about 25 years old and yet people have been pretty smart for about 2,000 years. I notice that whenever we have a recession and the appropriations are cut back, they always cut back on personnel administration first. Isn't this really a cajoling of people to get things done in the affluent society?

DR. BENNE: Yes. I think I'd approach that question this way: I still believe that organizations exist to produce and accomplish things. Many efforts to conceive human relations as something we do on the edge and periphery of things--I know a company that has appointed a vice president in charge of human relations. To me

that's just crazy. If they believe they can turn over to another department human relations and let the whole organization of production up and down the line be unaware of human relations factors as they affect productivity or not, then I think you have a managerial mind that is still trying, not to change the work life of the organization, but trying to put it on, like almost a beauty parlor or cosmetic notion--"We'll add a department of human relations that will make people smile and be desperately happy"--some of those smiles are sort of pasted on, you know--"but we'll never let it get close consideration in planning a job, we'll never let those human relations considerations come right along as an important part of building and maintaining our organization, as well as organizing for this job that we have to do." You see, I think we still are keeping them apart. A lot of managers, I think, are giving human relations studies a bad name by assigning them to beauty parlors rather than saying: "How can my line managers really develop the understandings of motivation and the setting up of conditions which will build on an elite motivation right in the midst of work and production?"

I think that's a little of the problem. I don't think you can turn human relations training over to a training department and meanwhile let the old managers continue to operate in the same old ways in organizing for work. I think the main carriers of human relations

understanding and training have to become the line managers themselves, which means that they are going to have to introduce new dimensions, in addition to their technical competence, their ability to organize effectively for work, they are going to have to introduce new dimensions into the very perception of their role. Until that happens, it will remain peripheral and it will be the first thing to go--"We have budgetary problems; therefore let's reduce personnel." If you get it built right into the line, as a function of the line managers, then you will have to fire the whole organization to get rid of human relations.

QUESTION: It was driven home to us in basic school that loyalty starts at the top of an organization and works down; that you cannot have an organization loyal to you until you first demonstrate loyalty. How does management go about achieving this in competition with labor unions, which likewise are trying to get the loyalty of the employees?

DR. BENNE: Let's go back to this (No. 2 on the blackboard). I'll bring the unions in at the last, because I believe they're a special case, but they're still not so awfully unusual.

I have said that I think, if you're going to build loyalty to your immediate work unit, this cannot be done just with the foreman down with his men on the first line of supervision. It has to permeate the organization. So you have these centers of loyalty, with the man in

the middle having to be strong enough to maintain his dual loyalty. That thing has to eventually permeate the whole organization, since the foreman is in effect loyal to the second line of supervision group to which he belongs, as well as his own outfit, his own work unit, and similarly up and down the line.

You can do some of it at the first line level, but there's always a danger that if you cultivate loyalty too much here, you cultivate it at the expense of loyalty to the larger organization, unless there is the same kind of working relationship growing and developing at each level of the organization.

As to that first part of your question, if I understand your Marine Corps, I would agree that that's the kind of interpretation that they are putting on it.

Now, take the labor unions. These people don't only belong to the group in which they work. Suppose this is the first line (drawing on blackboard). They are not only members of this group. They are also members of another group which has its own organization, out here, the union. It has its leadership. It has its organizational demands on people. So what you find is that members are having to face this problem of divided loyalty right in the immediate work situation. They are members of the union. A representative of the union, usually called a shop steward, is working right in the work situation.

The foreman is excluded by law from belonging to a labor union. So the more the union builds loyalty to itself by opposition to the organization, the more the foreman is separated from his men and the more he is unable to really approach them and say: "I want to belong to your group, although I'm not denying I also belong to the next higher group too in dealing with you."

Is that the kind of problem?

STUDENT: Yes.

DR. BENNE: Now, I don't think--First of all I'd like to say that that isn't--I have done a lot of experimental pilot training of foremen. They sometimes begin to see that this is an unusual circumstance, that unions have almost become the equivalent to, if they're management-identified, they become equivalent to the devil. They don't think about it as a human problem. I wonder if this is so unusual.

Each of these people also belongs to a family group. These people all may belong to the same church, or they may belong to different churches. In other words, every time we deal with a person, we are dealing with someone who has membership in a number of different associations. The problem of separate and divided loyalty is not limited just to the union case. But first let's see that this is the more general problem, with its own special characteristics. And I always urge foremen to recognize that they don't own all these men.

I'm against the totalitarian principle that says that any organization owns its members completely. They have other kinds of association-- in family, in church, and in whatever other associations they cultivate. So first let's accept that.

Now, how can we get new working relations cultivated between the union bureaucracy and the management bureaucracy at various levels? So there is need of some opportunity for union people to think in terms of problems of the survival of the organization, because in a sense the unions aren't going to survive unless the industry they work for survives. But how often is there any kind of opportunity to communicate about the problems of the industry except under the highly stylized combat situation of a negotiation situation?

So I think we're really going to begin to think of it. We're going to have to open up lines of communication between union officials at various levels and management officials at various levels in the context of thinking about the improvement and prosperity of our organization and not just in the only contact we make at those times when they are there by definition in negotiation situations, with sides drawn up, almost like a medieval joust of knights in armor. Really that's a rather fragile bond of communication--to assume that you can have any kind of rational common view despite the admitted differences of interest for which labor and management stand.

I don't think you can put the whole burden on the foreman alone. I think you should begin to get the kind of view that unions are here to stay in most lines of employment. All right. How do we bring union leadership along with management leadership into the study of and a more statesmanlike view of the problems of our industry and its growth and its prosperity? It seems to me that if that begins to happen up and down the line, then you will begin to find it easier for foremen to work with labor union members who, while recognizing their difference of interest at some points of negotiation, yet recognize the common interest of a prosperous and thriving industry, because if the industry falls on its face, they're going to be out of a job. It calls for changes on both sides--within union leadership, I think, as well as on the side of management.

QUESTION: Doctor, would you project yourself for a minute into a position of managership and tell us how you would go about, if you were put in a top spot in an agency or a business, how you would go about implementing this human relations factor to make sure that it sifted down to the very lowest level, and what devices you would use for instituting this program?

DR. BENNE: Well, at this point all of you no doubt have your stereotype of the university professor who, when he's asked a direct question, instead of answering it, begins to qualify it and sprout three

questions where one apparently simple question was before. You probably have that stereotype and it may sound that I'm going to do this. And maybe I will, but please remember that it's a complex of motivations that is moving me and not just a single one.

First of all, I'd have to know the situation. I'm worried about package deals on some of these things--those that you can sort of work out over here and then say: "This is just the way to do it, boys: You do 1, 2, 3, 4, 5." Well, if you're lucky, it may work.

In most cases what you have left out is the peculiar history and tradition and the whole, what you might call, if you accept the term, the personality of the organization with which you're dealing, which grows right out of its history and so on.

So I would first of all say, Let's begin to diagnose what some of these problems of our organization are, Where are there readi-nesses in our organization, to begin to admit a little different pattern of operation than the traditional one.

I think I would say positively this: that I wouldn't limit my view to any one level of organization. I have some feeling that our efforts to convert the head of the organization in the hope that this will trickle down, has its problems. I think that's a little better than trying to work at the lower level without any kind of opportunity for the people at intervening levels to think through their patterns of management

organization, because all you do there is to influence them at the lowest level. You just make them unhappy people, who are likely to become cynical, because when they begin to operate differently, let's say, a foreman, his supervisor says: "What the hell. Quit worrying about the feelings of your men and get the job out." He hasn't had a chance to see that this may be a very important thing--to spend some time on at this point. So you have to work at various levels of the organization, and you have to find the pattern of resistances and readinesses, point them specifically, points where these fellows themselves feel dissatisfied with their performance. They wish they could do a little differently. You begin to find these, and you begin to build, at least probably using the term multiple entry--I begin to probably get training programs going and that is pretty much the point where people are ready to think, because they have already felt the dissatisfaction. I would get some training started at various levels before I started any kind of cross-level type of grouping.

Usually, if it's very good training, they'll begin to not only solve a few little problems, but say, "By golly, there's another one that I hadn't thought of before." If it's good training, it's going to start new problems, and it's going to begin to spread toward reconsidering other types of things. Now, if you get this going at several levels in an organization, and then institute appropriate communication cross-level, you

can keep some of these changes at different levels in some kind of check, then I think you're on your way.

Here's one thing I would warn you about, though: When will the need for continual studying of ways of reconstruction of the relationship--when is that going to end? To expect that after we have our one big training program, then we can sit back and stop--that's where I think a lot of them fail.

As I see it, unless something happens to slow down this relentless advance of technological changes, this kind of continuing study and practice, trying out new patterns, is never going to stop. If we can accept this as now a new condition, in a sense, of life until the whole motor of technological advance is shut off, I think we have to begin by saying, "This is a task never completed." So that every organization is going to have to become an educational institution as well as an operational institution.

Now, I think, as I gathered from my work in the Navy, this was not a new concept. They felt that the whole survival of the organization meant continually training people, and that the training responsibilities for the line officer were just as important as his command and other responsibilities. I am sure that is true of the other services.

Now I think that's not only true of the preparation and upgrading of personnel to maintain the organization. I think now it's going to

have to extend also to trying new organizational patterns as problems arise. So we're not only training people to fill the slots. We're also working together to redefine the slots for which people will be used.

So it's not a new idea that an organization has today to provide for its own survival through continual training, as well as carrying on its operational responsibilities simultaneously. So I think we'll have to extend it to not only getting people prepared for slots that are already traditionally defined, but I think we'll have to prepare ourselves for rethinking of what the new slots and new relationships are in order to meet unprecedented conditions, as well as the upgrading of individuals to fill those slots.

Now, that's probably a typical professorial answer.

COLONEL SILLS: Dr. Benne, we're going to stop soon to fill some basic needs--lunch--

DR. BENNE: There are times when some needs become uppermost.
(laughing).

COLONEL SILLS: We'll reconvene at 1:30, gentlemen, for role playing.