

Instruction on the job

In most factories, it is possible to have a separate section for the training of apprentices and trainees. However, where it is a matter of training on expensive machines, it is necessary to use machines which are actually engaged in the production process. This sometimes causes resentment among other workers because it may slow production and affect their earnings. It is therefore necessary to reduce this type of training as far as possible. Similarly in department stores, much of the training must, of necessity, be carried out under normal working conditions. Therefore, diplomacy and tact are required in order to prevent friction.

Let us consider the case of a new employee who is taking a position as shorthand typist. Let us give her a name - Miss Stenographer. She is already an efficient shorthand-typist with a year's experience behind her. She does not require much training. It is simply a matter of introducing her to the standard methods. Let us take the simple process of setting out a letter. There are many different styles which may be followed and she may think that the style to which she is accustomed is the best. This is mainly because she is used to it. However, the organisation which she has joined has developed its own standard methods which she must follow. Hence the need for instruction, let us assume that the job instruction in respect of "letter setting out" is carried out under five headings:

(a) Copy Position

Most of Miss Stenographer's work will be concerned with typing back from shorthand notes or straight copy. The typist usually has the choice of having her notes on the left or right of her machine, flat on the desk or supported in a copy holder. Now when Miss Stenographer was with her previous employer, she probably had her notebook lying flat on

the desk, and having become accustomed to it she would now prefer it that way.

However, if the standard practice requires her to use a copy holder on the left hand side of her desk, she will have to conform to the practice, even if, initially, it slows her speed of operation.

(b) Setting out the work

The organisation will have its standard format for letters, that is the marginal widths, setting out of the date, position and form of name and address of addressee, opening calculation, complimentary closing, etc. Miss Stenographer will be given a specimen and will be required to practice this setting out until she has mastered the standard method to the satisfaction of the trainer.

(c) Correct motions

Some people when they swim exert *a* great deal of energy and make quite a lot of splash. Others glide gracefully through the water. Similarly, in typewriting there is the best method which requires the minimum effort. This will be arrived at, after much motion study. Miss Stenographer will be carefully watched, and if there is unnecessary motion or effort, this will be corrected.

(d) Reading "Copy".

There is a right way and a wrong way to read "copy". It may be that Miss Stenographer will have got into the habit of reading it line by line as she proceeded with her typing, whereas the standard practice may be to read the whole letter first, and then proceed to type without hesitation.

(e) Speed

Miss Stenographer will have little difficulty." in satisfying the shorthand speed requirements of the organisation, and once she has mastered the standard methods of doing the work, she should be capable of attaining high speeds. Where a newcomer is below the official speed required there must be daily instruction and speed practice until she has reached a satisfactory standard.

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