

Management Education and Training

COOPERATIVE CENTRAL SERVICES

Report of Training Executive to Congress 1978

As a factual background for attention in other articles to issues, proposals and comparisons in Cooperative management education and training we print, almost in full, the report of the Training Executive to Congress 1978. The Training Executive is composed of officials drawn from the Cooperative Union, the C.W.S. and retail societies and has the task of monitoring and coordinating the services in staff education and training to the societies from the two federations.

"The Training Executive has continued to review the activities of the Movement's training agencies and, in addition, it has monitored developments in the wider field of training, through its contacts with agencies outside the Movement and through the submission of views to Government departments.

Facilities at the College

The Training Executive has welcomed a revision of policy which affords more scope for improved teaching facilities at the College in accordance with present and future needs of the Movement.

Management Development

The Training Executive has been concerned with three major problems, i.e. difficulty experienced by some societies when attempting to recruit management at senior level; the development of training in management skills; and the development of training in Industrial Relations.

Replacement of Senior Officials - In an attempt to establish the extent of the difficulties encountered by societies who wished to replace senior officials, a pilot study involving the circulation of a questionnaire to selected societies was undertaken. The results of this survey were inconclusive and the Training Executive decided to concentrate on research related to an analysis of the skills and qualities required by senior management.

Training in Non-food Management - In view of the serious problems experienced by the Movement in its non-food trading activities the Training Executive gave careful consideration to the role of training in the context of strategies aimed at improved trading performance. The College, in collaboration with C.W.S., C.R.S. and a retail society, organised three courses in product management and, in addition, part of the Chief Officials' Conference (q.v.) was devoted to "Co-operative Performance and Problems in Non-Foods". Further initiatives will be considered during 1978, though it is acknowledged that solutions to problems in this area involve considerations which go beyond the scope and responsibility of the Training Executive.

Industrial Relations Training - The Training Executive has acknowledged the need to equip managers with the knowledge and skills demanded of those who are increasingly having to come to terms with the demands of complex, and at times, bewildering, Industrial Relations matters. Consultations have taken place between representatives of the Training Executive, the Co-operative Employers Association and the Co-operative Personnel Services Association and, although progress towards the provision of courses has not been as rapid as those involved would have wished, courses for middle and line management will be organised during 1978.

Other Training Provisions - Department and College

Retail Management Trainee Scheme - Ten trainees, including one lady, joined this scheme in 1977. The scheme recruits into Co-operative service participants newly graduated from Universities and from full-time courses of business studies. Approaches have been made to societies about recruitment for 1978/79 and the Training Executive records its appreciation to the Directing Committee and to the societies who support the scheme financially; accept trainees on attachment; and provide employment opportunities. On the most recent count 62 M.T.S. Trainees remained in Co-operative service of the 83 who had passed through the scheme which represents a retention rate above average in industry.

Long-Term Courses at the College - Ten students enrolled for the Course at the College from January to June 1978 for the Certificate in Distributive Management Principles. The teaching for this national award takes special note of Co-operative organisation and conditions and every student takes the elective subject Co-operative Distribution.

Conference on Staff Training - The Conference was attended by 52 representatives of retail societies and the C.W.S. The programme included four "workshop" sessions and it is pleasant to record that on this occasion every session was led by people employed within the Co-operative Movement. Proposals for the Conference in 1978 are to be considered by the Training Executive and consultation with Training Officers will be undertaken at a series of one-day conferences which will take place during the first half of 1978.

Regional Conferences for Officers responsible for staff training held in 1977 were well supported and the interchange of ideas between the Education Department, C.W.S. Training Services and retail society Training Officers continues to be valuable.

Conference for Chief Officials - Fifty-five Chief Officials attended a further conference in this series in September, 1977. The programme included an address on Current Government Pricing Policies by the Rt. Hon. Roy Hattersley M.P., Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection. A day was devoted to Co-operative Capital involving retail officials, the Co-operative Bank and the Co-operative Insurance Society. The programme concluded with attention to Co-operative Performance and Problems in Non-Foods. The date of the 1978 Conference has been publicised and discussions are proceeding on a programme of interest to all chief officials.

Short Intensive Courses - These courses by the Department, are accommodated at the Co-operative Management Centre at the College.

January to June 1977

Recruitment to courses held in the first two terms of 1977 was:

Type of Course	No. of Courses	Places Offered	No. of Enrolments
Management and Supervision -			
Dairy Depots	1	10	7
Store Managers	1	10	9
Managing a Supermarket	2	24	24
Management and Supervision -			
Transport	1	10	4
Controlling Consumer Credit	1	10	-
Area Managers and Shop Inspectors	1	10	-
Staff Management and Control	1	10	9
Supervisory Skills for Women	1	10	7
Non-Food - Electrical	1	10	13
Store Detectives	1	10	13
Non-Food - Textiles	1	10	7
Current Cost Accounting	1	10	11
Financial Control for Managers	1	10	-

September to December 1977

Type of Course	No. of Courses	Places Offered	No. of Enrol- ments
Supermarket Modules -			
Dairy Cabinet	1	10	-
Marketing Non-Food -			
Furnishing	1	10	12
Menswear	1	10	-
Supervisory Skills for Women	1	10	-
Managing A Supermarket	1	12	17
Staff Management and Control	1	10	10
Store Detectives	1	10	13
Management and Supervision -			
Dairy Depots	1	10	11
Management within a Co-operative			
Organisation	1	6	-
Meat Makes Money	1	10	18
Organisation and Methods	1	10	-
Management and Supervision -			
Dairy Departments	1	10	6
Departmental Managers	1	10	5
Pharmacy Branch Managers	1	10	13
Standard Accounting Practices	1	10	11
Current Cost Accounting	1	10	7
Merchandising in Pharmacy	1	10	9
Wines and Spirits	1	10	6

Spring and Summer Term 1978 - The programme is to be fully maintained. In addition to courses which attract regular support, new courses include Industrial Relations for Managers, Course for Certificate of Competence for Transport Managers, Accounting Management Standards, Interviewing Skills, Internal Audit and Current Taxation. The Co-operative Bank is operating three courses for its staff in association with Loughborough University.

Correspondence Courses - In conjunction with the I.G.D. the Department has maintained the provision of courses, organised examinations and made awards in the Introductory Certificate in Distribution, the Advanced Distribution Certificate and the Certificate in Distributive Management Studies. A total of 2,031 subject enrolments were received during the 1977/78 session, compared with 1,617 in 1976/77.

In addition a number of seminars for students were organised at centres throughout the United Kingdom. A total of 120 students participated in these seminars.

Enrolments in Co-operative Union subjects numbered 51 in 1977, compared with 83 in 1976. A set of revised syllabuses formed the basis for the award "Certificate in Co-operative Studies", which involves the study of a core subject "Co-operation" and a choice of option modules.

Management Coaching Packs - The first pack, entitled "Accounting for the Non-Financial Manager" was marketed in 1977 and a total of 93 packs were sold. It is hoped that the second title, "Aspects of Personnel Management for Line Managers" will be available early in 1978.

Seminars - In addition to the correspondence course seminars mentioned above, the Department organised a number of seminars relevant to training in specific aspects of management responsibility, e.g. seven Security Seminars attracted 207 managers.

The second in a series of one week seminars for Safety Officers which started in 1976, was held in May 1977. These seminars, which are organised in conjunction with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, have been well supported, and the third in the series was held in February 1978.

Other Training Provisions - C.W.S.

During 1977 three Training Officers resigned to take up Training Manager/Training Officer positions within West Yorkshire, Cambridge and Walsall Societies.

During 1977 the department conducted 82 courses for 834 trainees. All courses were mounted on societies premises.

Course	Number of courses	Number of Trainees
Bacon Handling	1	9
Branch Manager I	1	7
Branch Manager II	4	30
Branch Manager III	6	52
Section Heads I	3	24
Section Heads II	1	11
Section Heads III	3	19
Section Heads II and II	1	10
Job Instructor	7	61
Wines and Spirits	11	130
Freezer Centre	4	55
Food Merchandising	2	27
Greengrocery	12	126
Dairy Cabinet	10	103
Fashion Display	2	10
Health and Safety	2	33
Management Growth Potential	3	31
Branch Manager I and II	2	19
Store Inspectors	1	11
Basic Skills	1	11
Legal Seminar	1	14
Supermarket Managers	1	10
Non-Food Merchandising	2	20
Pharmacy Sales Assistants	1	11
Totals	82	834

Fresh Food Training - The emphasis within societies has been in the training of personnel involved in the handling and preparation of fresh foods. Twelve courses were mounted for 126 trainees in Greengrocery and 10 courses for 103 trainees in Dairy Cabinet and Delicatessen.

Wines and Spirits - The indication that specialist training continues to be a high priority is also confirmed by the fact that on demand by societies, 11 Wines and Spirits courses were mounted for 130 trainees.

Pharmacy Training - The first specialist Instructor Course for personnel employed in Co-operative Pharmacy Departments was conducted in Manchester. Due to the success of this venture and the evaluation carried out by the N.A.C.O. Superintendent Chemists Executive, it has been decided to have similar courses mounted on an annual basis.

Non-Food Training - Two advanced courses for Section Heads employed in departmental stores have been developed and validated. The first four of these courses have been mounted within three societies. A consultancy service for fashion display is also available.

Forward Bookings - It is pleasing to note that the demand for training continues at a very high level. The department has forward bookings for 40 courses to be mounted on societies premises during the first six months of 1978.

Fees

Increases in fees have been held to a minimum by the C.W.S. Training Services and by the Co-operative Union. The Training Executive feels that societies will appreciate value for money in this context particularly after comparisons have been made with the cost of courses provided elsewhere.

Training in Societies

The Report to Congress in 1977 noted that the Executive had "not been able to obtain from societies a range of registration forms sufficient either for a representative total or for a comparison with last year". Against this background it was not considered productive to ask societies to complete a registration form this year and, regretfully, a long struggle to secure a total picture of society commitment to education and training ends in defeat.

National Association of Co-operative Officials - The Training Executive did not meet formally with representative of the Management and Secretarial Executives of N.A.C.O. during 1977, but liaison on an ad hoc basis is undertaken as required, e.g. a N.A.C.O. representative attended a meeting relevant to the development of Industrial Relations courses.

Co-operative Personnel Services Association - Joint meetings with the C.P.S.A. Executive have taken place and the C.P.S.A. has also been represented at the meetings relevant to Industrial Relations training.

Business Education Council - The Training Executive has monitored developments in relation to new course structures proposed by the Council. Certain aspects of these proposals have given the Executive cause for considerable unease. The Council produced course specifications for awards at General and Higher levels at the end of 1977 and the Training Executive will be considering the implications of these documents and will issue a statement to societies in the spring of 1978.

Training Services Agency/Manpower Services Commission - The Executive has noted continuing evidence of the expanding role of these bodies and feels unease about their understanding of the distributive industry and its problems.

Distributive Industry Training Board - The Training Executive continued to monitor the activities of the Board, particularly in relation to the revised levy remission scheme which was instituted in August, 1977. Societies were asked to report any difficulties that the new scheme had presented, and the Training Executive will be reviewing operation of the scheme during 1978.

The Board was asked to consider the possibility of making a contribution to the cost of extensions and adaptations to the College, but was unwilling to make such a contribution whilst College courses were closed to those employed in the private sector.

The Training Executive welcomed the appointment of Mr. R. M. Grindrod and of Mr. H. Hetherington (Managing Secretary of Dalziel Society) to the Board.

Food, Drink and Tobacco Industry Training Board - As a result of a meeting held with the Director of the Board, at which difficulties which had arisen in societies relevant to Board policy and its implementation were reviewed, a joint F.D.T.I.T.B./Co-operative working party has been set up. The Training Executive welcomed this development and societies have been invited to propose items for discussion by the working group which is to meet twice a year usually in March and in October.

Conclusion

The Training Executive, in commending this report to Congress, feels that it indicates another year of useful activity in maintaining surveillance of the education and training scene. The Training Executive has, however, set itself the task in 1978 of reviewing its own performance against the specification set for it by the Staff Training Working Party whose report was instrumental in the establishment of this Executive. In the nature of things there

cannot be complete integration of training resources by the two national agencies, and the limit of achievement in a compromise situation has to be recognised.

The Training Executive pays tribute to the efforts of societies in the training field which should be rewarded to a significant extent by the degree of levy exemption available to them under the new levy/grant scheme operated by the Distributive Industry Training Board. Where a substantial levy payment appears under society trading expenses, then the question may fairly be asked as to why that society is not matching up to the specifications of the main Training Board

Personnel costs are an obvious target when seeking reductions in expenses, but the importance to a business of a well trained staff cannot be over estimated. The Training Executive still notes with concern that, by contrast with some of the Movement's main competitors, and with practice in industry generally, there is little evidence of recognition by senior management of the need for training, and particularly for up-dating their own knowledge in relation to modern techniques.

The Training Executive does not accept the old adage "You can tell a Co-operative official; but you cannot tell him much!" - but a change of attitude towards training on the part of senior management in many societies is not only due, but overdue.