

Swinging on the Learn-Shift

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INDUSTRY and business have much to offer educational institutions. Better preparation of young people for the world of work in particular, and life in general, can be brought about by closer cooperation between schools, management, and labor. Such cooperation can come only through a better understanding of the philosophies, organization, and operation of the agencies concerned.

Recognizing the fact that industry is using counseling and other guidance practices to a considerable extent, Clifford Erickson of Northwestern University and the writer decided to visit several manufacturing plants to determine what they are doing in this field. One of the industries visited was the Dodge Plant of the Chrysler Corporation. We were much impressed with the excellent training school which it has. Here the prospective worker can learn

to operate any or all of the basic types of machines used in the factory. The most interesting part of the training to us, however, was the guidance service. Here there is an honest attempt to determine the interests, aptitudes, and abilities of the individual before giving him training.

In conversation with John Amiss, Director of Training for the Chrysler Corporation, it was learned that the company planned to open up the training program to a limited number of public school counselors from metropolitan Detroit. The main objective from the counselor's standpoint was to give him experience in industry so that he could become a better counselor. Chrysler Corporation felt that the program would not only help in meeting a labor need during the summer, but would also develop good public relations.

Mr. Amiss was wise enough to see that counselors who had had first-hand experience in the Chrysler Corporation would be better qualified to select desirable employees in the future. Susan Jones, who took this training, would go back to her high school and send many Marys and Johnnys to Chrysler. Furthermore, she no longer would urge all of the best students to go to college and send only the persons with low I.Q.'s to industry.

The possibilities of a cooperative counselor-training program between in-

If John is a riveter, industry wants to see John driving rivets. If the vocational counselor who first talks with John isn't aware of his potentialities as a riveter, John may be directed into some other work at which he could never be very efficient, or happy as an individual. The usual teacher-training course doesn't provide for learning about the kind of persons who make good riveters. That's why both industry and education enthusiastically cooperated in an on-the-job, counselor-training program begun at a Chrysler plant last summer. Carl M. Horn, Chief of Guidance, Michigan Board for Vocational Education, describes here the type of instruction given and the reactions to the course of those who took it.

dustry and the teacher-training institutions were as clear as if they had been drawn upon the wall. A brief outline was prepared and presented to Mr. Amiss for his consideration. He immediately saw the advantages of the plan and said that Chrysler would provide opportunities for a maximum of seventy counselors, teachers, and school administrators to share in such a program.

Teachers Don Overalls

The next step was to present the plan to the universities in which Michigan teachers usually took their graduate work. The University of Michigan, Wayne University, and Northwestern University agreed to cooperate. General direction of the related training, which was initiated in the summer of 1943, was put in charge of a committee consisting of representatives of each of the cooperating universities, Mr. Amiss, and the writer, representing the State Board of Control for Vocational Education.

The plan for the course provided for two phases of instruction—one in Work Experience and the other in Related Training. The course lasted eight weeks, with forty hours a week devoted to learning machine operation and eight hours to related counselor training. Four hours of graduate credit in education were given for completion of the program. Participants were paid \$1 an hour plus time and a half for overtime or a total of \$52 a week. Universities sharing in the plan were represented on a quota basis, students being selected according to the extent to which they—as teachers—could utilize the counseling training during the next school year. Many more applicants were received than could be accepted. Tuition was

charged at the same rate as for similar courses in the universities.

The Good and the Not So Good

An evaluation of the experiences was obtained at the end of the eight weeks. Four hours were spent on the final two days in analyzing the good and bad features of the program. Although most of the reactions were very favorable, excellent suggestions for improvement were received from the group.

A tallying of the unsigned evaluation sheets filled out by individuals taking the course revealed that the majority of them rated the program as "excellent" counselor training. Almost as many considered the course to be "excellent" educational experience. A somewhat smaller majority called the program "excellent" training for *any* teacher.

To the question—Should a similar experience in business, industry, agriculture, or other types of work be provided as an undergraduate requirement for certification of all teachers?—the following views, as expressed by persons in different fields of education, came to light:

Counselors	Yes—50	No— 2
Secondary Teachers	Yes—31	No—14
Elementary Teachers	Yes—22	No—22
Administrators	Yes—35	No— 2

A majority of the students thought that the course was "excellent" as work experience. Some reported that they had operated as many as twenty-six industrial machines, while the minimum operated was six. Opinions on the physical effect of the work on participants were almost equally divided between "good" and of "no effect." A small portion felt that the physical effect had

been "bad," whereas a great many found it "very good."

Students reported that the work experience was valuable because it taught them new manipulative skills and an appreciation of fatigue due to manual work. They liked the variety of their course and regarded as extremely helpful the better understanding of industry and of management and labor problems which their experience brought them.

Many valuable suggestions for improving the course came from the students. They felt that a definite order of rotation in use of the machines would be helpful. They saw a need for more supervision at the beginning of the course, for a class in theory and terminology, and for more orientation to shop standards.

Particularly interesting are the students' appraisals of the effects of the summer's training on their work as counselors. They felt that their firsthand knowledge of industry would equip them to counsel more wisely in regard to industrial requirements and give them more tolerance toward the factory-destined pupil. Industrial promotion policies were better understood. They reported that they had acquired new techniques in interviewing, that they were gaining a new understanding of parents' viewpoints and at the same time finding it easier to approach employers. The participants were confident that all of this new knowledge would help them to give their pupils a clearer understanding of the habits and skills required in industry.

From Machines to Procedures

The majority of students rated the Related Training phase of the program

as either "excellent" or "good." Related Training was organized so as to utilize the Chrysler personnel to the fullest extent. The purpose here was to give the counselors an inside view of a great industry and its complicated organization and operation. The remainder of the related work was in charge of the university representatives. Of special interest to counselors were the company's employment procedures, its apprentice training program, and also the training program for supervisors. Part of the course was devoted to study of the counseling process within the plant, the meaning and place of guidance in the Chrysler Corporation, methods used to gain an understanding of the individual, counseling for war and postwar needs, the use of occupational information, and the importance of work study and work experience.¹

Out of the students' reactions to Related Training have come some worthwhile suggestions for improving this part of the course. Participants expressed a desire for more technical instruction, for daily conferences, and for mimeographed copies of each lecture. They would like more moving pictures for training and more demonstration of machines in operation. They expressed a desire for more occupational information, more trips through the plant, and a minimum of assigned work.

There seems to be no doubt about the value of Related Training as it affects counseling. Improved counseling techniques grew out of the experience. Counselors developed more human in-

¹ For full outline of the Related Training course, write to Carl M. Horn, Chief of the Occupational Information and Guidance Division of the Michigan Board of Control for Vocational Education, Lansing, Mich.

sight, which made them better able to understand pupils. They gained a new perspective of counseling processes and approached their work with increased confidence and enthusiasm. They made better use of tests and visual aids and kept better records. They agreed that in future counseling each would use his ears more and his mouth less.

Industrial Problems Take On New Meaning

There was a wide range of miscellaneous comments on the program as a whole which reflect the new "feeling" for their work gained by vocational counselors. Among these comments were the following:

- Sympathies have been broadened.
- Better understanding of interview techniques.
- Unsolved school problems become corporation problems.
- Need for universal vocational education.
- Need of cooperation between school and industry with follow-up schools.
- New appreciation of foreman's problems.
- Importance of accuracy.
- Need for calmness on a "hot job."
- Realization that repetition need not be boring.
- Need for recreational opportunities for swing-shift workers.
- New understanding of children's dislike for some school work.
- Better viewpoint toward women in industry.
- Factory work can be interesting and challenging.
- School can learn from industry.
- Appreciation of the necessary training and skill.

- Appreciation of the problems of management and labor.
- Appreciation of the shop man's viewpoint.
- New opportunities for the "general" high school student.
- Much attention given to personality and attitudes.
- Better knowledge of the abilities needed for industry.
- Learning through experience has no substitute.
- Operating a machine effectively gives satisfaction.
- Self-reliance developed by not getting too much help.
- The many processes involved in making *one* thing.
- Appreciation of what apprentice-school training offers.
- Need for more practical shop and math courses in high school.
- Greater need for orientation in high school.
- Counseling can be practical.

New Views Make Better Teachers

The program marks the beginning of a new era on counselor and teacher training. Teachers have long been thought to know little about anything but education. The average teacher has done nothing but study English, mathematics, history, and science and re-teach it to others. The war has given teachers new experiences. In general, however, these experiences are narrow in scope, and little effort has been made to apply them in teaching situations. Provision for off-campus education in fields other than teaching should go far toward broadening viewpoints and making teachers more practical in their counseling and teaching.

The success of the project at Chrysler on the graduate level of teacher training gave rise to the questions: Can experience of this type be incorporated profitably on the undergraduate level? Can many of the misunderstandings and mistakes of the beginning teacher be prevented by expanding the teacher-training program to include cooperative work-training experiences? If so, what kinds of opportunities should be provided and for whom?

An attempt is being made to find answers to these questions. Next term these same universities and several other teacher-training institutions in Michigan plan to experiment with the cooperative work-training program for prospective teachers. It is hoped that opportunities will be provided for ex-

perience-training in other industries, in merchandising, communication, transportation, agriculture, and related occupations and in various types of social and law enforcement work.

A real step forward toward better preparation of teachers for their counseling and teaching responsibilities has been made. Further advancement is dependent upon the combined cooperation of the agencies involved. Perhaps in the not too distant future, every beginning teacher will go to her first job with at least one term of off-campus work-training, such as has been outlined. Then we will be able to have a much more efficient guidance program, resulting in better trained pupils, more efficient employees, more understanding management, and a better America.



Time to Spare

How a busy teacher with twenty-two pupils in a one-room, rural school can find time to give individual aid to pupils with special needs, as well as to help boys and girls of different ages learn to work both independently and with each other, is demonstrated in a very good film called *Time to Spare*. In this film (produced in Mercer County, West Virginia) the teacher, by means of the "large time-block schedule," uses her day for all sorts of different things, rather than spending it rushing through an endless round of ten-minute classes. The film also shows how attractive and well-equipped a rural school may be.

A worthwhile film program for persons particularly interested in rural education might be, first, a showing of *And So They Live* (reviewed in *Educational Leadership* in October), followed by *Living and Learning in a Rural School*, an older film which shows certain attempts to improve the program of the typical rural school (filmed in New Jersey), and, finally, *Time to Spare*. The last two films rent for \$3 a day from the New York University Film Library and are two reels, sound.

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