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<th>Title</th>
<th>How to organise a newspaper for a more efficient management</th>
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<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Fernandes, Ernest</td>
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How To Organise A Newspaper
For A More Efficient Management

By

Ernest Fernandes
March 26, 1987

Mr. Narendra Aggarwal,
Senior Programme Specialist,
Asian Mass Communication
Research & Information Centre,
39, Newton Road,
SINGAPORE - 1130

Dear Mr. Aggarwal,

Re: WORKSHOP ON "MANAGEMENT OF SMALL NEWSPAPERS"

Thank you for your letter of 12th March 1987.

I am enclosing the papers on the following topics.

1. How to organise a newspaper for a more efficient management.
2. Newspaper Management and the personnel function
3. Styles of leadership.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

(E. Fernandes)

accomp:
For the purpose of relating technology to management, the way technology deals with change is significant. In a company with a given strategy and technology the need for change will fall somewhere along a continuum of infrequent to frequent. Similarly the kinds of changes the company typically faces will fall somewhere along another continuum ranging from unprecedented problems to familiar precedented ones; in the case of the latter the company will have a well established pattern of resolving them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of change</th>
<th>Infrequent</th>
<th>Frequent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Precedented</td>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>Regulated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>paper</td>
<td>flexibility</td>
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<td>with</td>
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<td>telephone</td>
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<td></td>
<td>exchange</td>
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<td>Unprecedented</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aerospace plan</td>
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<td>Management consultancy</td>
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A newspaper faces a continuous procession of new situations most of which can be handled by well developed techniques for resolving such problems. For this kind of technology the typical management system introduces flexibility by the use of craftsmen and professionals, separate scheduling units, careful programming of work loads, close control of work passing from one stage to the next, prompt information on the status of work at each stage and so on. The kind of flexibility needed at each stage is anticipated and the provisions for dealing with it are built into the system. Each person understands the limits of his discretion and other conditions are fully planned and controlled so that reliability of the total system is not lost.

Organising in a newspaper is mainly controlled and more on the basis of functional expertise. Whether the newspaper is big or small it is necessary to develop this expertise in an environment where technology and competition are rapidly changing.
The personnel function in a newspaper deals with the people who work in the newspaper whether they be managers or workers. It draws attention to the fact that human resources are as important as good printing machines or better office premises. The answer to increasing productivity to meet competition lies with improving the quality of human resources. Over the years the paternalistic attitudes has shifted to a business-like attitude.

Traditionally, particularly in larger companies, the main preoccupation of the personnel department was with salary administration, labour legislation and negotiation with unions. Very often it was a fire-fighting operation. Little attention was paid to organisation structure and management development. This is now changing. Considering that the quality of management plays a more important role in improving productivity, more time is now being paid to the managerial aspect of the personnel function.

What is the importance attached to the personnel man by the chief of the organisation? Is he viewed as an executive with specialised knowledge who is consulted and taken into confidence on all major developments in the company? Or is the personnel function viewed as one which can be performed by anyone, while the personnel function is to advise and counsel on the human resources, the responsibility for conserving, cultivating and enhancing the human assets lies with the line organisation.

The basic relationship in a newspaper, as it is in any organisation, is the man/boss relationship. Whether it is in producing the newspaper or in obtaining advertisements, it is the health of this relationship which is very important. The personnel function can help line manager in improving this relationship. Personnel should ensure that the benefits the company has to offer are handed over by the line manager to the employees.

Is the personnel function a line or a staff function? By themselves, the words line and staff have no universally recognised meaning. The line functions are sometimes described as those without which the company cannot exist. In a manufacturing company there would be the production function and the sales function. However, the staff function which personnel is often described to be, can and should make decisions in designated areas. The fact that it does make decisions, however, does not mean that it has authority over the line. Both line and staff should be authorised to make decisions in mutually exclusive areas. Conflict occurs when they don't understand this.

Personnel functions are gaining in specialisation. Within the personnel functions, there would be specialists in labour relations, training, etc.

Suggested areas which a master plan for the development of personnel activities in a company for a five-year period are given below:
I. **Selective Employment**

A. Better organisation of existing sources of supply of applicants and development of new sources. This includes cooperation with government employment services.

B. Design of a standard personnel requisition form for use by operating departments in requesting personnel.

C. Design of a uniform application form on which the applicant will record pertinent details of personnel history, education, and past experience.

D. Interview of applicants by a trained interviewer carried out in a standard but flexible manner. The screening interview could be with personnel department and subsequent interviews together with the head of the operating department.

E. Introduction of a testing programme to supplement the interview.

(i) A careful study will be instituted to determine what tests are suitable for measuring the aptitudes and abilities required on the various jobs in the newspaper.

(ii) Physical examination appropriate to the job will precede employment.

II. **Placement**

A. Assignment of employees to jobs for which they appear best qualified on the basis of the selection techniques.

B. More uniform procedures for introducing new employees to the company and to the respective departments.

(i) Copy of rules and regulations to be given to each employee supplemented by a short discussion about the company, its products, etc.

(ii) Department head or supervisor to designate a fellow employee to escort the newcomer around and to act as his "sponsor".

III. **Training and Education**

A. This includes lectures for clerical personnel, organisation of supervisory training programmes with an emphasis on techniques of handling problems of human relationships and management development programmes.

B. Development of a company library to include books, magazines, etc.
IV. Job Analysis and Job Evaluation

A. Analysis of each managerial, production, and clerical job to determine the nature of the work, the qualification necessary, the nature and amount of training, etc.

B. Derivation from the job analysis to job specifications. Grading of job.

V. Wages and Incentives

Formulation of wage scales in each job classification with a periodic review as a basis for recommendation to management.

Consideration of bonuses for supervisory personnel.

VI. Suggestion System

A suggestion system to reward good suggestions for improvement of methods, machinery, processing, employee relations, etc.

VII. Health and Safety

Provision of adequate first aid facilities, education of employees in safety and health, annual physical check-ups, etc.

VIII. Miscellaneous Services

Canteen, legal advice.

IX. Security Plans

Group life insurance, pension plans.

X. Records, Reports, and Follow-up

Record keeping to keep adequate control of personnel activities. Filing of all government laws and regulations on hours and wages.

XI. Employee Rating and Retesting

Annual retest of personnel with selected testing measures.

XII. Professional Contacts

Company membership of at least one professional management organisation which serves a source of research mentioned above.

XIII. Publications and Miscellaneous Data

Employee handbook, house journal and organisation chart.

XIV. Discharges, Quit, Layoffs

Establishment of leaving or "exit" interview, etc.
XV. **Disciplinary and other Problem Cases**

To have uniformity in disciplinary action for similar infractions.

XVI. **Joint Relations**

Establishment of an efficient mechanism for the adjustment of individual complaints and grievances.

XVII. **Personnel Audit**

A review of the major phases of the personnel programme.

XVIII. **Research Projects**

At least one formal research project on possible subjects such as "Evaluation and improvement of employment methods," etc.

XIX. **Industrial Community Relations**

This covers government agencies, citizens' organisations, colleges, schools, etc.
Most management writers agree that leadership is a process of analysing activities of an individual or a group in efforts towards goal achievement in a given situation. From this definition of leadership it follows that leadership process is a function of the leader, the follower and other situational variables.

The function of the leader according to scientific management as proposed by Frederick Taylor in the early 1900s was to set up and enforce performance criteria to make organisational goals. The main focus of the leader was on the needs of the organisation and not on the needs of the individual. In 1920s the trend started by Taylor was replaced by the human relations movement initiated by Elton Mayo. The focus shifted to individual needs and not the needs of the organisation only. Subsequently Blake and Mouton developed the theory of the Managerial Grid in which 5 types of leadership based on the concern for production (task) and concern for people (relationships) are located in the 4 quadrants. Concern for production is on the horizontal axis and concern for people is on the vertical axis, as is described in the following diagram.

![Managerial Grid Diagram]

The five leadership styles are described as follows:

**Impoverished:** Exertion of minimum effort to get required work done is appropriate to sustain organisation membership.

**Country Club:** Thoughtful attention to needs of people for satisfying relationships leads to a comfortable friendly organisation atmosphere and work tempo.

**Task:** Efficiency in operations results from arranging conditions of work in such a way that human elements interfere to a minimum degree.

**Middle-of-the-Road:** Adequate organisation performance is possible through balancing the necessity to get out work while maintaining morale of people at a satisfactory level.

**Team:** Work accomplishment is from committed people; interdependence through a "common stake" in organisation purpose leads to relationships of trust and respect.
Is there a best style of leadership?

It is unrealistic to expect a single ideal type of leadership behaviour, as the style of leader will depend on the followers as well as the situation. It cannot also be concluded that there are only 2 task leader behaviour styles - task oriented and relationship oriented. A leader who is high on task behaviour is not necessarily high or low on relationship behaviour. Any combination of the two dimensions may occur. It may also be inappropriate to use the same leadership styles all the time on the grounds of inconsistency. Inconsistency does not consist in using the same style all the time, but in using the same style in similar situations, and varying the style appropriately as the situation changes.

Relationship between the leadership style on different combinations of task structures and follower capacity is given in the following diagram.

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<tr>
<th>TASK STRUCTURE</th>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Task</td>
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<td>High Task</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Task</td>
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From the above diagram it is evident that:

a) the task structure is different for different jobs in a newspaper, and

b) the follower capacity is also different. So, the leadership style required will vary.