

S.343

CHANGE : CHALLENGES FOR HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICE

A SEMINAR

PRESENTED BY

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH

HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

1987

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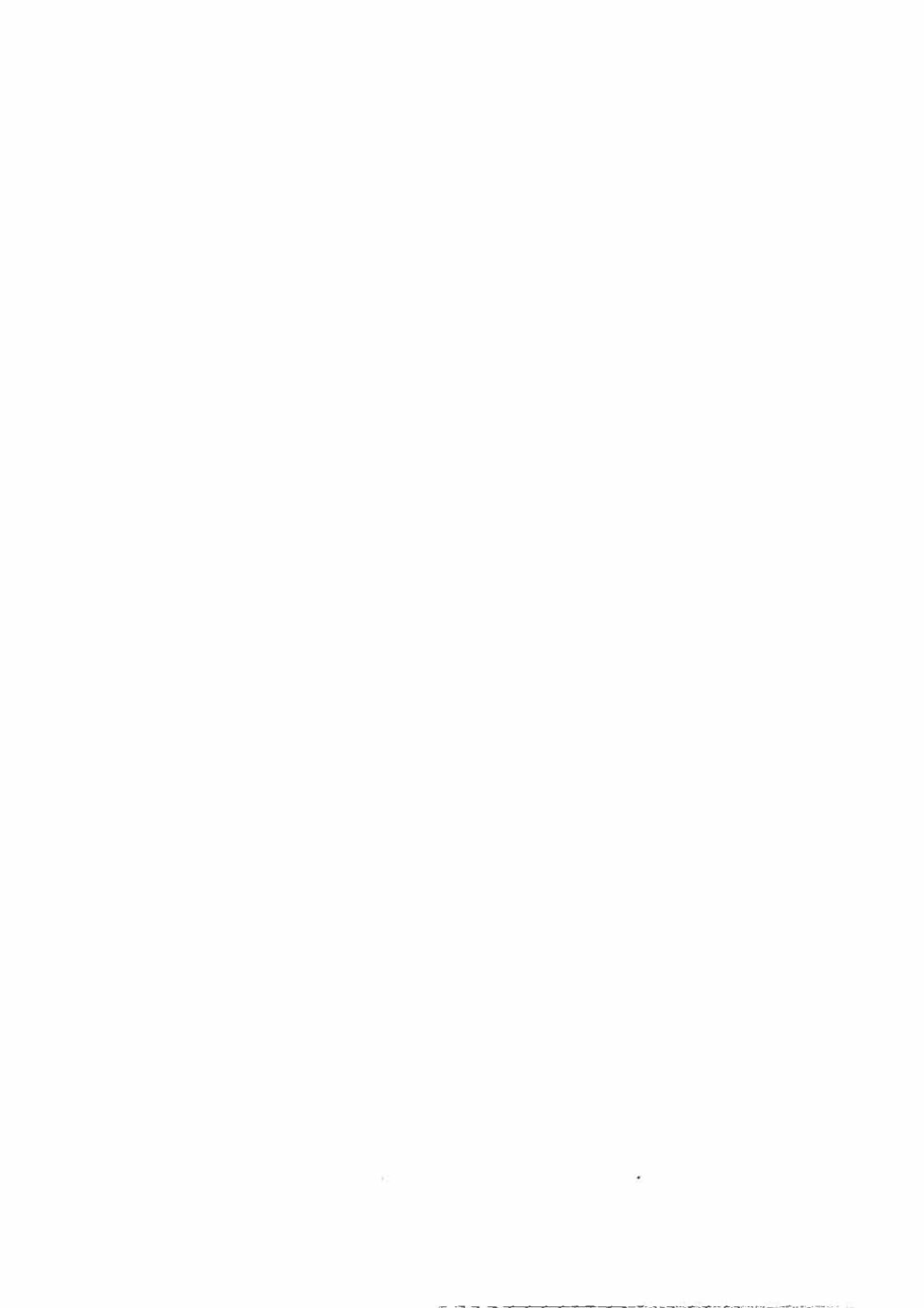
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HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

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HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERSONNEL RESEARCH

1988

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FORWORD

The five papers that follow comprise a seminar presented during 1987 on two occasions in Johannesburg and once in Durban. All five speakers referred to various aspects of the turbulent times which South Africa was, and still is, experiencing.

It is ironical that this very turbulence significantly depleted the audience on the second occasion, as a result of widespread strike action, and in Durban, when the occasion was the eve of a general election which was preceded by unrest that prevented a number of people from attending the seminar.

Mr J M Taylor joined the NIPR in 1976. In 1979 he was made head of the Natal Regional Office of the NIPR in Durban. After the transfer of the NIPR from the CSIR to the HSRC in 1985, he became, Regional Director of the HSRC in Natal. He is very well versed in the theoretical and practical aspects of personnel selection.

Mr J T Cook became a member of the NIPR's Assessment and Counselling Division in 1981 and succeeded Mrs Beryl Visser as head of the division in 1987. He is associated with a number of outside activities concerned with counselling and the dissemination of correct information, especially at black school levels.

Mrs Ann Jordaan was for some years in the NIPR's Pretoria Division and rejoined the NIPR in 1984, since when she has been a valuable member of the NIPR's Management Studies Division. In 1987 she was transferred to the NIPR's Western Cape Regional Office in Cape Town.

Dr Jopie van Rooyen has been with the NIPR for many years. She holds the rank of Chief Research Specialist and is head of the Management and Training Studies Group of the NIPR. She is a Director of the Women's Bureau of South Africa and various Committees in the public sector.

Dr Peter Franks was appointed in the Human Development Division of the NIPR in 1982 and succeeded Dr John Verster as head of the Division in 1987.

On behalf of the Institute I thank Dr Mauer, himself a one-time member of the staff of the NIPR, and now Vice-President of the HSRC, for chairing this Seminar on the second and third occasions.

I believe that readers from many different walks of life will find something of interest in these presentations and that the disquiet that many people in South Africa are experiencing about the country's future will be offset by the way in which the participants in this Seminar have identified in a positive and realistic way, some of the challenges that must be dealt with in these times of change.

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TOWARDS FAIRNESS IN EMPLOYMENT TESTING AND SELECTION

Summary of Paper presented by J M Taylor

Selection practices are examined against the historical backdrop of racial discrimination in South Africa, which has limited the employment opportunities for blacks in many organisations. The role of psychometric testing in the selection of job incumbents does not provide a simple solution to fair selection practice: research conducted in South Africa indicates that test scores do not necessarily have the same meaning for different groups. Results indicate the necessity for social judgements to be made. As an ultimate criterion for assessing the fairness of selection decisions, the definition adopted by the courts in the USA is suggested, i.e. discrimination against disadvantaged groups can be considered absent if the workforce of an organisation is reasonably representative of suitably qualified individuals from all disadvantaged groups. Thus, for an organisation to be classed as an equal employer, its workforce should reflect the characteristics of the relevant labour market from which it recruits. It is concluded that, if recruitment and selection decisions in South African organisations do not reflect fair and reasonable behaviour, the legitimacy of the organization's authority and thus long term survival will be at risk.

COUNSELLING FOR EMPLOYEES

Summary of Paper presented by Jonathan Cook

Studies show that South Africans in general suffer under exceptionally high levels of stress. The rate and intensity of change seems to be damaging to many people's emotional and physical health.

Yet some people experience change as an exhilarating challenge. These "copers" tend to enjoy warm, supportive relationships at home and at work; they have a sense of control over their own careers; and they tend to share the characteristics of what has been described as the "hardy personality".

At the other end of the scale, staff members at risk can be identified by behaviour such as increasing absenteeism, difficulty in making decisions, carelessness, forgetfulness, focusing on failures and problems in interpersonal relationships.

Counselling interventions which can help people cope with the prospect of change or recover from failure to cope include various group programmes, individual therapeutic counselling (probably through an Employee Assistance Programme), and career development counselling, in which the person experiences social support, gains a measure of control over his or her career, obtains feedback on successful coping in the past, and is prepared for any foreseeable changes to come.

IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGERIAL POTENTIAL

Summary of Paper presented by Anne Jordaan

In South Africa with its economic, political and societal changes of the eighties, very different demands are being made and will continue to be made on managers. The process of growing competent managerial talent has become an urgent need.

The following assumptions are vitally important to the success of any programme aimed at producing competent managers:

- The different realities that confront the organisation and the prospective manager.
- Identification of individual potential must go hand-in-hand with growth-enhancing processes in the organisation; and
- Commitment must breed commitment. Management must demonstrate its commitment to trainee managers.

The NIPR has developed a model for the identification and development of managers. Essentially one wishes to predict competence that leads to effective job performance. An important part of managerial competence relates to the fact that a person has a unique and individual way of dealing with his or her environment and with interpersonal relationships, of problem solving and decision making. To develop as a manager the trainee must gain the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge and skills and must identify with his or her management role.

There are no quick-fix or easy answers to identifying and developing managers. The success of these programmes hinges on an understanding of and commitment to change throughout the organisation.

**CHANGES IN ORGANISATION CULTURE:
IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICE**

Summary of Paper presented by Jopie van Rooyen

South African organisations are faced with a need to adapt and change because of changes occurring in the country. In striving to maintain viable organisations and to develop concerns of excellence, managers have to deal with economical, technological, political, social and cultural change factors. Effective adaptation to change requires, inter alia, co-operation and commitment of the human resources of the concern as well as adaptation of managerial style and development of a new organisational structure and culture. Organisations often attempt to change by adding new systems, structures and procedures to the existing way of doing things - thus adding on rather than adapting and changing. An add-on approach will, however, not result in long-term solutions. Human resource practitioners must accept the challenges to become agents of change, of assisting, advising and guiding managers in their strategic planning and decision making aimed at adapting and transforming their concerns. Different issues are involved which, in essence, require assisting individuals and groups to manage change and thereby contribute to improved organisation effectiveness in a changing environment.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE AND ADVANCEMENT GUIDELINES FOR INTERVENTION

Summary of Paper presented by Peter Franks

The changes taking place in South Africa are occurring at a time when the entire world is in the midst of changes brought about by the information revolution and calls by Third World countries for a new world economic order. The mere fact of change creates resistance to that change no matter what the changes are. This paper looks at the specific issues which in the South African context, are creating resistance to change, especially the resistance towards advancement in the work place. Drawing on research conducted by the Values and Human Relations Research Programme of the Human Development Division of the NIPR, guidelines for intervention in this process are presented.

INTRODUCTION

by

Dr Ricky Mauer

It is my duty and, indeed my privilege, to be able to welcome you here today to this Seminar by the NIPR called -

"Change: Challenges for Human Resource Practice"

Now I think that we see around us every day the symptoms that we live in an age where change is one of the most characteristic aspects of our daily life.

There is very little that most people have which they have brought along with them, which they can use as a means to cope with the future. I think this is certainly an aspect of society at this tail-end of the twentieth century which makes it very different from previous societies.

I think that our grandparents, for example, were people who were in possession of lots of information and skills and so on, that had been handed down to them by tradition and they were able, in fact, to cope to a reasonable extent. But this is gone and today's pace of change seems, to me at any rate, to be accelerating and it presents rather daunting challenges for all of us; I think particularly for those of us who are concerned with the adequate utilization of human resources. It is for this reason then that the NIPR has decided to try to bring together here today expertise in the form of our five speakers: people who are really concerned about this issue and people who have had the opportunity to study the area very carefully, who have also done some research in this area.

I trust that you will find the seminar both pleasant and useful. I hope that you will be able to go away from this seminar with information which will enable you to run your job even slightly better than you were able to do yesterday.

TOWARDS FAIRNESS IN EMPLOYMENT TESTING AND SELECTION

J M Taylor

OVERVIEW

The question posed in this paper is whether human resource practitioners are prepared to defend their selection and promotion policies and practices against accusations of racial prejudice. In our rapidly changing socio-political environment, objective, quantitative answers to such question will need to be provided by organisations claiming to have equal employment selection policies, since "good intentions" are being viewed with increasing cynicism.

The role of psychometric testing in providing quantitative answers on the issue of fair selection will be reviewed briefly. South African research findings in which the comparability of test scores for different population groups has been investigated, indicate the strong possibility that unfair selection practices occur if tests are applied uncritically to different race or socio-economic groups.

It is contended that the model that has been developed and used in the USA for describing the manpower profile of equal employment organisations would be appropriate for South Africa.

Affirmative action, which is considered to be a legitimate response in dealing with disadvantaged groups, may be strategically necessary for some time in achieving equitable employment patterns in South African organisations.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

1. Disadvantaged Groups

In the South African context, disadvantaged groups are seen as the historically disenfranchised sub-groups of Indians, 'coloureds' and blacks. These groups are identified because they represent obvious socio-economic discontinuities in the South African population. Discrimination against females raises issues and women could be included in the analysis, but racial discrimination is seen to be the major problem facing South Africa.

2. Unfair Discrimination

This is not a redundant term since selection requires discrimination between individuals; however, it is necessary that discrimination is perceived to be fair in the social context in which it occurs.

3. Affirmative Action

This is not meant to imply token selection of individuals from particular groups who will never perform adequately - rather, it is used to refer to the selection of people from disadvantaged groups who have the potential to perform adequately, although it may be necessary to provide special developmental assistance initially. The purpose of affirmative action is to achieve more equitable employment opportunities for all groups in the total population.

CONTEXT OF ACHIEVING FAIR SELECTION PRACTICES AND POLICIES

If one looks at the selection practices of the past, bias against the disadvantaged groups in the workplace will be seen to have played a prominent role in our history. For example, the plight of large numbers of unschooled "poor whites" at the turn of the century led to State Intervention to improve their lot. Large numbers of "poor whites" were employed by government departments such as the SA Railways, which in many cases led to the replacement of blacks. The Carnegie Commission of 1932, which investigated the "poor white" problem, recommended the introduction of employment practices, refined later into the job reservation legislation, to protect white workers from competition with black workers. This resulted in a rapid absorption of unschooled whites into the economy during a period of accelerated industrial growth prior to the Second World War. There are many other instances one could quote from our history of preferential treatment given to whites; however, in our rapidly changing society, credible answers will need to be provided to the question: "To what extent is racial discrimination still a feature of selection policies and practices?" Answers will have to go beyond the level of stated intentions, for reasons which should be clear from the following quotation from Mberdyk (1986): "It goes without saying that most organisations attempt to be fair in their selection and promotion policies. At the same time, it is clear that different conceptions of what the term, 'fairness', means, are possible, and that different policy implications flow from the particular set of assumptions adopted."

The ambiguity which has surrounded the concept of fair selection, as reflected in this quotation, has probably played no small part in permitting discriminatory employment practices to continue unchecked. For example, organisations which claim to follow "colour blind" employment practices in South Africa, (i.e. all employees are treated identically) need to consider the following

research findings which indicate that a "colour blind" selection policy is likely to result in unfair employment decisions.

This is where affirmative action is needed rather than "colour blindness."

THE ROLE OF PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS IN ACHIEVING FAIR SELECTION

Human resource practitioners who look to psychometric tests for objective answers about how to achieve fair selection in a multi-racial society will not find any neat psychometric answers. South African research in which the comparability of test scores for different racial groups has been investigated, indicates that cognitive test results cannot be assumed to be measuring intelligence in the same way across different groups.

Verster's (1984) study in which the performance of blacks and whites was compared on a battery of twelve cognitive tests indicated that black subjects show a greater tendency than whites to trade off speed in favour of accuracy, especially on conceptual tasks, which provides one clue in explaining observed test score differences.

A recent investigation by Owen (1986) conducted on a large sample of first year technikon students revealed significant differences in the patterns of responses of different racial groups on a widely used aptitude test battery (the Senior Aptitude Test Battery). Owen tentatively concluded from his findings that the tests systematically underestimate the abilities of "coloured", Asian and black students, due possibly to item bias and the different work tempo that characterised the various groups.

A study by van den Berg (1985) of test score differences between white, Indian and "coloured" school pupils found that test scores were similar across groups when socio-economic status was taken into consideration (see Table 1). This points to the importance of environmental factors on cognitive development, while the distribution of children on the socio-economic scale emphasises the wealth discontinuities between the racial groups and the need for affirmative action to break the vicious circle of unemployment and poverty.

Another study by Taylor and Radford (1986) in which test scores and exam results of students from black and white technikons were compared, indicated that although black students obtained significantly lower test scores, they nonetheless achieved better first year examination results. The tests were found to be reasonably reliable and valid within groups. This finding indicates the existence of test bias, which can be described as the systematic influence on test scores of sources irrelevant to what the test is purported to measure.

To summarise these South African research findings, it would seem that whether race or class differences are examined, test scores do not have the same meanings for different groups; the use of biased psychometric tests for shortlisting from a multi-racial pool of applicants will not result in fair selection. As Hunter and Schmidt (1976) have observed, **social** judgements will be required from the relevant decision makers in providing guidelines for the allocation of employment opportunities. Tests are, however, a useful means for measuring cognitive differences within homogeneous groups, thus the question of how many applicants to employ from the disadvantaged sub-group needs to be addressed.

**Means and standard deviations of IQ raw scores (GSAT)
for 12 to 14-year-old children from three ethnic groups
according to decreasing levels of socio-economic status**

SES Index	White children			Coloured children			Indian Children		
	N	Mean	S.d.	N	Mean	S.d.	N	Mean	S.d.
20	222	131,0	24,0	15	129,7	23,4	6	139,5	21,3
19	327	125,4	23,5	20	125,3	22,7	12	117,0	23,6
18	313	123,2	23,7	32	110,8	24,7	21	118,9	22,0
17	285	118,9	25,0	56	105,7	26,2	28	117,0	22,9
16	199	114,7	25,1	63	99,7	23,2	47	115,5	24,3
15	141	108,7	25,6	85	99,9	22,4	46	105,8	25,9
14	95	108,1	24,6	108	102,8	27,0	41	104,5	27,3
13	69	105,8	24,7	95	94,6	28,0	42	107,6	22,4
12	50	108,0	26,8	105	93,4	26,7	38	98,7	26,5
11	25	96,4	22,2	99	91,3	25,3	53	97,4	29,9
10	18	99,9	19,6	100	91,3	26,5	35	96,6	31,0
9	17	90,9	30,1	90	91,3	25,8	43	89,7	23,5
8	6	97,0	27,8	118	79,6	26,8	46	93,5	27,9
7	4	98,8	26,4	94	83,1	25,2	38	95,5	22,9
6	5	86,6	45,8	81	82,2	23,4	46	87,1	21,0
5	4	89,5	21,8	98	82,4	25,5	38	86,6	25,3
4	0			98	75,4	27,5	37	83,9	25,3
3	1	126,0	---	76	79,4	26,3	30	84,8	23,1
2	0			75	80,3	23,0	29	79,8	23,4
1	0			304	75,8	23,9	69	73,7	23,4

NOTE The version of the GSAT used in this study had 175 items, but the final version may contain less items.

From van den Berg (1985), p.7.

Table 1

DETERMINING A CRITERION OF SELECTION FAIRNESS

This issue has been closely examined by the courts in the USA; the guidelines used for achieving equal employment opportunity in an organisation require that employers should analyse (a) **their own workforce** and (b) **the relevant labour markets** from which they recruit, in order to determine the proportions of the various sub-groups employed in the relevant job categories. If significant deviations occur between these two sets of figures, then reasonable remedial action is expected from the employer to match his workforce to the labour market proportions (unless the employer can demonstrate valid reasons for discrepancies). The US Supreme Court (c.f. International Brotherhood of Teamsters vs US, 1977) has proposed the following ultimate criterion for measuring fair employment practice: discrimination can be considered absent. If the workforce of any organisation is reasonably representative of suitably qualified individuals from the disadvantaged groups in the relevant labour market from which employees are hired. This does **not** mean that the workforce should necessarily reflect the total population ratios of the country as a whole! It does mean that, for an organisation to be classed as an equal employer, its workforce should reflect the characteristics of the relevant labour market from which it recruits. This approach implies that a reasonable effort is made to recruit from all disadvantaged groups, and it provides a measurable and intuitively meaningful criterion of equal employment opportunity, which can be used as a target in drawing up short, medium and long term manpower plans.

Obviously, the specific strategic positions of different types of organisations, in terms of their products, clients, shareholders, technology, etcetera, will make each analysis and action programme unique. Large consumer or international organisations vulnerable to boycotts or strikes would need to move boldly and visibly towards fairer employment proportions, whereas smaller low profile

organisations with specialised clients might find proportional employment targets onerous; small privately owned organizations are exempted from compliance with equal opportunities legislation in the USA.

Overseas experience in introducing this approach to achieve fair selection practice indicates that targets should be reasonably flexible, and clearly identified as key performance areas of the responsible line managers.

PROBLEMS OF THE PROPORTIONAL EMPLOYMENT MODEL

This model is not without problems - the first one is the apparent paradox of using racial targets to remove unfair racial discrimination. This is, however, considered to be unavoidable if claims of equal employment are to be objectively verified.

An assumption underlying this proportional representation model is that equally qualified people from advantaged and disadvantaged groups are equally equipped to cope with the job. At school-leaver level this is a questionable assumption in the South African situation, but the model will help to focus attention on inequalities in education, which would hopefully speed up their removal.

A practical problem may arise from the need to quantify the **potential** eligibility of different groups for general entrance level jobs, such as sales and clerical positions, which do not require specialised qualifications. Surveys may be conducted to infer the size of the potential labour markets in such cases.

BENEFITS OF PROPORTIONAL EMPLOYMENT

This approach for achieving fair selection has been adopted by the law courts and enforcement agencies monitoring claims of unfair employment in the USA; organisations using selection techniques which result in disproportionate group representation can be asked to prove that these techniques are valid. Although many employers disliked the model because of the constraints it placed on their selection practices, it has brought about increased employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups, and led to more realistic use of psychometric tests. The outcome of this approach will be the eventual integration of the organisation at all levels, in proportion to the number of qualified individuals eligible from the different groups. The move towards an integrated organisation is considered by Mberdyk (1986) to represent "..... the only realistic long-term model of human resources utilisation (for South Africa)"; he is of the opinion that other models of advancement (displacement of whites/africanisation of jobs, vertical differentiation, etcetera) are, at best "..... interim stages in the achievement of the integration model". Adoption of the model is likely to make little immediate impact on employment patterns in high level technical and managerial jobs because of the existing shortage of skills in these areas, but a major move could be expected in entrance level positions, such as general clerical, technical and sales positions requiring no experience and only a matric qualification.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Since the proportional employment model does not address the problem of the existing shortage of skills amongst disadvantaged

groups, affirmative action needs to be considered as an appropriate strategy in achieving equitable employment opportunities. In this regard, one often encounters heated rejection of "reverse discrimination", which is usually capped by the injunction that one should heed the findings of the wellknown Bakke court case in the USA, which **appears** to reject "reverse discrimination". It is instructive to look more closely at this case, since it summarises many arguments which are bandied about on this issue of affirmative action. It concerns one Allan Bakke, who could not claim to belong to any disadvantaged group in the USA; after his application to the Medical School of the University of California had been rejected twice, he decided to sue the faculty because they set aside 16% of their seats for disadvantaged students, some of whom obtained lower grade averages and ability scores than he did, and yet gained admission to the School. His complaint was that this affirmative-action programme prejudiced his chance of being admitted to the Medical School and, in so doing, violated certain clauses in the American constitution, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of colour, race, sex or national origin. The nine judges of the US Supreme Court who heard the appeal of this case produced six differing opinions. Two of these six opinions were ultimately supported by four judges apiece, and the casting vote came from one judge, whose separate opinion agreed with parts of the two major opinions, although he used different reasoning to reach his conclusions. This indicates the complexity and divisiveness of this issue. The Medical School was eventually ordered to admit Bakke but, more significantly, in another five to four votes, the court held that some forms of "race conscious" selection procedures can be constitutional. The relevance of this is that South Africa, like the USA, has a history of unfair racial discrimination in employment practices, which will require

remedial action if there is to be a move towards more equitable employment opportunities for all groups. Subsequent US court findings have reaffirmed that, under certain circumstances, it is not unfair to take remedial steps to assist individuals from historically disadvantaged groups. It is thus a misinterpretation of the case to conclude, that because the courts ordered the University of California to admit Bakke, this provides a reason for rejecting the principle of affirmative action as illegal or unfair; one of the specific circumstances which the court identified as necessitating affirmative action, is in cases where selection techniques are proved to be biased against groups. Since the research discussed previously indicates that this is, in fact, likely to be the case in South Africa, it is concluded that affirmative action is a legitimate strategy for redressing the legacy of racial discrimination in the workplace.

CONCLUSION

The difficult social, economic and political circumstances in which human resource practitioners operate might make the quest for fair employment testing and selection seem an unnecessary luxury.

However, as Poolman (1985) notes, South African common law requires that all human conduct be measured in terms of "reasonable" behaviour, and in the labour relations system, the duty to act fairly is a duty demanded of the tripartite interest groups. From the point of view of effective human resources management, Beer et al (1984) conclude from their analysis of successful American organisations that managers at all levels of the organisation are required to recruit, select and promote employees in a way which is consistent with business requirements,

employee needs and standards of fairness. If the decisions taken by organisations are not congruent with the norms of society, then the legitimacy of the organisation's authority is at risk. Management ignores the demand for an end to unfair racial discrimination in employment practices at the probable cost of their legitimacy and therefore their longterm survival.

COPING WITH CHANGE : COUNSELLING FOR EMPLOYEES

J T Cook

I am sure there is no need to provide figures in support of the proposition that in S.A. we have entered a period of very rapid and pervasive change. Nor do I need to convince you that South Africans are feeling a certain sense of strain and foreboding.

A colleague, John Duckitt, used the Psychiatric Symptoms Index to measure stress symptoms in a group of white South Africans similar to a group of Americans in Chicago on whom the PSI had been applied. A comparison of the levels of these symptoms (Table 2) indicates clearly that these South Africans were considerably more stressed than their American counterparts. The alarmingly high incidence of coronary heart disease in S.A. also suggests that we are a nation ill at ease with our situation.

SYMPTOMS OF STRESS	S.A.	U.S.
TOTAL	18,3	10,5
ANXIETY	15,2	7,0
DEPRESSION	16,5	10,4
ANGER	28,8	18,4
COGNITIVE DISTURBANCE	20,7	12,4

Table 2

All this presents some people with a wonderful opportunity. History is being made. There can be few places which offer as great a challenge to the adventurous as South Africa does. But for others, the rate of change is highly stressful.

People who find change exhilarating can be described as experiencing "eustress", from the Greek syllable "eu" meaning good. Those who find change upsetting experience "dystress", or "bad" stress.

In a recent book on organizational culture, Deal has contributed a thought-provoking chapter called: "Cultural Change: Opportunity, silent killer, or metamorphosis?" He argues that the culture of an organisation serves to give meaning to the work of the organization's members, and thus becomes a very important part of their Identity.

So he offers two themes in his chapter:

1. Change is experienced as personal and collective loss. Changes in values, loss of heroes or "story tellers", and change of rituals, ceremonies or symbols cause a breaking of attachments which anchor people in the safety of the familiar. So he suggests that people experiencing a significant change of this sort go through a process which is similar to that of bereavement.
2. Rituals can help to achieve the transition required. Rituals can take many forms, such as seminars to discuss a particular development, symbolic ceremonies, or social events. The recent events to celebrate the change in logo and name from Barclays to First National Bank illustrate rituals to ease transition.

Deal suggests that change and culture are opposites: the stronger the organisation's culture, the more resistant will its members be to change. Thus he would expect some of the "excellent" companies described in In Search of Excellence to

be encountering difficulties now because of their strong cultures. I think this may be over-stated, and would prefer to reformulate his point as follows: To the extent that change is felt to threaten the cultural bases of a person's identity, to that extent change will be resisted - unless the person discovers at the same time a viable alternative basis for his or her identity.

Deal goes on to make the point that we have tended to attribute resistance to change to the wrong causes, failing to understand its roots in loss.

But, what sort of change leads to this difficulty in coping? Are there certain events which are more stressful than others?

Twenty to thirty years ago researchers "discovered" stress and the effect change has in creating it. Pioneers in this were Holmes and Rahe. They developed the Social Readjustment Rating Scale, in which they listed 43 life events and gave them weights according to the impact they had and the degree of readjustment required to cope with them afterwards. I have picked out just a few of these items here.

	<u>Impact</u>
Death of Spouse	100
Divorce	73
Marriage	50
Change in Financial State	38
Change to Different Line of Work	36
Outstanding Personal Achievement	28
Wife begins or stops work	26
Change in work hours or conditions	20
Change in social activities	18
Christmas	12

Approximately 80% of people with a score above 300 developed major illnesses within two years.

They obtained quite positive correlations between high scores (over 300) on their scale and physical illness and also psychological strain.

So the bad news is that if we in S.A. are under exceptionally high levels of stress, then we would expect to be much more subject to the diseases of stress, which include (all from correlational studies which established a significant relationship with reported stress):

TB, diabetes, arthritis, cancer, heart disease, depression, schizophrenia, neurosis, accidents, sport injuries and poor academic performance.

The good news however is that after some years researchers became disillusioned with this line of research.

Not all studies conducted confirmed the relationship between life events and stress, and even when they did, the correlations were modest. It also was not clear whether the stress was causing the illness or the illness was causing stress. And it was clear that the same event (e.g. changing work) could mean vastly different things for people in different circumstances. What seemed to be important was not just what happened, but the person's attribution - did he or she regard this as stressful? And attention needed to be given to chronic stressful circumstances, such as poverty or powerlessness.

What then are the factors which distinguish between people who cope well with change and those who do not?

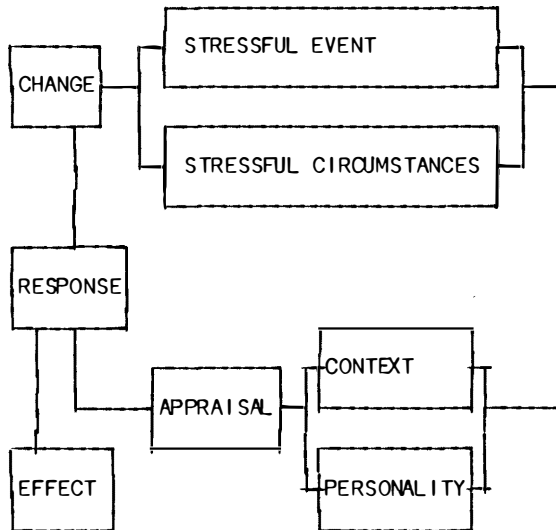


Figure 1

Social Support. This has been the most widely researched buffer variable of stress. A very impressive body of findings has supported the hypothesis that warm, supportive relationships at home, among friends, among colleagues and from employers reduce stress symptoms.

I think this is particularly relevant in S.A., where one's social position occupies so central a place in one's experience of life. Up till now, for example, the marginal position of people from disadvantaged communities has been shown to inhibit their ability to cope in the work place. Black Advancement programmes have tried to address this problem, but the very description "Black Advancement" itself emphasises difference and possibly compounds the problem of isolation and relative lack of actual power which a member of such a programme might experience in a predominantly white environment.

But as such programmes become more sophisticated and successful, the definition of who is at the core of an organisation and who is marginal is going to change, and individuals and groups who previously sat comfortably near the core of the company are going to discover that they have been shunted out onto a limb - without perhaps realising that this has happened.

This is why white resistance to Black Advancement, which Dr Franks will be dealing with later, is not only an organisational issue, but also an intensely human issue of people whose "comfort zones" within an organisation have been radically disturbed, who therefore are no longer sure where and how they fit into the culture of the organisation, who experience this as loss, and thus are subject to higher levels of stress. Career development programmes for one sector of an organisation's workforce therefore implies, I believe, the need for career development counselling opportunities for all sections of the workplace.

This brings us to the factor of control. People queue up in a playground to pay money for the privilege of riding on the roller coaster. It is a frightening, but also enjoyable experience. But put those same people through the same physical experiences on a suburban train, and they would be terrified and very unhappy. The difference is that we feel we can control whether or not we take that ride on the roller coaster, and we can predict that we shall emerge safely at the other end. The whole experience is controlled. But a train going through the same gyrations would manifestly be out of control. The roller coaster of the corporate fasttrack is exhilarating for those who believe they are in control of their own careers. It is terrifying for those who do not have that sense of control.

You may know of Seligman's learned helplessness experiments. A dog which is put in a cage in which electric shocks can be

administered through the floor will, of course, jump to safety as soon as the current is switched on. When the option of escaping the shock is closed off, however, the dog learns after a while that there is no point in jumping, and he is reduced to a quivering heap of anxiety in the corner of the cage, waiting for the next painful shock. The interesting point is that even when that dog is moved to a cage where there is an escape route, he still will not jump. He has learned to be helpless.

Seligman took this concept a bit further and applied it to depression. He suggested that people are more prone to depression if they have a characteristic style of explaining bad events which regards these unpleasant circumstances as

- * Stable (i.e. unlikely to change) rather than unstable
- * Global rather than specific (i.e. affecting the whole of life), and
- * Having internal rather than external causes (i.e. it is some weakness in my character which has put me in this predicament).

Subsequent studies have indicated that this gloomy attributional style is indeed associated with more depression, lower marks at university, a higher incidence of death from cancer and poorer performance and higher turnover among insurance sales reps - which is of course a job requiring the ability to cope well with failure. So a sense of helplessness increases the experience of distress. A sense of control increases eustress.

Particularly interesting is the interaction between the factor control and the Type A personality. The Type A is someone who

needs to be in control. For them lack of control is associated with particularly high levels of distress. So being Type A does not necessarily condemn one to experiencing stress symptoms, but the combination of a Type A personality and frustrating circumstances can be lethal.

It is interesting that in a survey of anger in a large South African organisation, Robinson found that the highest levels of anger were expressed by Senior Officers, which is a rank just below management. They had enough responsibility to experience stressful demands, without enough latitude to feel that they could assert control over these demands at work. So they had higher levels of anger than either managers (who experienced even greater demands, but did have latitude and could control events) and clerks, who had neither demands nor control.

The third factor is feedback. This is in fact linked to the issue of control, but I have listed it separately because it is one factor which does offer a company a straightforward way of helping its employees become better copers.

Your employees need to know, from people who matter, what they are doing well, and when they did well in the past. And they need exposure to models who can show them the way. One of our aims in career development counselling in the NIPR is to discover with the client where his or her strong points are, and then to describe the present situation in terms of positive achievements rather than mistakes. Obviously it is important to recognise and learn from mistakes; but it is even more important to recognise and build on achievements.

Preparation for change. I do not think I need to say much about what might appear to be an obvious factor in coping, except to note how seldom people think to do the obvious. Research does

show that people cope better with stressful changes when they have considered the consequences, examined alternative ways of either avoiding or coping with the effects, and then put their plans into action.

We have seen that context determines whether or not a particular event will be regarded as eustressful or distressful. But a person's personality also enters the equation.

A very interesting study was undertaken by R Hilkner, the medical director of the Bell Telephone Co, at a time when Bell was undergoing very drastic changes, both through internal re-organisation and by governmental demands for affirmative action and curbing of monopolistic practices.

Hilkner noticed that many of the company's senior executives, whom he judged were most exposed to stress, showed no symptoms of strain and were in fact the healthiest members of staff. He decided that the three characteristics of these hardy personality types were

- * Commitment i.e. believing in the truth, importance and interest value of who one is and what one is doing; with commitment to others.
- * Control i.e. tendency to believe and act as if one has influence over the course of life's events.
- * Challenge i.e. tendency to value change and unpredictability as opportunity and incentive for growth.

These three characteristics describe the hardy personality. One of the interesting findings about the hardy personality is that it has a very particular relationship with the factor of social

support. Researchers have found that under conditions of stress less hardy personalities have evidenced greater symptoms of physical illness when given increasing levels of social support. This partially contradicts the point made earlier that social support reduces the effect of stress. They found, however, that this unexpected result does not apply at the work place - presumably because colleagues are less likely to tolerate physical illness as a means of coping than are family members.

A number of other personality factors have emerged in various studies which we shall not go into here. They include

High self-esteem

Cognitive flexibility and tolerance for ambiguity

Effective problem-solving skills

Higher anxiety threshold

High level of motivation (need achievement)

Physical fitness

and others

Appraisal The point where context and personality come together is in how we think about the stressful events and circumstances we encounter. This is the mental definition we give to an experience.

Now, if we look at this whole model we can see that there are a number of points at which we could intervene to help people cope with change. Coping has been described as "the process of managing external and/or internal demands that tax or exceed the resources of the person". So we can either try to reduce demands or increase resources.

The three counselling interventions which I shall describe shortly are intended to increase coping resources and help people to think

about change differently. But there is no contradiction between this and the equally important task of preventing problems by reducing the demands placed on people. Thus Deo Strumpfer makes the point that the most fundamental form of "stress management" in South Africa ought to be activities which address the social, political, economic and educational conditions which influence the eustress-dystress balance in individual experience.

Prevention is certainly preferable to cure. If conditions cannot be changed, then the next step in prevention is to identify those most at risk and target your interventions to help them. Some of the symptoms to watch for in identifying those experiencing stress are listed in Table 4.

IDENTIFYING THOSE AT RISK

WORKING LATER/ABSENTEEISM

DIFFICULTY IN MAKING DECISIONS

INCREASES IN NUMBER OF CARELESS MISTAKES

MISSING DEADLINES OR FORGETTING APPOINTMENTS

INTERPERSONAL DIFFICULTIES

FOCUSING ON MISTAKES AND PERSONAL FAILURES

Some of us in the NIPR are looking at developing an Early Warning System to help companies in their stress prevention or coping programme.

THREE COUNSELLING CONTRIBUTIONS

1. Group Work

I shall not spend much time on describing the various models of stress prevention and coping skills training which are available.

In one form or another they all encompass a stage of conceptualising what is going on, a stage of acquiring the particular skill required, and then a stage of rehearsing and applying it.

This broad framework can be applied to relaxation training, meditation training, biofeedback training, time management training, interpersonal skills training, assertiveness training, and so on. Basically these are all aimed at changing habits of behaviour and habits of thinking.

Group approaches have the advantage of cost-effectiveness, of reducing discomfort by allowing people to interact with others whom they discover are grappling with the same sort of problems, of increasing motivation through the influence of group compliance pressures, and of harnessing the therapeutic effect of mutual help, support and encouragement.

A second kind of group which has to be taken into account in considering change is the very powerful effect of informal peer group pressures. An individual may be prevented from making the behavioural and cognitive adjustments required to cope with changed circumstances by the fear of rejection by an informal peer group which is unable to make that transition. So in his recent article in the IPM Journal, Professor Deo Strumpfer makes a strong case for the group rather than the individual being the unit of change. To require individual change may place intolerable strain on that individual if group pressures are not taken into account.

2. General Counselling

Firth and Shapiro report a recent British study in which employees with exceptionally high levels of stress were referred for

psychotherapy. They concluded that in such cases, individual counselling was more appropriate than group stress management programmes because of the high proportion of issues related to relationships and self image, which could only be dealt with safely in the privacy of an individual interview.

So it seems that an individual counselling service should be an important part of a company's plan to help employees cope with the stress of change. In-house counsellors and external counsellors have both been used successfully, and your choice here may depend on factors such as size of the company and convenience. External referrals may be made to appropriate organizations such as SANCA, Family Life, or ourselves. Alternatively your local branch of the PASA, which includes the Institutes of Counselling Psychology and Clinical Psychology, may be approached for a list of private counsellors or clinical psychologists who may be willing either to take referrals from you or even consult by running a private practice on your premises.

3. Career Development Counselling.

I have kept the best for last, because I really believe that career development counselling is an exceptionally effective and efficient way of providing social support, helping an employee gain a measure of control over his or her life, providing feedback about strengths and achievement, and preparing an employee for further developments - the four environmental factors we noted could buffer the effect of stress. It permits personal counselling and analysis of coping style. And it achieves all this while assisting the organization to place its human resources most effectively, achieving a better person-environment fit, and therefore contributing to the organization's ability to cope with change.

Now I need to draw a distinction between career development programmes and policies as a function of management, and what I am talking about here is career development counselling. Management decisions about developing its human resources are of course necessary, important and helpful. But in terms of what we have discussed so far, you can see that if implemented in a way which leaves the employee feeling like a helpless pawn in a large and mysterious organisation where decisions are made in quarters which are inaccessible to him or her, then even positive, career enhancing moves may in fact serve to increase dystress rather than eustress.

Career development counselling, on the other hand, brings the employee in as a partner in assessing his or her own achievements, strengths, potential and life goals, and matching these to the organization's needs and the opportunities in it for the person. A good fit can then usually be worked out between the two, and an action plan developed whereby the employee and his or her company can implement this.

The model we use for this at the NIPR at present is that when a company requests us to offer career development counselling to an employee, we make a visit to the company to assess how the individual fits in now, and what opportunities or possibilities exist in the future. We also ask for an assurance that this exercise has to do with career development and not retrenchment - if we are to make the best of the exercise, the employee has to be confident that we are all working with him for his benefit, and not assembling evidence to justify getting rid of him.

Then he comes to the NIPR for a comprehensive psychological assessment and in-depth interview with a counsellor, during which he is given feedback from the assessment, and he and the counsellor together derive possible directions for the future.

Then the counsellor writes a report on their conclusions, copies of which are sent to the company as well as to the employee. Finally, we offer the option of a three-way interview in which employee, manager and the counsellor can discuss the report together.

Management Studies Division has been trying out some promising new instruments, and in my own division we have some ideas here too, to improve the aspect of the assessment which has to do with the way in which the person fits into and relates to the organization and its culture. The next step we have identified in our research is to apply this on a more systematic rather than ad hoc basis throughout an organization, or to assist the organization to implement its own career development counselling programme, and monitor the effects of the programme so as to improve the approach.

Let me conclude, then, by saying that we cannot avoid the future. As a country we have entered a period of very rapid and most probably very traumatic change. We are likely to see human tragedies on a vast scale. Our employees will not, of course, be exempt from this, nor will our organizations. In the face of this it is essential to make counselling facilities available. But more than simply helping people to cope with change, counselling can empower people to be the ones who will create a future worth waiting for.

IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGERIAL POTENTIAL

A Jordaan

INTRODUCTION

Management has always been part of and affected by movement and thought in society. Indeed, managerial effectiveness has implications not only for an organisation's success but also for the well-being of any society. As we progress through the eighties in South Africa with the accompanying economic, political and societal changes, it is clear that the demands made on managers are rapidly changing. Not only does South Africa lack managers, but the process of management is also being redefined.

While the relative accuracy of occupational forecasts, projections and scenarios is debatable, it is accepted that South Africa is both a developed and developing country, and that there will be a continuing need for skilled and managerial resources.

The manager of tomorrow (and the effective manager even today) has been described in different ways. He is very much part of the organisation's survival strategy : It has been suggested that both the strategies and effectiveness of organisations reflect the values and perceptions of powerful actors in the organisations. There is a need for a capacity to create and communicate a compelling vision of what is desired, and the ability to gain understanding and commitment to such a vision from subordinates. These managers have been called change agents and transformational leaders, someone who motivates others to do more and to go beyond own expectations of performance.

The traditional source of managers in South Africa is well known. In 1986 more than 90% of South Africa's management was white and predominantly male. If organisations are to meet the current challenge for change as embodied amongst others in the expectations and demands of the workforce, managers will need to be drawn from other sources. However, if organisations are to survive, more than ever before their managers must be competent at what they do.

The emphasis on black advancement has ushered in an awareness of the need for effective human resources and people development. The process of identifying and developing managers - of growing managerial talent - has become an urgent need. All the more so as the process today cannot merely emulate the ways in which managers emerged in the past. The present-day organisation in South Africa has already entered a different historical time with its implications for changing ways of organisational functioning.

IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING MANAGERIAL POTENTIAL: POINTS OF DEPARTURE

Research indicates that organisations characterised by excellence have policies that promote an organisation culture in which management makes a conscious attempt to develop subordinates with leadership potential. In discussing the identification and development of South African management potential, the need for an integrated development strategy has been spelt out. Statements of intent must be followed by the development of comprehensive and integrated strategies to attain objectives.

Various assumptions underlie this principle. The following are vitally important to the success of any programme aimed at producing competent managers:

- Development strategies need to consider the different realities that confront the organisation and the prospective manager;
- To "grow" managers implies a developmental process that takes place within the organisation and which must be identified or described and used. Identification of individual potential must go hand-in-hand with identifying growth-enhancing processes/situations/events in the organisation; and
- Commitment must breed commitment. Management must demonstrate its commitment to trainee managers by displaying respect for the individual. An important way of communicating this commitment is by involving the trainee manager in the process of development. Being involved fosters a personal sense of ownership and commitment from the trainee.

A MODEL FOR IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING MANAGERS

Against this background, the NIPR has developed a model (see Figure 1) for the identification and development of managers. The dynamics of the model are discussed by briefly indicating how it implements the abovementioned guiding beliefs.

Development strategies need to consider the different realities that confront the organisation and the prospective manager.

The main elements involved in identifying and developing managerial potential, namely the person with his or her personal background, the management role itself, and the organisation with the demands of its external and internal environments, must be viewed together continuously (as illustrated in the model). A full audit must be done of the ways in which the organisation functions both on a formal and informal level. Organisation

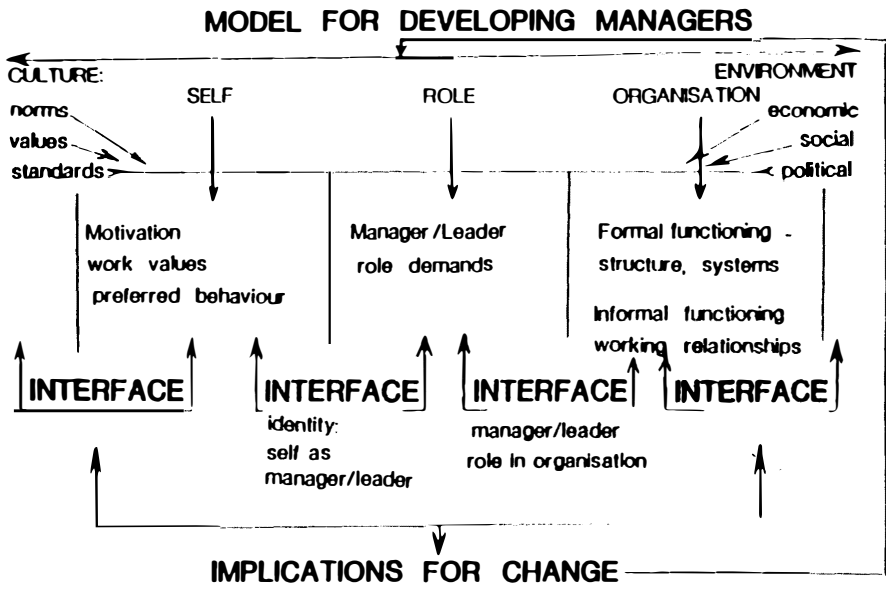


Figure 2

structure and systems, as well as the value of different ways in which people interact with one another in the organisation, must be considered.

To develop as manager the trainee must gain the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. However, to develop competently the trainee must identify with his or her management role. Unless the trainee manager feels reasonably at ease and secure in dealing with the changing and often ambiguous demands of a management position, his commitments to a training programme or the position will be lacking.

Identification of individual potential must go hand-in-hand with identifying growth-enhancing processes/situations/events in the organisation and involving the person in his development

Identification of potential is a critical first step to successful people development. There is a need for an integrated model of managerial competence as well as one for individual competence that extends beyond the measurement of traits and skills, and illuminates other competencies that exist in the person. By comparing these two models across a group of individuals, management potential or its absence can be highlighted.

In identifying potential one wishes to predict competence that leads to effective job performance. Traditionally competence has been measured by defining and testing for areas of knowledge, skills and traits relevant to the requirements of a position. While these attributes are important elements of competence, they are not the only ones. An assessment must be made as well of the person's self-schema and what typically drives or directs his or her behaviour: by what process does the person perform effectively.

In the NIPR's view an important part of managerial competence therefore relates to the fact that a person has a unique and individual way of dealing with his or her environment and with interpersonal relationships, of problem solving and decision making.

People will prefer to use those behaviours or approaches with which they feel most comfortable. No one approach or set of behaviours is best: each approach has its own strengths and weaknesses depending on the demands of the situation.

While it is accepted that cognitive testing has its role to play, it is also believed that an assessment of non-cognitive aspects is equally important to facilitate matching the person and the position.

Development of the individual manager is influenced not only by who and what the person is but also by his or her environment. By assessing and then informing the person of his or her characteristic way of functioning and how this relates to job requirements, he or she is offered the opportunity to become more effective by developing insight into own behaviour to organise and understand his or her relationships with others and the work environment better.

To illustrate meet John. He is a 24-year old trainee manager with a banking concern. After an initial unsuccessful attempt at study he now wishes to continue his education particularly as he is performing well in his present position. This is his third position - prior to joining the bank he had been involved in sales and running a small business and had become disillusioned with both.

His profile indicated that he is highly intelligent. He enjoys

working with ideas and is thoughtful in approaching a matter - he prefers to think before he acts. Being reflective he is more interested in the idea behind the job than seeing results. He is factually minded, careful with detail, thorough and methodical. He wants to get to the bottom of things and wants to know more about the job before beginning. He will rarely jump to conclusions and is slow to make up his mind. He is more of a listener than a talker and is sensitive to the feelings and needs of others. He relates well to others but does not enjoy the "limelight". He is not strongly assertive or competitive as he prefers to achieve through mastering the task so that he is more in competition with himself than others.

While he enjoys an ordered and planned working environment and is happy to work within an existing structure, he resists receiving cut and dried instructions on how tasks should be done.

In comparing this profile to his job demands a number of points of conflict became clear. His cautious, thoughtful approach could be interpreted as indecisiveness and an ability to take risks. Coupled with his certain lack of assertiveness, he might be considered not ambitious enough. As management often requires a selectively superficial way of dealing with relevant issues, his preference for getting to the bottom of a matter could trip him up. His need for harmony could also imply that he might allow his decisions to be influenced unduly by the likes and dislikes of others.

It was suggested that he use these pointers to guide his career development. John saw one immediate application: he indicated that he would like to discuss his profile with his superior who had shown considerable interest and encouragement for John's progress during the past year.

Research indicates a myriad of potential growth-enhancing processes, situations or events within an organisation. Most eventually relate to the process whereby the individual becomes part of the organisation and where he or she has learnt about the basic goals of the organisation; the basic responsibilities that are required of him or her in the role that he or she is placed in as well as which behaviour patterns are required for effective performance in that role. In addition the guiding beliefs of the organisation, or rules and principles of acceptable ways in which to perceive, think, feel and behave, must be learnt and absorbed.

The process of organisational socialisation, organisational integration or organisational acculturation must take place effectively if the trainee manager is to develop credibility and clout. It is important to identify aspects that hinder or facilitate this process.

In our involvement, two aspects are viewed currently by NIPR as important in facilitating management development. Firstly, criteria for performance that are specific and agreed upon by superiors and subordinates need to be identified. Expectations of performance should be made quite clear.

Secondly, superior-subordinate (and other) developmental relationships emerge as important and necessary for most young managers to achieve success. An individualised consideration of others as well as a developmental or mentoring orientation towards subordinates is essential for effective leadership today and developing and effective leadership of tomorrow.

The mentor relationship and networking deal directly with the empowerment of the trainee and his ability to move towards the core of the organisation. If we wish to produce transformational leaders, they need to be exposed to the example of

transformational leadership.

In conclusion, there are no quick-fix or easy answers to identifying and developing managers, whoever they are. The success of these programmes hinges on an understanding and commitment to change throughout the organisation.

CHANGES IN ORGANISATION CULTURE: IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICE

Dr Jople Van Rooyen

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a society in transition. The changes we face as a country involve a need to reassess existing structures, systems, ideologies, values, attitudes and behaviours. These changes are also reflected in changes required of organisations. South African organisations are microcosms of society and consequently serve as change agents spearheading the processes of adaptation and change required to create a new way of life and a new culture for all our people.

South African organisations, in meeting the economic and technological challenges of our times are, however, faced with the very real problem of, on the one hand, a scarcity of skilled, professional and managerial expertise and on the other, an oversupply of unskilled and semi-skilled labour. Organisations are also faced by an urgent need for increased labour productivity.

In striving to develop organisations of excellence, management is not only faced with challenges to deal with an increase in change and uncertainty emanating from the environment external to the organisation, but they also have to deal with changing labour resources which often are less experienced and less able to deal with organisational realities than in the past.

In times past increased product, financial and marketing expertise could largely assist organisations to remain viable. Present-day

demands however, emphasize the importance of labour resource planning, the development and utilization of human skills and the nature of organisation social responsibility behaviour as critical issues to ensure continued organisation competitiveness and effectiveness.

ORGANISATION CULTURE

Present-day organisation effectiveness is characterized by an ability to adapt to change and by a realization of the implications of adaptation for existing management systems, structures, procedures and techniques. An awareness of the importance of people, their skills, capabilities, commitment, cooperation and trust has become central to the demands placed on managerial leadership. In adapting to change, managers must however have a clear vision of what the mission of the organisation is; where it is going and the implications of any change on existing organisation functioning and on individual values and skills. Managerial leadership must also realize that, in recognition of the quality of the existing and available labour resources and with respect for their human dignity, there is a need to demand (in the best sense of the word) that each individual worker should accept responsibility and become an involved contributor in meeting the challenges of our times. Adaptation requires team involvement - but not team involvement through increased participative management only. Application of the SWOT analysis principle is required for groups and individuals to guide them into acceptance of increased co-responsibility for achieving effective change.

This is no easy task. Dealing with change may require a new style of management and it will require adaptation of existing organisation norms, values, traditions - it will require the

development of new organisation cultures.

Generally speaking, culture can be defined as a theory of the code of conduct to be followed and the nature of life games being played by different groups or subgroups. Culture can thus relate to a set of common theories of behaviour or mental programmes that are shared by groups of individuals.

Organisations as social systems, and in their functioning, are based on attributes of human symbolizing and the learning and behaviour patterning capacities of employees - as such specific organisation cultures can develop.

Through leadership and in the combining and integrating of individual cultural norms, traditions and behaviours a specific organisation culture develops over time, based on specific structures and procedures, shared norms and values, traditions, stories, myths and legends which guide worker behaviour and result in statements like

"This is the way things are done here" and
"This is what we stand for".

Organisation culture can be called the normative glue that binds the organisation and its workers together, and such cultural norms guide people in their functional, professional, interpersonal behaviour in the workplace. Accepted work behaviour can furthermore differ for different organisations.

Leadership forms a core element of any organisation's culture and any strategy aimed at adaptation or restructuring the organisation (and consequently its culture) is therefore the responsibility of its management. Organisation culture is, however, also influenced by the nature and expectations of employees, their experiences of

being accepted, of belonging and of being integrated in (being part of) the organisation as a whole. Workers must experience meaningfulness in terms of their own quality of worklife and in the leadership and culture of the organisation within which they are employed if commitment, co-operation and trust are to develop.

CHANGING ORGANISATION CULTURES

Traditionally the work-place in South Africa is still seen as a male domain, involving western, industrial, functional norms and behaviours.

Management (leadership) is generally accepted as white male domain. South African organisation culture thus predominantly tends to reflect white, male, industrialized and western norms, standards and behaviours. Future expectations emphasize that due to a diminishing resource of white males the nature of the work-force is bound to change. Increasing numbers of workers other than white males are already functioning effectively at all levels of organisations. It must be recognized that these "new" employees bring with them specific cultural values, expectations and behaviours which will influence the existing organisation culture. These "new" employees will be new to each other; new to the system, new to their job demands and new to the bridging which they have to do in merging different and potentially conflicting cultural role requirements. As the numbers of new employees increase and as they move into positions of leadership, changes in organisation culture will occur through a process of cultural assertiveness (cultural differences instead of cultural similarities are stressed), and through changes in organisation politics (for example non-acceptance of tokenism or paternalism and greater pressure for social and community involvement).

Managing an organisation's adaptation to demands emanating from a changing external environment is a difficult and complex matter. Having to manage internal change requirements like changing labour resources, at the same time, further emphasizes the stress demands made on managers who are already overloaded - or who are experiencing their own problems in effectively integrating different cultural role expectations whilst developing into managerial positions.

Organisation adaptation is often attempted by adding new systems, structures or procedures to the already existing way of doing things. Development is thus seen as "adding-on" rather than "adapting" according to the demands of changing circumstances. What often is required, however, is a need to change the culture of the organisation in the process of adapting. A transition is required which involves identification of change priorities which need to be dealt with in the process of transforming the culture of the organisation. This requires assessment of the existing mission of the organisation as reflected against a vision of its future objectives and a realisation that in the process of transforming changes in the internal functioning of the organisation will occur. An important issue that will have to be dealt with is the merging of expectations and worker values of people coming from different cultures.

HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES

There is no doubt that the role of human resource practitioners in assisting organisations to adapt to change will become more and more important. They will be called upon to recognise the implications of political, ideological and environmental change, to plan accordingly and to guide management in the processes of

strategic decision-making. Human resource practitioners must play a central role in the creation of new organisation cultures and in this process they are co-creators of a new way of life in South Africa.

What are some of the issues

- (i) There is a need to be aware of the social, political, economic and demographic changes taking place and changes projected for the future in order to plan for and guide and assist in meeting the organisation's labour needs.
- (ii) A greater awareness of individual values, needs, expectations and potential development issues is required (selection and counselling issues). Individual adaptation involves personal choices which need to be made with awareness of the implications of decisions for own behaviour and acceptance of responsibility for own development. Both individual and organisation will have to adapt - but according to clearly defined objectives and stated target-results. There is a need to know where you are going, how you are going to get there and how to evaluate your success on arriving.
- (iii) Individuals must be developed to become agents of change of their own circumstances. This would involve training for instance in self awareness; training for functional effectiveness; training for career development; training on how to deal with being an "O" amongst "X"'s and training in negotiation, handling of stress and networking, to name but a few priorities. Training is required to deal with change, not only as leaders and the led, but as equal partners in the creation of a new organisation

- (iv) Increased emphasis is needed for leadership training to assist in developing worker co-operation and trust through involvement, mentoring, sponsoring and counselling.
- (v) Organisation socialization will have to become a central theme of whatever form of worker induction is followed. As part of this socialization workers could for instance be made aware of community development projects which may be of benefit to them (for example literacy training) or with which they could become involved themselves.
- (vi) Issues which should not be overlooked are the reality of some form of backlash as cultural assertiveness starts taking place (e.g. white male backlash), and the resistance to change and stress because of change which employees at all work levels will experience.
- (vii) A real result of change can be employee and managerial anxiety. Feelings of anxiety may relate to fears of uncertainty, fear of failure, fear of redundancy, fear of being "over-run" by others (eg women, non-whites) and thus losing control, etc. In the handling of such feelings of fear and anxiety a loss of productivity, commitment and trust can result and an escalation of conflict can be experienced.

Training, based on insights of change requirements emanating from individuals and the environment, internal and external to the organisation, seems to be a high priority for human resource practitioners of the future. Skills required need to be identified and procedures for selection, placement and development need to be formulated to create a growth environment within which people from

different cultures can, through a process of evolution, create a new workplace culture.

We are called upon to assist not only individuals to manage personal change but to assist in managing the organisation through change - to assist in balancing human needs with those of the organisation.

Clearly, therefore, the role played by the executive and line management in creating a new culture is vital. It is unlikely that a program developed by human resource specialists will be as acceptable as one initiated and developed by the people responsible for its execution.

In final analysis however, we must remember that the issues facing human resource practitioners in their development of other workers are also the issues they themselves will have to attend to.

We must remember that in the process of assisting others to adapt and transform we also need to assess our own preferred ways of operating and to question the relevance of our existing knowledge and expertise. We must accept that in assisting the old to make way for the new we may also have to change.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE AND ADVANCEMENT : GUIDELINES FOR INTERVENTION

Dr P E Franks

I want to expand on some of the points made about change by the previous speakers. Change is happening in the world context, not only in the South African context. The whole world is going through what is called the information revolution, which is going to change the way we produce things and the kinds of products we produce. At the same time the world is going through an economic realignment, and nobody knows where that will end. The third world countries are saying that there must be a different sharing of economic realities, and first world countries are saying, "maybe, but we don't know how to do it yet".

The whole world is in a moment of rapid change. Within this, South Africa is going through what one could call a sociopolitico-economic realignment - nobody knows where that will end either. It is not just in South Africa that we have to deal with change. World literature on management shows there is a concerted search going on among management specialists, of all types and in all countries. They are searching for modes of management that are applicable to the present time, and to particular environments. This presents an enormous challenge, and South Africa is a kind of test tube of the whole world, providing us with a perfect milieu in which to work and search for new management modes.

Resistances arise from conflict of interest, e.g. someone is going to lose his job and someone is going to get it. This makes for conflict within the work situation, especially with the changing political situation.

We are moving, in South Africa, from what we could term "baasskap" (just to avoid any ideologies), which is where we have come from. This has been the mode of management, the white leadership principle.

The manager has to face the fact that this change will create conflicts of interest. Entrenched interests are going to be shaken up within the company, and by companies themselves. Some companies that have been with us for a long time may go out of business because they cannot adapt to the changes. Habits, attitudes, etc. from the past (e.g. "baasskap" - what the old social psychologists like to call, "survivals from the past age which remain in the new, coming age") will not change readily. Most importantly, change itself creates fear. Not necessarily, towards anything or against anybody in particular, it just creates fear or what we could call stress. This requires sensitive and judicious management.

In our environment we are experiencing much change and political realignment, and we are stuck with the history of poor education and bad relations between groups. This is not going to be easy to overcome.

From the research we have done in the Human Development Division over the last four or five years the following problems seem to be common to most companies in South Africa:

- * UPWARD AND DOWNWARD COMMUNICATION
- * DISCRIMINATION/FAVOURITISM
 - Selection
 - Career Development
 - Conditions of Service

- * RESISTANCE TO CHANGE
- * ANTAGONISM TOWARDS LABOUR UNIONS
- * ATTITUDES AND HABITS (e.g. Baasskap)

ALL OF THESE ARE INFLUENCED BY CHANGE IN THE SOCIOPOLITICAL ENVIRONMENT.

There are problems of communication, both upward and downward. The CEO's orders don't get down, and what's going on at the bottom never gets to the CEO. So there is a lack of knowledge within the company as to what is actually going on.

Discrimination and favouritism go without saying. Favouritism is linked with discrimination in the sense that it seems to be the limiting case. There is very little in the literature on the word "favouritism." I found one book published in the 1950's referring to it in Britain, but very little elsewhere. Yet, it seems to be the core issue in discrimination. People give out their favours to those they like, they don't give them to those they don't like; its as simple as that. Discrimination and favouritism affect selection, career development, and conditions of service. Dr Verster's research with one company showed that the way in which whites look at remuneration differs very radically from the way in which blacks look at remuneration. Part of this is the history of conditions of service that each group has - that whites are being paid far more than blacks. In fact blacks are still at a subsistence level. I repeat the point Laurie Schlemmer made, that whether the person in the black community is employed or unemployed really makes no difference. They are all affected by unemployment. Each employed person is supporting more or less eight to ten people. So they are not free of the unemployment situation, even if they hold a job for twenty years. They are still within the situation of unemployment.

Resistance to change will be mentioned last, for in some ways it sums up all of these processes.

Antagonism towards labour unions - I am not proposing that one should love labour unions. All I am saying is that there is a habit or an attitude towards labour unions which negates them before there have even been any negotiations. This attitude is very prevalent among white male managers. This antagonism does not allow the development of healthy labour management relations.

Attitudes and habits exist within all companies, our own is no exception. These attitudes and habits take a long time to change and one cannot just dismiss them or get rid of them very easily at all.

All of these factors are influenced by the changing sociopolitical environment and resistance to change is evident in all of these factors; this is my major topic of discussion today.

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE EFFECTS THE FOLLOWING PROCESSES IN ORGANIZATIONS:

- * THE GENERAL HUMAN RELATIONS CLIMATE
- * THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPANY POLICY
- * COMMUNICATION
- * SELECTION AND PLACEMENT
- * ADVANCEMENT IN GENERAL
- * PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS
- * TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
- * INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
- * GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
- * PRODUCTIVITY

If we look at what kinds of processes within the organization this resistance to change can affect, we find that it affects the whole organization. There is nothing that escapes from it. Change, and resistance to change, affect the general human relations climate, the morale within the company or organization.

It affects the implementation of company policies. They can be sabotaged at any level - communication, as we talked about, selection, placements, advancement in general. By general I mean that advancement and career development is not the process of choosing one person and advancing him, and then the company is "OK". It is a matter of advancing, or as Dr van Rooyen mentioned, redesigning or "transforming the organization". It is the advancement and development of the organization in general. It is not picking out one group and labelling them as those who need to be advanced, but it is in fact advancing the whole organization. Performance appraisals are affected by resistance to change and by change; training and development, industrial relations, and grievances procedures are also affected.

All of these processes contribute to productivity.

The reason we are looking at resistance to change and change itself is that we want to get our organizations to be productive. It is not a matter of pushing one political viewpoint or another, it is really a matter of how we make our organizations productive. If we reflect on the history of South Africa, it could be said that we have been in a strike situation for perhaps the past 50 years. I wonder if we have ever had productive organizations? The assumptions made in much of the literature is, "Well, we did have productivity before this black advancement thing came along, and now we don't, but we must just get back to where we were". I don't believe it is like that, I think we

should look for the opportunities in the situation and try to move on to real productivity.

Some of the strategies for resisting change

These are just some of the strategies for resisting change that we have come across through our research. Human resources managers should be aware of these.

A list of resistance strategies follows. These can be divided into overt ones and covert ones. There are those that you can see, and those that are very difficult to see.

SOME OVERT STRATEGIES FOR RESISTING CHANGE

- * BLATANT DISCRIMINATION
- * ANTI-UNIONS-FOR-BLACKS ATTITUDES
- * BLOCKING ADVANCEMENT
- * NOT TRAINING OR DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES
- * BLOCKING COMMUNICATION

1. Blatant discrimination

Overtly, there is just blatant discrimination. This is quite clear in many companies, and not even hidden by the people one interviews, which is quite surprising in this changing situation.

2. Anti-unions-for-blacks attitudes

The-anti-unions-for-blacks attitude, which we have talked about before.

3. Blocking advancement

In companies we find situations where a manager will tell you he would advance someone, and he has tried, but it just gets blocked at the regional level or wherever. Or the application just does not get processed.

4. Not training subordinates adequately

The best method for training subordinates is within the company, on the job. I am not saying that training courses are not any good, I am really just saying that the best means of training is on the job where the person has to do hands-on what is required of him in that job. This does not happen enough in most of the companies we researched.

5. Blocking communication.

This can be done in an overt way.

Some of these items are repeated below, because they can be done overtly or covertly.

SOME COVERT STRATEGIES FOR RESISTING CHANGE

- * SETTING PEOPLE UP FOR FAILURE
- * BIASED APPRAISALS AND SELECTION
- * BLOCKING ADVANCEMENT
- * BLAMING THE VICTIMS OF MANAGEMENT MISTAKES
- * NOT TRAINING SUBORDINATES ADEQUATELY
- * SEEING AND HEARING WHAT ONE WANTS TO
- * SUBVERTING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS
- * SUBVERTING GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES
- * DISCRIMINANT APPLICATION OF RULES
- * HOARDING INFORMATION
- * CREATING A CLIMATE FOR INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

ALL OF THESE HINDER THE ORGANISATION'S PRODUCTIVITY

1. Setting people up for failure

One of the problems with a lot of black advancement programs where they have concentrated on promoting black managers per se and do not look at promoting blacks in general, is that they set people up for failure. They put them into situations that are impossible to handle. Then they fall and management says "we tried and it doesn't work so we will just revert back to where we were before".

2. Biased appraisals and selection

Biased appraisals, including Jon Taylor's notion of test bias has been looked at in the NIPR. This is more covert in the sense that the person can't really say "I failed on that test, but the test is inadequate" because they are not in a position to question the test. This is a covert type of resistance to change.

3. Blocking advancement

Blocking advancement can be done covertly as well as overtly.

4. Blaming the victims for management mistakes

This is quite common in companies. I was in one company where management decided to change the kinds of clothes employees were going to wear. It turned out the women did not like the clothing they were given - these were very flimsy, very thin and left the women very open to the men as such. Management had not thought of that. They just looked for a cheap cloth to use in making the uniforms. Management then complained that the women were not happy with the uniforms; they could not really comprehend what was going on and why the women were unhappy with this management mistake. There had been no consultation with the people as to whether the cloth would be suitable. Even when it was pointed out to

them, management were still reluctant to see the point people were making.

5. Not training subordinates adequately
Often employees are not really given sufficient detail of how to perform a task.
6. Seeing and hearing what one wants. This is a really general statement. People, through their attitudes and habits from the past, tend to see what they want to see, they don't try to search for what there is to be seen. This is an important role for management to play - to look for what there is, rather than saying "oh, we've seen that before, that's what it looks like", and just carrying on.
- 7+8 Communication channels can be subverted, grievances procedures can be subverted. Perhaps the SATS strike tells us something about that, though it is difficult to tell at this time.
9. Discriminant application of rules. This is a habit from the past which is very difficult to break.
10. The hoarding of information. This brings us to one of the cruxes of advancement. If employees do not have access to information within a company, it is not possible for them to move up in the company. It is very easy for information to be hoarded.
11. Creating a climate for industrial conflict. This is similar to setting people up for failure, but it is setting people up for situations which can then break out into industrial conflict and unrest. A manager can make a racist remark which he then denies. This creates a strike, or whatever.

People can create situations very easily in a tense climate. Management has to be exceedingly careful to ensure that those stimuli do not occur.

SOME OF THE INDICATORS OF BAASSKAP IN ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- * ATTEMPTS TO CREATE AN ILLUSION OF DEVELOPMENT
- * EXCLUSION OF BLACKS FROM DECISION MAKING
- * THE DEMAND THAT BLACKS ADAPT TO "WHITE EXPECTATIONS"
- * HOARDING OF INFORMATION BY NON-BLACK STAFF
- * DISREGARD OF THE PROBLEM OF WHITE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE
- * CONSISTENT APPOINTMENT FROM OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION
- * PERFUNCTORY BUT INADEQUATE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Attempts to create an illusion of development within the organization are doomed to failure. One cannot raise a few blacks to management level in functions such as Personnel and expect that this will satisfy black aspirations in general. Half-hearted attempts at development create more problems than doing nothing, and they help to further entrench "baasskap" within the organization. The exclusion of blacks from decision making in our country and in our organizations is a sign of "baasskap".
2. The white leadership principle, "baasskap", has traditionally excluded black South Africans from the decision making processes within organizations, as well as in the government of the country as a whole. Organizations run the risk, by not including all staff in the decision making process, of being misinformed as to what the realities in the organization are. If the management wants the organization

to run smoothly and productively it needs to include, especially, black staff in the decision making process.

3. The demands that blacks adapt to white expectations. The belief (present in the literature on management advancement) is that organizations are run by whites and, therefore, if blacks want to be in them the blacks must adjust to the white organizational culture. The whole country is changing, and organizations have to change too. There is no way one can expect blacks to give up their lives to work in the company. The idea of putting blacks in white middle class suburbs and thinking this will create black managers will not work at all, it is an illusion of development.
4. The hoarding of information by non-black staff. This has been dealt with previously. However, it is an important factor, and it happens within companies, where e.g. blacks don't know what goes on in the company because nobody tells them. They do not get access to the informal information networks.
5. The disregard of the problem of white resistance to change. This is not easy to deal with. But, at the same time, cannot be disregarded. (This will be discussed further in the "Guidelines" which follow.)
6. The constant appointments of people from outside the organization. This creates many problems and is a way of maintaining "baasskap" in the sense that you are bringing someone who doesn't know the situation into the situation to do a managerial job. This does not show people within the organization that they can actually move up. It is, in fact,

telling them they can't. It is like telling them to leave the organization and try to come back, perhaps then they can move up.

7. Perfunctory but Inadequate performance appraisal and development. In the companies researched, this was a major source of irritation to black staff. They feel that they try and do their job and when it comes to their appraisal they are told, in some cases, to sign the appraisal without even having discussed it with their superiors.

These are some indications of what we are dealing with in our country, the kinds of organizations that have come to us from the past. We are dealing with organizations with their pasts. We cannot simply set up new organizations, we have to try to change the organizations, to develop them.

An attempt is made here to lay out a strategic approach to dealing with this issue. (A diagram was shown supporting attempts to conceptualize what a strategic management process was about.)

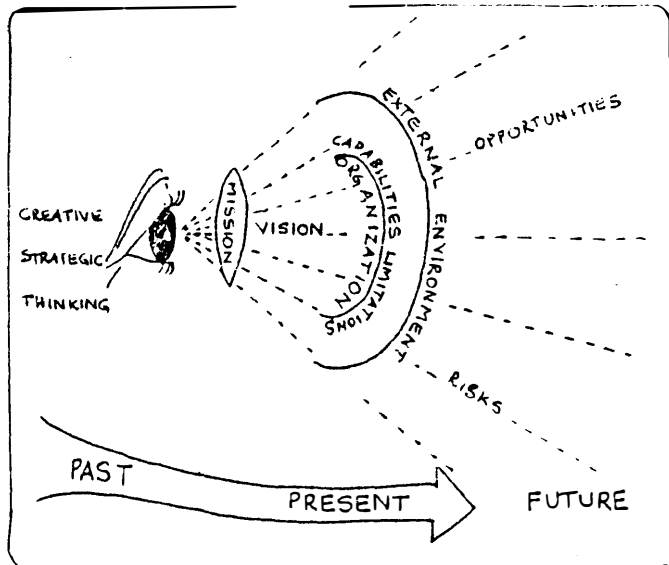


Figure 3

Behind the eye is a demand for creative strategic thinking which is a search. The answers are not known. We have to look at what there is and look at possibilities and alternatives for the future.

The mission of the organization can be compared to a lens in front of the eye - the reason for the organization. One has to know what the organization is attempting to do.

Through the lens we look at the organization in its context in the external environment. In the organization we look at the capabilities and limitations of the organization as it currently exists. In the external environment we look for opportunities and risks. We keep an eye on the risks as we move from the past to the present into the future. In terms of dealing with resistance to change and dealing with change, the following 17 guidelines were laid out for a process that a company should go through in order to try and search for a mode of management applicable in our multicultural society.

GUIDELINES

DO:

1. CLARIFY THE MISSION
2. KNOW YOUR CONTEXT
3. ESTABLISH VISION OF THE FUTURE
4. CONSULT
5. LET THESE CONSULTATIONS GUIDE YOUR STRATEGY
6. FORMULATE AND FRAME INTERVENTION POSITIVELY NOT NEGATIVELY
7. ESTABLISH A CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS POLICY
8. REASSURE THOSE THREATENED BY THE CHANGE
9. TREAT BOTH OVERT AND COVERT RESISTANCE FIRMLY AND UNAMBIGUOUSLY

10. ADVANCE PEOPLE FROM WITHIN THE ORGANISATION WHEREVER POSSIBLE
11. CONFRONT INEQUALITY
12. BE ALERT TO PREJUDICE AND FAVOURITISM
13. USE OMBUDSMEN, MENTORS AND CHAMPIONS
14. DO NOT:
 - THINK THAT PALLIATIVE GESTURES WILL SATISFY GENUINE GRIEVANCES
 - MAKE RASH AND HURRIED DECISIONS
 - IGNORE ANY PERCEPTIONS OF ANY PARTIES CONCERNED
 - TAKE EMPLOYEES' STATEMENTS TOO LITERALLY
15. BEWARE OF TOKENISM
16. APPROACH THE PROCESS IN TERMS OF GOOD MANAGEMENT
17. CONTINUALLY MONITOR AND REASSESS

Firstly, the mission of the organization has to be clarified. The CEO and, in the coming trend in South Africa, the Human Resources Managers, would have to be proactive in informing their CEOs about what is actually happening. The role of human resources managers would have to broaden, as is seen in some companies where they are now becoming managing directors.

Secondly, one has to know the context. We have to know both the organizational context and the external sociopolitical context in which the organization exists. There are a number of processes, or techniques we could use, such as scanning, monitoring, and scenarios.

1. Scanning can be used for scanning the external environment, e.g. one can scan newspapers, what one sees every day as one goes around the external environment, as well as looking at the internal environments of the organizations themselves. The Japanese managers talk about "walking around". One of

the jobs of the chief officer is to walk around the factory, know what is going on at the floor level, not just sitting in the office. Scanning is a more intuitive process, there are no guidelines or checklists for what is or is not happening.

2. Monitoring is to monitor both organizational indices, social indices, and the general sociopolitical environment, looking at issues and trends that have been identified through the scanning process and trying to follow them more systematically. Monitoring is an analytic process, not an intuitive process. Looking is done carefully and systematically so that one keeps up to date on what is happening.
3. Scenarios. We do not have many examples of scenarios in the South African context. Clem Sunter of Anglo American Corp. has produced one. The major aim of scenarios is an attempt to look at different futures in order to question our present and habitual assumptions. Scenarios help us question our assumptions and look for alternative assumptions, thereby looking for opportunities in the future that may emerge with change.

The two processes mentioned above, i.e. clarifying the mission and knowing the context have to be done before anything else. The organization has to establish its visions of the future. We need to ask what are the opportunities and risks.

4. Then one needs to consult with all levels in the organization. Participation should not become just another "buzzword" but it should be what we do. If an organization is to know what is going on within it, it needs to use these senses (all the people placed in their different positions

within the organization). Further, the organization needs to get all these perspectives into the decision making process. In this way we will have an idea of what is happening to the whole organization, and not just have one perspective which may be blinded by lenses (habits and fears) pushing in unproductive directions. Consultation, therefore, is the fourth major guideline for an organization. A client, personnel manager from a mining company, when questioned whether there were potential black managers amongst his employees replied that there were five. However, these potential managers had never been consulted on the process. When I suggested it, he admitted that it had never occurred to him. Consultations should guide strategy wherever possible, so that the formulation and implementation of strategies are intimately connected.

5. One of the problems with black advancement programs and equal opportunity programs is that the formulation and framing of the intervention are negatively rationalised, e.g., they say "there is a shortage of managers, therefore we have to bring blacks into management, therefore we are employing this process". It is implied that anyone who wants to sabotage the process is free to do so. The saboteur is subtly being told "We (the company) are not serious about this, we do not see any benefit to the company, all we see is that we have to do it" or, "we are being pressured into doing it".

It is important to formulate and frame the intervention positively instead of negatively. It helps if we look at our assumptions. Our assumptions have been that, because we have placed blacks in subordinate positions, this is where they must always remain. This is a self-fulfilling prophecy which we keep building up on.

6. One needs to establish a clear and unambiguous policy. One needs to spend a great deal of time working out the policy and making it known to all levels of staff, so that it is not a secret held by the CEO and a few people at the top of the organization, but becomes a concerted policy of the organization. Again, this should be phrased in positive, rather than negative terms. This will help to get the process of change within the organization into a positive rather than negative mode.
7. There is a need to reassure those threatened by change.
8. At the same time, both overt and covert resistance has to be dealt with firmly and unambiguously. It places the human resources manager and the CEO in a delicate situation, the essence of which is judgement and sensitivity.
9. Again, wherever possible, we should advance people within the organization, to build morale and to build the organization's new culture.
10. We have to confront inequality in the same way that we confront overt and covert resistance.
11. We have to be alert to prejudice and favouritism.
12. Use ombudsmen, mentors, and champions if applicable. But, with the proviso that this does not mean that the process can just go with an ombudsman, a mentor, or a champion. The process needs to have the involvement of all managerial levels in the process, otherwise it will not work as a developmental process, but will merely be an intruding technique, attracting resentment.

13. There are a number of "do not's". Past experience has shown us that people are willing to do these things.

* Do not think that palliative gestures will satisfy genuine grievances - they never will and they will make the situation worse than it was to start with. People get very dissatisfied when they think they have been brought into a game that goes nowhere.

* Don't make rash and hurried decisions. Think carefully and strategically.

* Don't ignore any perceptions of any of the parties concerned. Everybody's perceptions have some validity. One often has to look for that validity, but it usually is there.

* Don't take employees' statements too literally. Often people say things in anger and the CEO says "that's ridiculous, therefore your demands are ridiculous". One has to understand that people are often talking poetically or symbolically about something. What they are trying to get at is something deeper down. If one ignores the symbolic statement, one perhaps ignores a warning at one's own risk.

14. Beware of tokenism, it too will create more problems than it will solve.

15. The whole process has to be approached in terms of good management, development of the organization, and in terms of raising productivity. It is not a party political issue. It is an issue concerning intra organizational politics. A manager does not want to get into any political debate with

any of his staff. One needs to look at it as a problem of organizational development.

16. Continually monitor and reassess the situation. The situation is never static and will always change.

In conclusion, I would like to say that this process, although it is difficult, presents an enormous challenge for human resources managers. Our response, creative strategic thought and action will in the years to come, hopefully, bear fruit.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

MAUER

I am sure that the stimulating thoughts of our speakers are going to result in a number of questions.

Question:

'Affirmative Action' is like a red rag to a bull to the governing party today. Yet the concept is an old one practised by that party for the last forty years in consolidating its own supporters into positions of power in the Civil Service and semi-state industry. Are we now faced with conflicting 'affirmative action' programmes?

TAYLOR

That's a real mine-field to try to pick up!

It's a question of principle. Affirmative action as a principle has a rôle to play. It needs to be moved out of the context of racial discrimination and I know that we start moving into the area of semantics when we try to differentiate between one and the other. I think that the context I've tried to explain is that we live in a country in which there has been a great deal of racial prejudice. The disadvantaged group is identified as the historically dis-enfranchised groups, and those are the groups where affirmative action needs to occur, as I see it.

But this is a subjective thing and it's a relative perception. That's not to say things aren't going to change in the future, but I agree with the point that you make and I'm not sure if I've answered your question.

Question:

If current tests developed by NIPR are biased, what is being done to

- (I) remove the bias from the tests**
- (II) withdraw these tests from the market and**
- (III) develop new tests.**

TAYLOR

O.K. That's a comprehensive question. I'll work through those three points.

The question of removing bias from current tests is a question which is undergoing a great deal of research at the moment. The report to which I referred, indicating research by Owen, is looking at item bias and items which seem to be biased against groups are being worked out of tests. Tests are being re-analysed in the light of this problem. That's an ongoing programme and it's going to take a while.

Withdrawing the tests from the market? I think that's possibly an over-reaction in the sense that tests legally have to be controlled by psychologists and psychologists should be aware of the research findings and should be able to apply them accordingly. I did some research in which I looked at the question of testing for black and white technician students. The tests were found to be valid and reliable within groups, so that they do work within groups. Then it's a question of how does one move towards a fair selection policy in which the tests are not being used to bias the opportunities of certain groups. That is why I say, the question of a policy which looks at 'colour-blindness' is likely to be problematic. I think that psychologists can use tests within groups, using separate norms for different groups. One can adjust the results according to the different norms, and achieve the end-result that you're looking for.

The third point, developing new tests: This is an area in which there is ongoing work. As we find a test is biased we try either to rectify the test by pulling out items which are biased or else we might have to start from scratch and do a whole new test. So that's another ongoing programme. Dr Mauer, would you like to add anything?

MAUER: "I should say that it is certainly HSRC policy that in future, in the development of tests these things will be taken into account to as great an extent as possible and we are at the moment investing tremendous amounts of money and time in the development of tests which are not biased against various groups. It's a very difficult procedure, it is a very complicated thing if you start fiddling around with the mathematics of it and it is tremendously time-consuming, as research goes."

COOK: "I would like to make a point here. The matter of bias isn't limited to tests. We don't know of any unbiased assessment method. At least within tests we know the degree of bias. If you use an interview, you are subject to unknown and uncontrolled bias of the interviewers' prejudices. And if you use past achievement like educational achievement, you are subject to the bias of educational systems and so on. So tests are probably better than most other methods of comparing people because you make allowances for the system's bias."

Question:

What selection methods would you suggest for apprentice selection if approximately 1200 applications are received to fill 55 vacancies.

TAYLOR

That kind of situation in fact presents an enormous challenge to organizations because you can be so selective. By using tests and looking at the positive effects of that kind of selection ratio you can potentially identify very successful people within the different groups.

But I think my answer to that would be that I don't think you can really test 1200 people. You need to shorten that list through appropriate biographical screening methods. Test for a large group amongst that. I would use tests and I would look at test scores differently with the different groups, broadly speaking.

Question:

Given what you said about control, what is your further comment about the reluctance of some individuals (often black) to accept training for promotion particularly versus the need to take affirmative action.

COOK

I don't have the data to support this but I think there is often a perception that with advancement schemes the members rise to a certain level and then that's it. Now there are various explanations for this. One is that they don't want to go any further. The other is that they perceive it as being impossible to go any further and that it's not really worth trying.

There could be another peripheral factor involved there. I take it the question is suggesting that maybe control or the experience of control has something to do with the unwillingness to go further. Maybe the comment I would like to make is that if one regards black advancement schemes as advancing individual black people then this is going to happen, most likely. Because you are

then taking one or two individuals and exposing them to social isolation and other problems in a predominantly white environment and you are actually setting them up for failure.

But if you regard black advancement as advancing the potential for black people throughout the organization to develop and build on a more solid base, I think you will then find the individuals having less of a sense of isolation.

Although it may be a slower process I think it may be more effective in the long run.

Question:

What's being done to update the WAIS (the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale)?

MAUER

A lot is in fact being done, I'm fortunate to be able to say. You know, the original test was standardized in SA some time ago. It has served us very well, both in industry and clinical practice. But clearly all tests have a certain natural life-cycle and this one is overdue for revision.

Now, it is not a simple matter at this stage to update the WAIS, because we do not wish simply to go along and modernise the drawings and get new norms for the existing test. Rather we would like to move in the direction of the WAISAR (in other words the American Revised version of the WAIS) which is a somewhat better test. (The problem with the present one, of course, is that it was standardized for whites only, so we have a terrible problem over that.)

Now to do this we have been trying for the better part of eighteen months, (quite unsuccessfully) to negotiate with copyright holders, consulting psychologists and the press. We've written to them on numerous occasions, we have spoken to their representative for Africa, who travels along down Africa and pitches up every few months. We have even sent somebody across to talk to these people and we have not had very much success.

What we now aim to do is to develop a test-battery similar to the WAIS BIN, which we will, we hope, be able to use for all people in this country irrespective of white, black, whatever. We are moving in that direction. If we can not get copyright permission there is nothing which will stop us, in any event, from using the concepts which are employed in the WAIS. Those constructs can always be used in some other way. But we are moving in that direction, although it's going to be some years before we have a product available.

Question:

Can one reconcile the prescriptive nature of the Sullivan Code as it relates to recruitment and promotion of employees (50% of all vacancies and promotions must be filled with Blacks, Coloureds or Asians) with fair labour selection principles, as you've described them? Could you comment on the 'fairness' of the procedures laid down by the Sullivan programme?

TAYLOR

That's an interesting question.

In terms of the model that's used in America, it would seem to me to be an unfair approach because they take an arbitrary figure of 50% and I can't see why it should necessarily be 50%.

The American figure is very much dependant upon what is available in the labour market, so if one used strictly the same criteria as used in America then I'd say that is possibly an unfair, prescriptive approach and that's not to say that it couldn't be more than 50%. In this country there are certain positions where the labour-market might exceed 50% for disadvantaged groups. So really it depends on the particular job that you're looking at and what is available in the market.

Question:

They specified categories. Like we have to have special permission to appoint more than 50% of whites for sales, supervisory and management positions.

TAYLOR

Well I'd be interested to know where they got those figures from. If that represents an analysis of the labour market, then in terms of the model I've suggested, I'd say that's fair enough. But not if it is an arbitrary figure.

MAUER

May I add to that? Do you know that we at the HSRC have recently been publishing a series of studies in the Institute for Education research on graduation trends over the past ten years; of whites, of coloureds and so on, and very often one just gives up in desperation because for example, I think in the last five years we have had one black person who has graduated as an engineer. One person. And if demands are made that 50% of Engineers must be black, this just doesn't make any sense in terms of the people available in the country. I think there's great need for affirmative action but I think it must be tied to the realities of the available labour forces.

QUESTIONS ON SECOND PART OF PROGRAMME

Question:

Who 'owns' the individual's career development plan?

VAN ROOYEN

The individual's career development plan, as I see it, is the **responsibility of the individual, in the sense that I own where I want to go.** It is my responsibility and it is therefore important **for me to be aware of the possibilities within the organization.** Ideally one would like to have co-operation but I think for too long one has found that individuals tend to say, **'the organization will see to my career'.** I don't buy that. There is a shared responsibility certainly, but the impetus has to come from the individual. In the final analysis, what I do in the organization is my responsibility.

Question:

What does this mean for the interrelating rôle behaviours and orientations and the individual managers and human resource practitioners?

VAN ROOYEN

I think there is an inter-relationship in the sense that as an individual I must make known my need to move up. I must make it known to, on the one hand my superiors which could be the manager; on the other hand I think there is a shared responsibility from your human resource practitioner who in his manpower planning approach must identify potential candidates for future development. So that the individual must see to it that he or she becomes visible. On the other hand the human resource practitioner must see who, potentially, must be developed to become visible; and thirdly your manager or supervisor of that

particular person should ensure a good growth climate to allow for development, so that in the end there is an interactive approach. Mrs Jordaan, what is your comment.

JORDAAN

May I add that I see the rôle of the human resource practitioner being very much what Dr Franks described as a mediating party - the "keeper of the morals", perhaps, under certain circumstances.

Question:

Accepting that the individual has a responsibility to himself or herself, **do you believe that the individuals in South Africa, our particular culture and environment, understand how to take that responsibility?**

VAN ROOYEN

I don't really think they do. But I think that this where the responsibility for us as human resource practitioners or as managers, this is where it lies. And it lies there in terms of an **element not only of organization context but also in terms of net-working.**

I firmly accept the need for networking amongst your blacks, your coloureds your asians, your women, whoever it is; that responsibility is yours, accept it and then do something about it. But don't accept it to such an extent that you aggressively demand that "you've got to come up with the goods", because then you get a backlash.

JORDAAN (addressing audience)

Sir, Is there something you wish to add on that point?

Question:

Yes, thank you. I do believe that the organization has a specific responsibility toward individuals in terms of inculcating that sense of self-responsibility. But that can be very difficult because you can't say to people, "That's your problem. Now go away and think about it and come back with the answer", because they don't know what to do. You actually have to offer some dimensions and some mechanisms for them to do that.

VAN ROOYEN

I agree with you. The NIPR is at present involved in programmes aimed at inculcating this awareness for women and specifically for Black managers, which we do in close co-operation with, for instance the Black Management Forum, where we put forward our ideas according to the need for self-awareness. We use Black rôle-models to share with them from their particular culture. But for the next course, we aim also to go to the organizations and identify with them what they see as the developmental needs and potentials, so that it becomes a total package.

Question:

What do you think of the use of mentors to overcome problems such as resistance to change within an organization?

JORDAAN

As far as I know, the effective use of mentors for developing black managers is still in the trial phase. There are typical problems associated with the use of mentors and there are processes and aspects that hinder the use of mentors. But one of the key issues in the use of mentors is that there should be openness between the mentor and the protégé and also between the mentor and the organization. If the mentor feels, for example, that this isn't on or that in fact he cannot identify with the

protegeé, he should then resign from the task. Whether that actually takes place I couldn't answer.

FRANKS

I would agree with Anne. However, I think that it is important that the mentor not get isolated within the organisation. It is most important that mentoring or any other such intervention must take place within a broader process of organizational and individual development. Many such interventions are being attempted. It is difficult, at this time, to say if they're working or not. Too often the mentor can be used as a token - "we're developing our people: we've introduced a few mentors and they're taking care of the situation". My warning is against using mentors instead of having a general process of development going on within the organization.

Question:

Can we learn from the United States' experience with "equal opportunity"?

FRANKS

I think there is always something to be learned from others in other countries. But I think it is also important that human resource practitioners don't simply import ready-made answers from elsewhere. With this issue it is not clear whether anyone elsewhere has found successful solutions and furthermore, the uniqueness of our South African situation must not be overlooked.

Question:

Dr Franks suggested the use of Ombudsmen. This concept is less wellknown than the concept of mentorship. What does an ombudsman do in an organization? Could you give us a brief post-specification and a brief person-specification?

FRANKS

I don't know if I can come up with those exactly, but I'll try. The idea of an ombudsman is somebody that oversees the protégé, somebody who has authority within the organization, who can cut blockages if they need to, can carry information back and forth. So I see an ombudsman as more than a mentor. He's not dealing with one specific person. He's dealing with the whole process as it's going on and is a kind of a "hit-squad" all on his own, looking for what the problems are and acting on them directly and with authority. So I see the ombudsman as a kind of facilitator in a very broad sense.

VAN ROOYEN

I would like to add that the "ombudsman" or "change-agent" or "facilitator", call it what you will, would have different levels of intervention within the organization. Sometimes it is in terms of people, sometimes it is in terms of structures, sometimes in systems, sometimes in organization culture. And there is an interactiveness which takes place.

FRANKS

Certainly. But I think the key is that the ombudsman or the change-agent has the authority to act immediately and, I think, to intervene judiciously and fast.

Question:

How and why does "baasskap" arise?

To answer this question adequately would require an excursion into the political history of both Western civilization and of race relations in South Africa. To look at the issue briefly one could say that "baasskap" is a particularly South African form of favouritism. It has arisen as a response to a particular situation, in terms of the Western perspective, which views other

cultures as requiring the guidance and leadership of the 'superior' Western civilization. All in all it is a political question, perhaps arising from a fear of the 'other', i.e., the swart gevaar. The resolution of this question remains basic to the political change that South Africa is presently undergoing.

Question:

What should we do instead of demanding blacks fit into white culture?

I think we have to recognise the principle asserted by Ouchi to the effect that an organization cannot have an organizational culture at variance with the culture in the surrounding environment. Organizations need to adjust to the values and norms of the environment in which they exist. In order to do this it will be necessary for the organization to involve many more of their employees in policy and decision-making processes, not limiting this input to whites, as has been the pattern of the past. The task of developing a form of human resources management appropriate to South Africa's multicultural context is, to my way of thinking, the exciting challenge facing human resource practitioners today.

Chairman's concluding Remarks

The question of change seems to me to be so highly relevant. You may in the past have heard one of the former Deans of the Business School at Wits, Professor Jacobs. He was an extremely good speaker and he had a marvellous analogy for indicating how the pace of change has accelerated: It really is accelerating at virtually "a geometric pace". I think it is therefore appropriate that we at this stage and in this country should look at change and the problems and challenges that are posed by this increase in the rate of change to us all in the field of human resources management.

I would, if I may, like to say one or two things about the papers. I don't want to single a paper out and say, "this was a particularly good one and you get first prize", but I would like to say that I found the papers joining up in an interesting way. All the speakers, although none of them specifically said so, had been very aware of the very ambivalent very difficult socio-political situation in which we all find ourselves in this country. I think they have all shown a great awareness of the strains this is going to place on human resource practitioners now and in future and also upon the society in which we live. I think they have all addressed this particular problem from various points of view. They have all made contributions, some at a more macro-level. For instance Dr van Rooyen spoke about organizations. Jonathan Taylor spoke about selection issues and the risks we run when we make use of this sort of thing, both at an individual level and a company responsibility level. Jonathan Cook's concern is for the individual and the stresses the individual has to face under these circumstances, and so I can carry on.

I think, all in all, that we have had the opportunity today to see the door opened a little and we have had a glance at the problems and the challenges that are going to face us in the future. I hope that we will have the combined wisdom to be able to take up these challenges and to be able to make a success of things.

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