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5 September 1969

Attachment

A TRAINING PROGRAM IN THE AREA OF
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND DECISIONMAKING

We have recently been urged by the National Security Council Staff and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Analysis to make more use of the growing understanding of the decisionmaking processes in large organizations to improve the quality of our work. According to these two important consumers of our product, our output of explanations and projections of Soviet military forces seem often to be treated as though Soviet decisions were the result of single, rational actors. We all know in a general way that such treatment is incomplete, and that ways of taking the organizational and bureaucratic realities into account probably could be developed and used more systematically in OSR. A training program that allowed some of our analysts to become better acquainted with the existing knowledge in the field of organizational behavior would be valuable in achieving this goal.

Why Is a Training Program Needed?

Normally, our analysts would be encouraged to seek appropriate education locally in one of the universities in the Washington area. However, a survey of

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the locally available courses suggests that the local offerings are inadequate. The field in any case is still developing and the number of trained people in it is presently rather small. Local universities are not well supplied with professors teaching appropriate courses, and it appears that if our people are to be exposed to this discipline, some special arrangements will have to be made.

Alternatives have been considered to training our current analysts. But since there are relatively few trained people available, we probably cannot hire many new people with appropriate backgrounds. We could increase the use of consultants but the effectiveness of this would be limited unless some of our own people became more acquainted with the field of organizational behavior and, hence, better able to use outside consultants effectively. We could send some of our analysts to graduate schools for full time external training, but the costs would be high and the payoff period far away in time.

Therefore, we feel that a specialized training program for our current analysts is indicated. A proposed program is described below. An additional

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advantage of a special training program would be that it could be conducted in-house and some portion of it conducted on a basis which would allow full interchange between those attending the courses and the instructors. This should shorten the time required to get some useful payoff in the day-to-day work of the analysts. They could explore with their instructors particular problems of applying the insights available to our work to the problems and source materials they deal with on the job.

A Possible Training Program

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[REDACTED] would probably be willing to organize an appropriate training program for us. That is, they would undertake to supply instructors who could commute [REDACTED] perhaps one or two afternoons a week to conduct courses in-house. These lecturers would attempt to convey the current state of knowledge regarding decisionmaking processes in large organizations, organization theory, behavioral studies of the decisionmaking process in the firm and governmental organizations, etc. Each session might run for about two hours but would be agreed upon between ourselves and the people from

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[REDACTED] In addition to the standard course activities, it would be possible to run a seminar or workshop. The initiation of the latter could follow the first semester's work when our analysts begin to try to apply what they are learning to their immediate problems. These workshop sessions could run for two to three hours, one afternoon a week.

The design and content of the courses would be undertaken by the [REDACTED] people with the help of some experts in this field who have already been involved directly in an attempt to apply knowledge of organizational behavior to our problems, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is already a consultant to our Agency and would be available to help and advise us in other ways.

It would probably be best if the course were approached as a graduate seminar from the beginning. The faculty in the course would prescribe readings and materials. Sessions for the most part would minimize lectures and emphasize discussion. In particular, participants would be urged to bring specific problems to the sessions and the teaching would be done through having the participants apply the material of the day

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to their specific problems. This method of handling the course would insure that participants would be able to use organization theory in their work. Thus, each session would be based on the assumption that prior reading assignments had been done by the participants and that they were prepared with problems for class discussion. Among the topics of relevance that could be covered, the following seem appropriate:

(1) The interactive effect of environment, organizational structure, organizational task, and individual goals and strategies on organizational behavior.

(2) Decisionmaking processes in organizations; the effect of organizational structure, procedures, career programs, etc.

(3) Intergroup relations (the determinants and effects of cooperation and competition between groups, including an intergroup exercise as part of the program.

(4) Interpersonal relations in organizations.

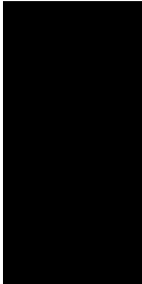
The major impact of organization theory is on a man's understanding of why particular things that he observes happen in organizations. The course should enable the participants to function more effectively

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within this Agency as well as put them in a position to interpret the data of other organizations more effectively. There is relatively little in organization theory in the way of established principles that would enable participants to change organizations in some optimal fashion--although progress is being made in this area. The major benefits will come from an ability to see phenomena from a new viewpoint and in a way that will give new insights into organizations and the individual actors in those organizations.

Cost Estimate

In terms of a budget based on a 15-week course meeting one day a week, I would see it as something like the following:

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Faculty salaries		
Faculty expenses (travel, meals, etc.)		
Books and materials		(per student)
Secretarial expenses		

As with any budget, the estimates are crude, but probably not far out of line with actual cost.

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