CAN THE SKILL OF MANAGEMENT BE TAUGHT?

Jay T. Knippen, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33620, (813) 974-4155

The teaching of management in the colleges of business has followed a fairly set pattern: some type of introductory "Principles of Management" or "Introduction to Management" course, followed by some intermediate "Organizational Theory," "Organizational Behavior" course, a few elective management courses, and at least a portion of the capstone "Business Policy" course devoted to the aspect of management. POOF: "You're A Manager." Yet, upon meeting a graduate of business or management school, one is unimpressed with her/his ability to perform as one would expect a manager. True, they can recite the five functions of a manager. They know all about Father Fred Taylor and immediately after "Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep . . ." they can recite Henry Fayol's principles. Furthermore, with an 85% accuracy they can tell whether a given statement is true or false, and with an 80% rate they can pick the correct multiple guess answer. They even can regurgitate textual and lecture material for an hour, sometimes even two hours. In fact, there's only me thing they can't do. They can't manage. They can't give positive reinforcement, coach, lead, handle conflicts, discipline, delegate, accept responsibility, motivate, take initiative, communicate, listen, interview, plan, set goals, appraise performance or solve problems. In short, they can't manage. Why? They've not been taught to manage, they've been taught how to recognize and define management. Whetton and Cameron state that "up to now, students have been taught more about management than how to manage," (Whetton 1983, p. 15). The literature is replete with studies showing no correlation between college grades and managers' salaries. (Pfeffer, 1977; Weinstein and Srinivasan, 1974; Williams and Harrell, 1964) So, what is needed to rectify this situation? Students need to learn the "skill" of managing.

Numerous articles have been written on the art versus skill topic of management (Green, Knippen and Vincelette, 1985). It is widely accepted that management is in fact a skill, but how does one learn such a skill?

The colleges of business have maintained that if a person reads a few books on management, listens to a number of lectures on management, writes a few term papers, takes some tests, then POOF, "They Are A Manager." The colleges of business across the country for years have been blind to a system that has worked very well in other colleges.

Our sisters and brothers in education say, "That's fine to read, listen to lectures, write papers, and take tests, but it's only the first step. After the formal learning one needs to practice and be critiqued for me semester under the guidance of a qualified and certified teacher in a program of practice teaching.

Only then can they truly obtain the teaching skill, be certified as a teacher, and begin their teaching career among the youth of our nation and the adults of tomorrow.

Likewise, our sisters and brothers in the College of Medicine give "the doctor-to-be" formal classroom education followed by a residency program in a hospital where they are supervised by practicing doctors and coached in the skills of medicine on actual patients. Those of us fortunate enough to live near a college of medicine (where the latest cures and technologies are discovered) often loose sight of the "guinea pig" role we sometimes play in the name of advanced medicine.

If the colleges of education can practice on the adults of tomorrow and our future doctors can experiment on citizens in the community, shouldn't future managers have the same opportunity? Most certainly.

One need only to look to the coaches of many fine athletic teams for a functional model. Coaches at all levels (high school, college, professional) begin with the basics. Football coaches start with the stance, blocking, and tackling. These basic skills are "taught" in the traditional lecture style. After "teaching" the players how to successfully perform, they "demonstrate" each skill by showing how the skill is done either by themselves or another player, or showing a film demonstrating the skill being performed successfully. After the teaching and demonstrating steps, the players "hit the field." For hours they practice, receive feedback, practice, receive feedback, practice. . . . . "until they reach the final step of . . . receiving positive reinforcement." After the basic skills (stance, blocking, and tackling) come the intermediate skills (ball handling, running, passing, pursuit, defending, zone, and man-to-man coverage) and finally the integrative skills: (offense, defense, and team work). Herein lies a basic model which could be well applied to teaching management skills: teaching, demonstrating, practice, and feedback.

How can this model be applied to teaching management? An application of a model to management skills may be utilized. In the teaching segment, the instructor spends 30 minutes teaching students the content part of a particular skill. This is the typical lecture style of instruction. Content is always divided into four parts: What is the skill?, Why do managers need to know how to use the skill?, When should the skill be used?, and How, specifically, should the skill be used? The "How To" part has a detailed set of steps to be followed when using the skill. In addition, each of these steps can be clearly seen and identified a videotape.

Following the presentation on content, students view videotapes of the skill being used correctly and effectively in a number of business situations. The steps under the "How To" part of the teaching segment form the outline or construct of the videotape script. The instructor leads a short discussion after each tape to make sure the students understand the steps from the "how to" portion of the teaching segment, know the reasons for the steps, and are confident that they can apply these steps to their own life.

The first hour of the teaching and demonstration segments use the teaching and presentation style found in most traditional lecture classes. It is the next three hours of practicing and feedback that make the knowledge relevant and usable to the student. Each student must practice the skill for effective learning to take place. Groups should be no larger than 15 students per instructor/video setup. To help transfer the newly learned skill to the students own world, each student chooses an actual situation from his or her own work or personal environment. This is truly "skills development, based on learning from

(one's own) experience." (Waters, 452) The student is then videotaped practicing the skill in a role-play with other students. Immediately following the videotaping, the student views her or his performance.

After viewing the videotape, during which time the other participants have competed an evaluation form (see Figure m), the practicing student orally critiques her or his own performance. The other students orally contribute their evaluation, and the instructor/assessor (note the instructor has now taken the role of assessor) makes additional comments the practicing student or other students have overlooked. One goal of the practice-feedback segment is for each member of the training session to become capable of critiquing the skills being demonstrated by the other participants. As students' evaluation skills improve, they become more conscious of what behaviors should be demonstrated and closer to internalizing the skill for their own use. The fewer comments the instructor/assessor has to make, the greater the probability that the students understand the particular skill.

When a student does a good job of demonstrating the skills, s/he receives positive reinforcement for portions of the skill that were performed well. If the student performed well overall, the next student is videotaped. In cases where the instructor/assessor feels that the trainee did not perform satisfactorily, constructive feedback is given, and when the student indicates that s/he has an understanding of the improvement needed, s/he is invited to retape the skill. Again, written and oral feedback is provided. Students having difficulty with a skill practice it until they have the proficiency to perform the skill correctly. Every student receives a passing grade each session as they practice each skill until they can perform it satisfactorily. Each practice is graded and the grades for multiple practice sessions are averaged.

Each student every week (every skill) receives a grade. The compilation of each week's skill amounts to 50% of the course grade. The remaining 50% consists of midterm, final and term paper. The midterm and final can consist of the usual true/ false, multiple guess questions, or essay questions. An additional type of question frequently used is that of completing a scenario (a scene of something happening). The student reads the scenario and decides which skill they have learned would help improve the situation. The student merely continues writing the scenario using the chosen skill. The student has merely continued writing a script which has in it the use of the skill. The instructor grades on the applicability and the correct use of the skill. The scenario can be presented in written form or it can be a video scene where a student with a written continuation finishes the viewed script using a learned skill.

After all the students are successfully videotaped, the feedback sheets are distributed. This prevents students from reading their feedback sheets when they are supposed to be critiquing the next student. At the end of class there should not be any doubt in the students' minds that they can perform the skill successfully. They viewed themselves successfully demonstrating the skill of videotape, they were told by other members of the class and the instructor/ assessor that they were successful, and they received written feedback sheets (see Figure 1) from every student and the instructor/assessor documenting their success. Every student leaves the classroom a "success," having received positive reinforcement, as opposed to merely receiving constructive

feedback and leaving thinking they know where they "goofed up."

Sometimes the first few students who practice their newly acquired skill do not perform well. With each subsequent taping, review, and critique, students perform the skill better and better. Each student attempts to repeat behaviors for which previous students received positive reinforcement and to improve in the areas where constructive feedback was given, thereby improving the total effort of their practice session. As the students assume more of the critiquing role, and as each successive taping improves, modeling and cognitive learning take place. The instructor/assessor should rotate who practices first, second, third, etc. to assume that each student practices early and late in subsequent sessions.

This course has been taught at the University of South Florida since 1981. It is increasing in popularity and demand. There is talk of making it a required course for all management majors, and perhaps all college of business majors.

The management skills can be taught as a free standing course or it can be taught with Principles of Management and/or Organizational Behavior courses as prerequisites. The following skills have been developed for teaching management skills:

Positive Reinforcement
Coaching
Clarifying Communications
Active Listening
Interviewing
Building Self Confidence
Motivation
Taking the Initiative
Participative Planning
Problem Solving
Handling Conflicts
Disciplining
Delegating
Accept Responsibility
Performance Appraisal
Goal Setting
Terminating an Employee

Each class can be any size; a TV cable and a monitor set up in an adjoining room can handle overflow classes. However, for every 15 students a separate room with video recorder and camera, a monitor, and an assessor (trained top-notch students from previous classes make excellent assessors) are needed for the practice and feedback segments.

A user of these skills need only prepare the day before the class for the 1/2 hour lecture, as the material to present in the lecture is contained in the instructor's manual. The lecture material is keyed to the student outline in the students' book which has space in it for notetaking. The student outline follows the course format of What Is, Why Do Managers Need to Know How to Use It, When Do Managers Use It, and Specific Steps on How to Use It.

The course is a very effective method of teaching the active use of management skills. Students have indicated that it is by far the best course they have had in school because of its practicality and relevance. They can actually use it both at work and in their everyday life.

A side benefit of the course is that the student enhances her/his speaking ability. Being able to see oneself communicating on videotape enables the student to reduce her/his fright of speaking while improving her/his overall communication skills.

FIGURE 1

PARTICIPANT NAME: _____ SKILL: Goal-Setting

    EVALUATOR NAME (Optional): _____

1. Create the need to know _____
    _____
    _____

2. What benefits to worker _____
    _____

3. Introduce goal setting (Joint) _____
    _____
    _____

4. Indicate use of goals _____
    _____
    _____

5. Model goal statements

    a) Specific _____
        _____
        _____

    b) Measurable _____
        _____

    c) Realistic _____
        _____

Positive reinforcement _____
_____
_____
_____

Constructive feedback _____
_____
_____
_____

+ A -   /   + B -   /   + C -   /   + D -   /   + F -

CONCLUSION

There has been a lack of training effectiveness documented in the literature for a number of years.(Brush, 30) Classroom performance has not been equated to managing effectively for three reasons: 1) cognitive learning alone doesn't alter behavior, 2) unrelated case studies and role playing from a foreign environment doesn't transfer readily to the students world, and 3) business school curriculums have stressed the recognition of management rather than the internalization of management skills. For years the business world has been echoing Mintzberg's philosophy that "our management schools need to identify the skills managers use, select students who show potential in these skills, put the students into situations where these skills can be practiced, and give them systematic feedback on their performance". (1975, p. 60) Skill performance is learned through both intellectual pursuits and internalization through practice. If only one of these is emphasized, performance doesn't take place.

From the education, medical, and athletic world, a model of teaching, demonstrating, practicing, and receiving feedback has emerged. This model can be successfully applied to the teaching of management skills. Teaching cognitive learning, followed by a demonstration of the management skill on videotape instills the skill in the student's mind. Practice with positive feedback freezes and internalizes the skill making it readily applicable to the student's present or future working world.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Beatty, Richard W., & Craig E. Schneier, Personnel Administration: An Experiential Skill-Building Approach. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., 1981.

"A Behavior Modification Approach to Supervisor Training," Personnel Research Bulletin, #8, November, 1970. General Electric Employee Relations, New York.

Bigelow, John, "Teaching Action Skills: A Report from the Classroom," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, m983, pp. 28-34.

Bradford, David L., "Some Potential Problems with the Teaching of Managerial Competencies," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, 1983, pp. 45-49.

Broadwell, Martin M., "Supervisory Training in the '80's," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 34:2, February, 1980.

Brush, Donald H. and Licata, Betty Jo, "The Impact of Skill Learnability on the Effectiveness of Managerial Training and Development," Journal of Management, Vol. 9:m, Spring/Summer, m983, pp. 27-39.

Byham, W. and J. Robinson, "Interaction Modeling: A New Concept in Supervisory Training," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 30:2, February, 1976, pp. 195-202.

Carlson, S., Executive Behavior: A Study of the Wordload and the Working Methods of Managing Directors. Stockholm: Strombergs, 1951.

Cary, M.S., "Comparing Film and Videotape," Environmental Psychology and Nonverbal Behavior, 1979, Vol. 3, pp. 243-247.

Catalanello, R.F., and D.C. Brenenstuhl, "An Investigation of Innovative Teaching Methodologies," Academy of Management Proceedings, Vol. 38, 1978, pp. 18-21.

Culbertson, Katherine, and Mark Thompson, "An Analysis of Supervisory Training Needs," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 34:2, February 1980, pp. 58-62.

Cummings, L.L. and D.P. Schwab, Performance in Organizations: Determinants and Appraisal. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, m973.

Damm, Raymond C., "Measuring Skills: The University of Pittsburgh Experience," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, 1983, pp. 35-36.

Filley, A.C., Foster, L.W., and Herbert, T.T., "Teaching Organizational Behavior: Current Patterns and Implications," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 4:2, 1979, pp. 13-18.

Foy, N., "Action Learning Comes to Industry," Harvard Business Review, 1977, Vol. 55:5, pp. 158-168.

Gioia, Dennis A. and Henry P. Sims, Jr., "Videotapes in the OB Classroom: Creating the Tools to Teach," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 7:3, pp. 13-17.

Gordon, R.A.and J.E.Howell, Higher Education for Business. New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

Green, S.G. and T.D. Taber, "Structuring Experiential Learning through Experimentation," Academy of Management Review, Vol. 3, 1978, pp. 889-895.

Hayes, James L., "Preparing Future Leaders," Management Review. May 1981, pp. 2-3.

Ilgen, D.R., C.D. Fisher and M.S. Taylor, "Consequences of Individual Feedback on Behavior in Organization," Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 64:4, 1979, pp. 349-371.

Jernstedt, G.C., "Experiential Components in Academic Courses," The Journal of Experiential Education. 1980, Vol. 3:2, p. 11.

Kidron, A.G., "The Effectiveness of Experiential Methods in Training and Education: The Case of Role Playing," Academy of Management Review, 1977, Vol. 2, pp. 490-495.

Knudson, H.R., R.T. Woodworth and C.H. Bell, Management: An Experiential Approach, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973, pp. 1-5.

"Learning Supervisory Skills Through Videotaped Behavior Modeling," Personnel, November 1979, p. 55.

"Learning Supervisory Skills Through Videotaped Behavior Modeling," Personnel Journal, November 1979, Vol. 56:55.

"Managing: The Coach's Art," Training, Vol. 23:3, March 1986, pp. 78-80.

Manz, Charles C. and Henry P. Sims, Jr., "Vicarious Learning: The Influence of Modeling on Organizational Behavior," Academy of Management Review. Vol 6, 1981, pp. 105-113.

Miner, J.B., "Implication of Managerial Talent Projections for Management Education," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 33:22, February 1979, pp. 32-35.

_____ "The Real Crunch in Managerial Manpower" Harvard Business Review, Vol. 51, 1973, pp. 146-158.

Mintzberg, Henry, "Critical Managerial Skills," The Organization Game. Goodyear Publishing Co., Inc., 1979.

Mintzberg, H., "The Manager's Job: Folklore and Fact," Harvard Business Review, Vol. 53, 1975, pp. 49-61.

Mintzberg, R., The Nature of Managerial Work. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.

"Modeling: A New Concept in Supervisory Training," Training and Development Journal. Vol. 30:2, February 1976.

"The Money Chase," Time, May 4, 1981, pp. 58-69. Morse, J.J. and F.R. Wagner, "Measuring the Process of Managerial Effectiveness," Academy of Management Journal, Vol. 21,

1978, pp. 23-25.

Newburg, Thomas A., "Exercises for Better Management Development," Personnel Journal, October 1980, Vol. 59, pp. 850-852.

Pfeffer, J., "Effects of an MBA and Socioeconomic Origins on Business School Graduates' Salaries," Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 62, 1977, pp. 698-705.

_____ Power in Organizations. Marshfield, Mass.: Pitman Publishing, 1981.

Porras, J. and B. Anderson, "Improving Managerial Effectiveness Through Modeling-Based Training," Organizational Dynamics, Spring, pp. 223-236.

Porter, Lyman W., "Teaching Managerial Competencies: An Overview", EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, 1983, pp. 8-9.

Posner, B.Z. and W.A. Randolph, "A Decision Tree Approach to Decide When to Use Different Pedagogical Techniques," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 3:2, 1978, pp. 16-19.

Powers, Edward A., "The AMA Management Competency Programs: A Developmental Process," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, 1983, pp. 8-9.

Reeves, Elton T., "Skills and Abilities You Will Need," So You Want To Be A Supervisor, 1980, pp. 17-36.

Rohrer, Hibler & Replogle, Inc., "The Skills and Training of the Manager," The Managerial Challenge: A Psychological Approach to the Changing World of Management, 1981, pp. 71-90.

Rosenbaum, Bernard 1., "Common Misconceptions About Behavior Modeling and Supervisory Skills Training (SST)," Training and Development Journal, Vol. 33:8, August 1979, pp. 40-44.

Scharinger, Dale H., "Avoidance of Pitfalls in Supervisory Development," Training and Development Journal, October 1981, pp. 92-96.

Shuttenberg, E.M. and B.W. Poppenhagen, "Current Theory and Research in Experiential Learning for Adults," The Journal of Experiential Education, Vol. 3:1, pp. 29-30.

Sorcher, M. and A.P. Goldstein, "A Behavior Modeling Approach in Training," Personnel Administration, 1972, Vol. 35:2, pp. 35-41.

Sullivan, J.R., "Trends in University-Based Continuing Management Education," Training and Development Journal, March 1977, Vol. 32, pp. 23-26.

Tauber, Mark S., "Supervisory Skill Development," Training and Development Journal, September 1981, Vol. 35:9, pp. 49-54.

Thelen, M.H., R.A. Fry, P.A. Fehrenback, and N.M. Frautschi, "Therapeutic Videotape and Film Modeling: A Review," Psychological Bulletin, 1979, Vol. 86, pp. 701-720.

Tough, Allen, The Adult's Learning Projects: A Fresh Approach to Theory and Practice in Adult Learning. 2nd Edition (Austin, Texas: Learning Concepts, 1979, pp. 174-175.

Vaill, Peter, "The Theory of Managing in the Managerial Competency Movement," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, 1983, pp. 50-54.

Walter, G.A. and S.E. Marks, Experiential Learning and Change. New York: Wiley Interscience, 1981.

Waters, James A., Nancy J. Adler, Robert Poupart, and Jon Hartwick, "Assessing Managerial Skills through a Behavioral Exam," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 8:2, 1983, pp. 37-44.

Weber, R.J., "Effects of Videotape Feedback on Task Group Behavior," Proceedings, 79th Annual Convention, American Psychological Association, 1971, pp. 499-500.

Weinstein, A.G. and V. Srinivasan, "Predicting Managerial Success of Master of Business Administration (MBA) Graduates," Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 59, 1974, pp. 207-212.

Welsh, A.N., The Skills of Management, 1981, pp. 7-27; 41-130.

Wexley, K.N. and G.P. Latham, Developing and Training Human Resources in Organizations. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1981.

Whetten, David A. and Kim S. Cameron, "Management Skill Training: A Needed Addition to the Management Curriculum," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 7:2, 1983, pp. 10-15.

Williams, F.J. and T.W. Tarrell, "Predicing Success in Business," Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 48, 1964, pp. 164-167.

Zammuto, Raymond, "Organizational Decline and Management Education," EXCHANGE: The Organizational Behavior Teaching Journal, Vol. 7:3, 1982, pp. 5-12.

Zoffer, H.J., "Restructuring Management Education," Management Review, Vol. 6, April 1981, pp. 37-41.