

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

BY
DR. SURINDER P. S. PRUTHI



FORUM OF FREE ENTERPRISE

SOHRAB HOUSE, 235 DR. D. N. ROAD, BOMBAY-1

"People must come to accept private enterprise not as a necessary evil, but as an affirmative good."

—EUGENE BLACK

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Several young men and women graduate out of our national institutes of management and departments of business administration around April-May each year. Their number is bound to increase in future years as the post-graduate institutions succumb slowly to the relentless pressure on them to increase their intake each year. The problem is three-fold, namely, (a) how to absorb an ever-growing crop of business graduates, (b) how to make full use of them, and finally (c) how to orient business education so as to best subserve the prevailing and emerging needs of Indian business, industry and commerce. A careful discussion of this problem is vital if the business graduates want to avoid the fate of engineers for no fault of theirs, and the country wants to plan its future business educational policy on a realistic basis.

Who are these young graduates? Are they a special breed? How are they different from other graduates from Arts and Science faculties of different universities? These are the kinds of questions frequently raised.

These business graduates are indeed a special kind of species in their own right. They think big, talk big, and act big, all of which is not without justification. These youngsters, having had the benefit of education and training which is available only to a small minority today, naturally feel rather sure of

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themselves as far as their job prospects are concerned. It is a fact that these youngsters, commonly known as MBAs, are comparatively better equipped for business careers than the ordinary Arts and Commerce graduates owing to the fact that they have been exposed to a rigorous study of the wide spectrum of inter-disciplinary knowledge of functional and core subjects that comprise their curricula. It is not surprising, therefore, that these young business graduates with their proficiency in facts and figures, modern business lingo and mystifying semantics, and above all their flourish for argument and debate — encouraged in no mean degree by modern pedagogical tools such as the case method and the rest of it — should succeed in convincing their employers that they are indeed a class apart and, therefore, deserve nothing but the best. So far so good.

The real problem starts when the young trainee — still obsessed by his mastery in the use of slide-rule and effortless proficiency in reciting formulae — enters a contemporary business organisation where the culture and environment are, in a large measure, at variance with his conditioning and expectations. The problem is compounded owing to an apparent lack of active communication and interaction among the three parties involved, namely, the companies, the trainees and the post-graduate institutions for business education. Also the fact that there is insufficient realisation on the part of each about the needs and objectives of the other two. I should like to take a look at the whole problem from the standpoint of these three parties involved and offer what I regard as a workable programme of action on the part of all three in bringing about a happy synthesis of their collective objectives. There are several other spheres of national endeavour where business graduates can make their contribution but I shall confine my comments to their careers in business and industry only.

The Institutes of Management and other post

graduate institutions for business learning have neither thought it worthwhile nor indeed are adequately equipped, as of today, to do a decent job of counselling this new generation of mini-managers into seeking a smooth transition into corporate careers once they leave these prestigious places of learning. The business houses on the other hand do not yet have, for the most part anyway, anyone whose sole function it is to rear these youngsters and to serve as a buffer, as it were, between a highly motivated, adequately trained, over-ambitious and yet inexperienced group of youngsters on the one hand, and result-oriented over-busy, surface-scratching, self-opinionated and suspecting seniors on the other hand, whose entry and rise into corporate careers was, for the most part, fortuitous and whose major claim to bully the young trainee is that they have been there longer and intend to prove that all that the management trainee stands for is an esoteric nonsense. The young trainee, encouraged to reason and debate, query and probe, lands himself in a mess unsuspectingly when he threatens, inadvertently however, the standards of propriety and infallibility of his seniors by using the same techniques of questioning and argument which got him high grades when he was studying for business. Partly, his effortless ability to be irreverential also rubs his seniors on the wrong side. Obviously, the missing element in the equation is the meeting point — born out of insufficient cognisance of each other's conditioning—around which a healthy and fruitful relationship can be built. Here, a great deal can be done by all the three parties concerned; namely, the business schools, the companies and the trainees to facilitate a transformation from a feudalistic pattern of management to a professional one.

Education for business in India is hardly ten years old. Each generation uses the educational process for passing on to the next generation the knowledge, beliefs and norms which govern it.

It is well known that we in this country inherited much of the British system of education, and some of its objectives along with it. Broadly speaking, this heritage comprised two categories: utilitarian education for the coveted few. The aim of the former was to make better and useful clerks whereas the latter form of education was designed to perpetuate the norms and mores of the ruling class of society. The primary characteristic of the upper class which ran the whole system was that it did no physical work, innovated little, and excelled in maintaining *status quo*. The chief accent was on how to preserve rather than change. This was a major plank of the whole educational philosophy. It is not surprising, therefore, that professions like business education, science and technology took a back seat during that period. Anyone who had good cocktail manners, proficiency in using fork and knife, turning a Latin phrase, or had a passing acquaintance with classics, was deemed to be equipped to do almost anything exceptionally well. So low on the priority list was business education on the part of our erstwhile rulers that business schools at London and Manchester came into being only after India had established its full-time institutions for business education in recognition of the altered environment and emerging changes.

Despite the late start, business education in India has made an impressive progress during the sixties. Today, we have two full-fledged national institutes of management, several departments of business and industrial administration affiliated with different universities, and a whole host of voluntary and governmental institutions geared to the short-term and long-term requirements of business education. Whereas there is still great need for further enlarging and strengthening the institutional infra-structure already in existence, great gains can be had by appropriate shifts of orientation, curricula and faculty-mix of the existing institutions so as to get still more mileage out of their strength and resources. Post-graduate institutions of business education in

India can make an effective contribution to the successful professionalisation of Indian business and industry through the graduates they are making available in an over-increasing number. Let me list below three areas in which immediate action is possible.

Problem-finding in a business career is as important as problem-solving. The ability to find and exploit the right thing is no less critical than to do a thing right. A major reason why business graduates sometimes fail to build successful careers in management is that they do not learn from their formal education what they need to know to perform their jobs effectively. In fact, the tasks that are the most important in getting results usually are left to be learnt on the job, where few graduates ever master them simply because no one teaches them how. Over-emphasis on problem-solving and decision making in the curricula of our business schools distorts the ability of the young graduates to develop skills for finding and exploiting the opportunities that are available to them, and, at the same time, to discover and deal with potential serious problems before they become critical. To put it in the language of psychologists, "operant behaviour" is as critical to develop in business graduates as "respondent behaviour". Being purely analytical and logical does not guarantee business success; one must also be trained to cope with human emotions in order to get results. Text-books, cases, technical notes and group-discussions are not enough; doing-orientation is vital. Doing-orientation can be imparted in several ways: appropriate balance in curricula planning between 'analysis' and 'action' orientation; work-experience as an essential pre-requisite for faculty positions, on-the-job training and a whole host of other means, including a more effective and imaginative handling of the Summer jobs scheme.

Management is a highly individualised art. In India owing to extreme difference in the organisa-

tional forms of business houses it is only natural that there is no uniform style of management which obtains in all situations. It is, therefore, necessary that in our own unique environment every manager must expect and then discover for himself what works and what does not work for him in different situations. He cannot become effective merely by adopting the practices or the managerial styles advocated in text-books. He must develop his own natural style and follow practices that are consistent with his own personality. In the existing business school curricula one finds that managers are rarely taught how to manage in ways that are consistent with their own personalities. Instead, through the formal courses and spate of seminars we find that the participants are in fact taught that they must follow a prescribed set of practices and adopt either a conciliatory or participative or permissive style in order to provide maximum motivation. This kind of teaching causes them to expect management styles to be prototype of what they pick up in the text-books. This, of course, is simply not so in real life.

An ideal text-book prescription is to move men around to meet the needs of an organisation; in practice one finds all too frequently the tendency to break the organisations asunder to subserve vested individual interests. In so far as these are the realities of work-culture, it is imperative that our business graduates do not remain unaware of these practices when they are being equipped for careers in business. Since taking action and accepting responsibility for the consequences are not a part of our formal business education, the young graduates neither discover for themselves what does—and what does not—work in practices nor indeed develop, in turn, natural managerial style that is consistent with their own unique personalities.

While conceptual and analytical skills are important, more crucial to managerial success are the perceptual skills needed to identify problems long

before evidence of them can be found by even the most advanced management system. Since these skills cannot be easily developed in the classroom, they have of necessity to be largely left to be developed on the job. Something like 90% of the manager's development in knowledge, skills and attitudes occurs on the job. It is in this context that on-the-job training becomes a crucial adjunct to management education.

In-company training programmes are of recent origin in India, and that too localised to a handful of progressive and large industrial houses. Business schools in India have so far left alone the task of training and guiding practising executives in the context of their work-culture on the plea of shortage of faculty and other resources. Whereas organising programmes in picturesque surroundings have a great deal to commend them, it should not be overlooked that such programmes are no substitute for on-the-job training which can be most effectively imparted in the context of the work environment. The process of management education will remain incomplete and the problem of adjustment of the young manager to the prevailing culture in companies will remain with us till such period that the educational infrastructure in this country starts looking upon in-company education and on-the-job training as parts of the whole business educational process to which it must accord the necessary importance and attention. In fact, this would not only induce individual companies to start their own in-company developmental efforts but would also promote mutual interdependence between Indian business and the business schools.

It is essential for the business schools in India to attract and acquire a healthy mix of academic and business experience on their faculties. No matter how erudite a scholar, a good business teacher must have a first-hand experience of Indian business environment which cannot come easily without get-

ting one's feet wet in industry. There is need for a two-way traffic to begin to occur on a large enough scale between industry and the academic world in order that there is a better understanding of each other's unique role in the developmental process.

So far the business schools have been scouting for faculty recruitment from well-known universities abroad and at home. By and large, business schools have not been very successful in attracting qualified men and women from industry within their fold. It is true that there is dearth of people with requisite academic framework plus industrial experience to teach and guide research at post-graduate level in business schools, yet a serious and systematic search can yield rewarding results.

The desire to compromise academic standards on the part of certain institutions of advanced business education who have to make do with part-time faculty is very disconcerting indeed. The whole concept of guest faculty needs to be put on a much sounder footing and the help of business and industry should be sought actively to enlist the support of qualified managers to devote a part of their time to business teaching. A distinction needs to be made between itinerant pontificators and dedicated men who are qualified to teach, and who if properly handled can provide an extra arm to institutions of post-graduate business learning. Likewise, there are several qualified and bright individual entrepreneurs and government officers having the requisite wherewithal — who can be of great value as part-time teachers. But all this requires a major reappraisal on the part of business schools as to the faculty mix that is essential for producing the desired results.

What can the Management Trainees do?

In order that the business graduates tap their unique combination of high potential, good grasp of

general concepts and modern techniques to the full, it is necessary for them to effectively tackle some of the criticisms against them. Among the most common criticisms of business graduates are the following :

Lack of experience : The grades scored in examinations are not always a true reflection of how good or bad a person may turn out to be when actually entrusted with a job of work. As a matter of fact, if success in business was equated with academic achievement, the well-educated manager appears to be a glorified myth. No formal education can teach what a man can learn for himself while on the job. Unless a trainee acquires through his own experience the knowledge and skills that are vital to his effectiveness, he is not likely to advance far up the organisational ladder. What one learns at business schools is certainly not enough to equip a trainee to build a successful career in business. Good scholastic standing is no guarantee that an individual will be able to learn what he needs to know to build a career in fields that involve selling, producing, leading, or working with people. Overplaying the mystique of formal business education also causes employers to have unrealistic performance expectation of business graduates. Viewed thus, several youngsters fail to match with the expectations of their employers. The end result is that turnover among business graduates is increasing for some years now and more and more of them are tempted to change jobs in the hope that they can make a go of the next one.

At the starting level to make a go of his career the young trainee needs to have four basic strengths: substantive knowledge, conceptual skill, inter-disciplinary awareness and the ability to absorb and adapt. Each one of these attributes would be vital in helping the young trainee to carve out a niche for himself. As he begins to swim along the tide of corporate career, the young trainee, if he is any good, will automatically learn the relevance of tact, humility,

judgement, flexibility and use of common sense in solving business problems and getting along with people rather than a mere reliance on plethora of techniques and formulae. Trainees found most successful in handling human beings and most effective in their jobs have been those who have had some prior business experience before they went for their MBAs. Whereas an exceptionally gifted and mature young man can attain similar success without any prior work-experience, yet a young man who joins the MBA course after having had his feet wet for a year or two benefits that much more from the entire learning process. And to that extent his induction into a corporate career is easier.

Those who join business houses without any prior experience should use the first year or two as an apprenticeship period and learn as much as possible about the organisation and its needs for new skills. This initial period of "ears and eyes" open should be used for determining your strengths apropos the needs of your company rather than alienating yourself from it by being cocky as to your area of expertise. The initial years should be used for gaining intimate awareness of the internal and environmental constraints of the business rather than wanting a lot of paper work, a good looking secretary and an air-conditioned office. These will all follow in time.

Money and Title consciousness: Job hopping by itself is no qualification. Whereas one must refuse to hang on to a job where one is stagnating, the common notion that the young mini-managers who move from company to company are an exceptional breed of emerging professionals is misleading. All those youngsters who regularly keep thinking of changing jobs fall into three broad categories, namely, 1) those who think that all their seniors who are old timers are fools, or 2) those who think too much of themselves in relation to the jobs that they have, or 3) those who have convinced themselves that the 'Politics' of

their company is too nasty and undignified for them to have to do anything with it. In either case, it denotes a failure of some kind and an insufficient realisation of the realities of the workplace. But central to the reasoning of most of these youngsters, whether or not they own up to it, is their being money-conscious. "So and so elsewhere is already getting so much more and he was two years my junior" is an often-heard grouse. "I happen to be a victim of a family-owned business where management is sloppy and promotions are reserved for relatives", is another common kind of complaint that one hears. All youngsters must never be slaves of any one company, and in order that they can effectively insulate themselves from the company's subtle capacity to diminish the options, they should be sure that their present earnings are lower than their opportunity earnings elsewhere.

It is a mistake to choose the first employer (in most cases) in life purely on the basis of remuneration that it offers. Likewise, please do not hanker after high sounding titles. Be more concerned with the opportunities that you will have for learning and growth. How many people have the luxury of experimenting for a year or two, doing different jobs and getting exposed to a wide variety of situations, and then identifying in consultation with their peers and seniors as to the areas in which their strength really lies as opposed to a supposed conviction that one is good in marketing or production when one leaves the business school? Trainees must make full use of such a coveted opportunity. In several cases, companies do not even know what they need people for when they are hiring management trainees. Please get into the company, assess the situation, identify yourself with the culture of the place, and then determine your strength *vis-a-vis* the needs of the company rather than arrive on the scene with a predetermined decision. Being called a "trainee" is in your favour rather than being earmarked to a specific slot from the word go.

Avoid being pompous and irreverential: Once in business you will realise that substantive knowledge, conceptual ability, exposure to wide spectrum of inter-disciplinary curricula, etc. are helpful in rising in a business career. Once you get going you will realise that you are getting further and further removed from what you learnt at a business school. Your strength and effectiveness on the job, therefore, will depend entirely on what you keep learning as you are growing in business. The business graduate must realise and re-recognise that not all managers who never went to business schools are men with third-rate minds and blocked outlooks. Knowledge is, indeed, a powerful source of intoxication and one feels terribly secure in the knowledge of one's knowledge but arrogance and pomposity on the one hand and irreverence and contempt for those who do not wear the same school tie is totally inexcusable.

The long-term value of a person is a matter of qualities of character and intellect rather than mere knowledge. The longer you are in business, the less heavily you will rely on the knowledge you acquired at business school. A real depth of meaning in life emerges only out of experience. It is true that there are people who have 20 years' experience in a job which in effect represents one year's experience repeated 20 times. When one talks of experience, one really is talking about both the intensity of it as well as what are the components of that package. The acquisition of meaningful experience on the job requires a basic pre-requisite, namely complete eschewal of a pompous, "chips-on-shoulders" or an "all-knowing" attitude of mind.

Growth and development require apart from humility, willingness to learn, capacity for hard work and sustained application. It is terribly essential to learn how to learn. Effectiveness rather than mere efficiency counts in a competitive situation. The ability to acquire a useful feedback on one's own performance is bound to stand every young trainee in

good stead as he grows up to occupy senior positions. It is not only important to do a right thing but one must find right things to do. In other words, the young trainees can direct their own destinies by effectively exploiting the opportunities available to them. To find and exploit opportunities is the essence of entrepreneurship and/or professional management. Above all, the young trainees must learn to tolerate ambiguity without the loss of intellectual mastery. Everything that happens in business life cannot necessarily be quantified. The failure of a product, or that of the product manager, or the loss of a market etc. may all happen at times owing to non-quantifiable reasons. Any education that emphasises over-reliance on quantification to the exclusion of qualitative and other subjective factors needs to be improvised by the trainee's own experience of people and the business world. Business education should enable the trainee to make a virtue out of contingency rather than induce hesitancy and expedience.

Leadership requires sacrifice and hard work:
It is good to be ambitious within reason but the mentality of rising up to Managing Director of a Company in a hurry impedes the learning process. The business leaders of today were not born to be leaders or assigned these roles overnight. Leadership is a strenuous process. We do not live in a perfect world; cruelties of nature and man are rampant. Each one of us cannot be equally successful in the big affairs of the business, not all among us by any means can be leaders of our fellowmen. Many of us may well feel disappointed and grieved as we grow in commercial concerns. Favouritism and bad luck will play their sordid parts and block some careers. But happiness is not the end result of accomplishment: it resides more often in its pursuit.

The message for any young man or woman who aspires to leadership in business today is clear. It is not enough to have an MBA, to be dogged on the job, and to die with one's boots on. To achieve and

hold a position of leadership in this age of organisation and innovation a man needs to add continuously to his resources of knowledge and skills, to win the respect of his peers and associates rather than only of his seniors. To do this he cannot afford to be spend-thrift of time. A cushy career in a company working in a non-competitive environment or being assigned to a lazy boss may afford you enough time to idle and to turn your energies to unproductive pursuits. But this is fatal. You must learn to guard your time with resolution, to handle it with precision, and to invest it with acumen. Then you will find you have a wealth of time for leadership and development in a commercial career.

What can the Business do?

The business scene in India is fast changing. The great complexity and variety of change in the contemporary business in India is without precedent; all forms about us are rapidly altering, from the tools that complicate our toil and the wheels that whirl us restlessly around the earth. In a rapidly growing economy like ours, a period always comes when old patterns, institutions, instincts and habits prove inadequate to altered stimuli and changing environment. Several recent steps taken by the government, viz. The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, the nationalisation of commercial banks, abolition of the managing agency system, management participation by financial institutions, company and labour legislation, the concept of the joint sector have all combined to change the face of the Indian business significantly. More changes are bound to take place as we move into the future.

If we pause and look around we shall soon discover that something is happening to business today. A typical firm in India has always been a family affair. Seldom did it employ outsiders in key positions. Human relations and management were on a man-to-man, face-to-face basic. Communication was

a first-hand process speaker to hearer. Techniques and technologies were learnt and conveyed over days, months, or years on the job, by traditional oral and behavioural communication. Products were technologically simple. Markets for manufactured goods local or regional. The physical plant, simple itself, for the most part, embodied the modest fortune of a single family. Indeed all decisions of any significance in a set-up of this nature were mostly made by few people—a father, a son, or a son-in-law perhaps. In such a situation, the manager was not confused as to either objectives or methods. The manager's function was to bring together and co-ordinate elements involved in the production and distribution of goods and services. By keeping the cost of these elements at a maximum and directing labour to maximise production, he was able to increase the profits. This was his function, philosophy and power. He did not need any specialist help nor did he miss its absence in the fulfilment of his functions. Blind devotion and loyalty to his boss and sufficient proficiency in keeping books took him far along the ladder of growth and recognition. Until very recently, success in business depended not on what you knew but whom you knew. It paid to manoeuvre rather than manufacture. People rose in organisations by mutual back-scratching. Whereas things are not totally different now, let us make no mistake they are changing fast. Nepotism in business is fast fading, especially as family-owned enterprises become publicly-owned and forces of competition are allowed, albeit partially, to sort out the wheat from the chaff. In better managed companies the rise of an individual is beginning to depend more upon the estimates of his associates and peers rather than on connections alone. Superimposed on all this is the growing governmental vigilance which rightly demands from business and industry strict accountability to shareholders and public alike.

Fundamental changes are occurring in the owner-

ship, the control and the motivations of business. Business today is becoming more and more professionalised and better organised. Business managers themselves are undergoing a metamorphosis; the historical self-made man, who made his way up in the world by native genius and hard work is giving way to the professionally educated business administrator. The manager today stands at the vortex of great many pressures and is under attack from many quarters. The manager has to contend with the growing challenges of unions on the one hand and face an ever-increasing number of governmental codes, regulations and limitations on the other. In a day when business was business and competence was intuitive, the wider the distance and the less the traffic between business and government, the better everything was thought to be. This attitude is on the way out. The old indifference which limited active business participation in politics, education, public problems and social issues has diminished in the face of several new developments. In the midst of these changes and competing forces the manager feels obliged not only to remain aware of his changing role but to acquire the whole range of new managerial techniques and skills so as to play his role effectively. Management cannot develop today to meet its social responsibilities without education and training and an on-going renewal of its skills. There is still time for us to mend our fences and those who are still living in the past are in for a rude shock before their tenures expire.

It is not given to us to alter our fate but surely we can manage the way we come to terms with it. Every executive wants to make good decisions but he is uncomfortable about decisions based on data collected by people he suspects and presented in a form which he does not understand. Whereas most people tend to become conservative as they grow older, it is an unspoken commonplace that they are more bored. Disillusionment, competitive environ-

ment, squabble for spoils, fight for power, and sameness of routine combine to create this mood. Recent researches have shown that the combination of rivalry and anger prevent the emergence of challenging ways to use young people in management. It is also established that to prosper in a fast-changing world, top business leaders must think more like philosophers than efficiency experts. A change of attitude is, therefore, called for. There should be no debate on the question that modern, complex, competitive business, if it is to be successful must be operated and through the use of modern methods and systems. This does not, however, rule out the vital relevance of common-sense and experience in the decision making progress. If the above premises is accepted then the Indian business can take the following immediate steps to tap the existing and future trainees more fully.

Expose existing managers to Developmental Programmes: Companies must devise systematic plans to expose their middle and senior level executives to either in-company or external programmes for development, concentrated largely on renewal, keeping up, conceptualisation, and the acquisition of new knowledge about methods and organisation. Training programmes for this category should include small experimental attempts to apply new skills with minimum risk. A part of managerial training for these men should be focussed on how to rear younger men. This means not only emphasis on tolerating, but counselling and supporting these youngsters in their effort to build successful careers in business and industry. Results show that such programmes for senior managers prove extremely effective in bringing about attitudinal changes in favour of adopting new methods and accepting new trainees.

Organisational Development and Manpower Planning: Board Level Function: For creating a suitable climate in the organisation for change, the

function of organisational Development and Manpower Planning should be located at the highest level. This function should not be confused with the day-to-day personnel and administrative functions, and the appointee to this position should be a man who has sufficient knowledge of the contemporary trends in the management field. Loud voice and mere seniority are rapidly ceasing to be effective attributes for maintaining control over existing and emerging generation of corporate employees. Executives must respect the person who has the responsibility for their growth and development. The persons in charge of the central function of management development should also be well versed with the company's present and future plans for expansion and growth so as to be able to play his role effectively. Recruiting management trainees is only the beginning of the task and not its end. The progress of these new entrants into the portals of big business houses needs to be constantly monitored, their grievance properly understood and tackled, their aspirations appropriately diagnosed and contained and their edges skillfully sharpened and smoothed. This is a full-fledged function and should not be indulged in as a hobby. Furthermore, management development is too often an isolated activity in a company, confused usually with the routine personnel function, and not seen as a dynamic means for executive management to link personal and company performance. Also the tendency to treat the task of developing executives on a take-it or leave-it basis is calamitous and calls for an altered orientation on the part of the top management.

Need for Flexible salary structure: Basically the only company that can pay business graduates the salary that they demand is the company that is flexible enough in its salary policy to pay the rate for the job regardless of age and seniority. There are three kinds of trainees available today: (1)

Arts and Science graduates; (2) MBA's fresh from the business schools and (3) MBA's with some prior work-experience. It is unreal to treat them all alike for the purposes of salary fixation. The company selection board should have sufficient freedom in fixing salaries within the prescribed minima and maxima depending upon age, experience, education and related attributes of the trainee.

A race on the part of companies to outbid each other in order to woo young trainees is likely to end up in giving these youngsters an exaggerated importance of themselves at an age when they are so impressionistic. Indeed one finds enough evidence of this notional superiority at higher echelons of corporate executives which is in no mean degree caused by fat salaries paid which are not always seen to be related to either the qualifications for the job or the job-content for that matter. Oddly enough, high salaries rather than adequate salaries cause a feeling of insecurity on the part of managers, and the young trainee must avoid falling into this trap. Companies need to develop scientific salary structures instead of treating this vital aspect of management on the basis of grand *ad hocry*.

Systematic Training: Nothing is more frustrating for a young trainee than to discover after joining the company that the training programme for trainees about which he was told at the time of interview does not in fact exist. In the absence of a well-thought through programme most companies are compelled to invent instant remedies for keeping the young trainees gainfully employed and sufficiently amused. This is a sheer disaster. Not only the trainee resents being kicked from pillar to post till someone out of charity or default or indeed desperation sucks him up, nor does it make for any real commitment on the part of the trainee to his company. Recruiting trainees for fashion is just as much a folly as refusing to induct trainees just because the company does not have the wherewithal to

dream up a suitable training programme. The answer lies in creating a nucleus in each organisation which would serve the integrated requirements of selection, induction, training and development. Those companies which have set about this task in a professional way have had a handsome pay-off on this count.

In order that the great business graduate employment boom does not burst in our eyes, the graduate trainee must not only shed his myopic vision of his place in industry, but should also consciously seek to serve the country in new fields of work. Just because a job has not been done by a business graduate before, it does not mean it is not good enough. Business graduates should not be hesitant to carve out careers in Government, Public Sector Enterprises, Municipalities, Agro-business, Retail trade, Civil Administration and on their own steam. Those who join business and industry should not be averse to starting as salesmen and shop-floor doers instead of seeking straight executive appointments. This is a matter of employers raising their sights as well as graduates lowering them. By the same token employers must devise systematic plans of recruiting new talent and tapping them fully rather than leaving this to mere chance. Business schools in turn can play an effective link-role in society by providing a broadbased educational orientation rather than an industrial orientation to the young men and women that pass out of business schools each year.

The views expressed in this booklet are not necessarily the views of the Forum of Free Enterprise.

**“Free Enterprise was born with man
and shall survive as long as man
survives.”**

—A. D. SHROFF
(1899-1965)
Founder-President,
Forum of Free Enterprise.

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