

To Change, To Grow... /I/D/E/A/'s Clinical Training Workshops

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BOB MARCUS pulled the tab from a can of his favorite beer, swung his overheated body into a hammock, and began to pull his thoughts toward his reading assignment in "Educational Innovations 532." Shifting his weight more comfortably, Bob began reading a monograph surveying approaches to individualizing instruction. Presently, the titillating summer breeze and the nectar of the gods combined to put Bob in an introspective mood. His eyes shifted from black on white to white on blue. As he focused on a drifting cloud, he was aware of feeling, even in his comfortable circumstances, more than a little irritation.

Pressing for a reason for his pique he mused, "Here I am, in a summer school situation in which I am supposed to learn

about innovations in education. But I have yet to see one in operation. The professor, however well-intentioned he may be, lectures and lectures only. I wish to God somebody would just *show* me rather than *tell* me how it should be done."

Perhaps what Bob had uttered in a random moment of self-analysis should be engraved on the cornerstone of every teacher education institution in the country. Again, the imperatives, "Show! Demonstrate!" should be tacked to the flagpoles of every local school system which has insisted, up to this point, on making preservice and inservice "preservitude" and "in-servitude."

Bob Marcus is, in many respects, a victim of a pattern that has perpetuated itself throughout this century. He is, first of all, genuinely concerned about self-improvement as a teacher. Second, he has been given materials to read, has been told how to

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improve, has been observed, and has been involved in endless rap sessions with other educators. He was trained in a lock-step system that violated many of the principles of learning he was urged to uphold. He had reached his senior year in college before he had any real exposure to the children he would be teaching and then was given a chance to bumble about on his own in a stint called practice teaching. He consequently learned about the upper middle class advantaged child with no serious mental or physical impediments and few dissenting or radical opinions.

Five years later, Bob is still periodically given a chance to "shape-up" with some pre-service or in-service activity in which no one in a leadership capacity has really had to put himself on the line and demonstrate how to teach students effectively. Bob can, as he is doing now, take a graduate course, but too often he again finds himself in a passive role.

Is Bob's case extreme? Some might think so. On the other hand, look at some of the research in teacher education over the past few years:

- Sixty to seventy percent of teacher accreditation institutions are affected minimally, if at all, by innovations in teacher education. (James A. Johnson. *A National Survey of the Student Teaching Programs*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University, 1968.)

- In a four-year investigation at UCLA, experienced teachers did not achieve any significant statistical difference over their non-teacher counterparts in three teaching performance tests in the fields of social science, electronics, and auto mechanics. The conclusion was that "experienced teachers are not particularly skilled in bringing about specified behavioral changes in learners." (W. James Popham. "Teaching Skill Under Scrutiny." *Phi Delta Kappan* 52 (10): 599-602; June 1971.)

- A sample survey, conducted for the decade 1960-70, by the American Institute for Research concluded that "the instructional program of the nation's schools has improved very little in its quality and effectiveness over

the past decade." (Quoted in *Education Today*, August 7, 1972.)

Are there answers? Here's one, derived from the combined thinking of educators, agencies, and institutions. The model presented here, furthermore, is workable. It has been developed and used all over the world by the staff of the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc. (/I/D/E/A/), the educational affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. The /I/D/E/A/ Change Program for Individually Guided Education (IGE) mandates clinical training workshops for teachers and for leaders participating in the program. Such a clinical training workshop seeks to:

- Put into practice the concepts of improvement of instruction which it purports to foster in the behavior of teachers. In other words, the model seeks to practice what it preaches.

- Provide a controlled framework in which teachers can concentrate on their own learning without having to fear the consequences of mistakes they might make. The professional reputation of the teachers involved in the workshop is not "on the line."

- Give teachers the opportunity to work with consultant-advisors who have demonstrated that they can perform the tasks which are a part of the workshop.

- Allow teachers to see themselves and their skills honestly and to see themselves as others see them.

- Give the educators involved in the workshop the benefit of an outside agency's (in this case, /I/D/E/A/) human and material resources, including the development of audiovisual teacher training materials.

- Offer a workshop that will allow for growth and improvement in all areas affecting the school—in administration, curriculum, methods of instruction, organization—and at all levels, K-12.

- Provide a systematic and logical approach to a particular plan and process for individualizing instruction for students.

- Train teachers to conduct a similar workshop in their own local school districts.

Model

Place: Any school facility.

When: During school vacation or during the school year. Workshop lasts 13 days.

Personnel: It is recommended that the workshop have 10 to 40 participants. These can be key teachers, principals, new team facilitators—anyone who will be agents of change in the school system.

Organization: Team-teaching; continuous progress, individualized instruction, multi-age groups. Workshop Director (one of the consultant-advisors). Teams composed of 4-7 teacher-participants.



Days 1-5

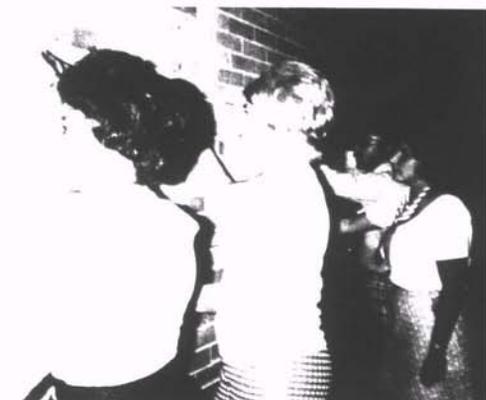
Human development activities, comprising the first three days of the workshop, are designed to establish rapport and mutual trust among the participants and to furnish them with actual techniques which they will later use in working with their own students in the workshop. Some of these activities involve, for example, having each participant relate experiences which would illustrate his basic values or having small groups and then the total group of educators agree upon a common set of educational goals.

During the first three days, the participants are organized into teaching teams with one member of the team serving as leader. The teams begin to collect data about their students; utilize with their students some of the human development techniques the participants have already experienced; and begin to plan a unit of study which is delimited by measurable objectives.



Days 6-13

Teaching-Observation-Assessment Cycle. During the mornings of the remaining days of the workshop, the teaching, observation, and assessment cycle (described here) takes place. In the afternoons, the activities which most often occur are planning, conferences, learning on one's own, and the development of a plan as to how the ideas gained in the



Teams of 4-7 teacher-participants begin to collect data about their students, to utilize with their students some human development techniques, and to plan a unit of study based on measurable objectives.

workshop can be implemented in the participants' home school system. Each morning is divided into two separate and distinct halves, each of which is regarded to be in effect a separate day. Teams will alternate in teaching one half of the morning and observing during the other half. In this pattern, each team undergoes an intensive observation cycle each day and has a daily experience teaching students.

Pre-observation. For purposes of understanding this model, it is necessary to consider some aspects of the observation and the assessment phases of the workshop. Before a team observes another team in the teaching process, both groups should discuss what the observers should look for and the ground rules for the time the observers are in the room. (Should they move about? talk with students?)

Observation. During the actual observation, the observers should, in all instances, refrain from making value judgments on the teachers being observed. (Some of the observers may be teachers from the performing teacher's own team.) The observers should have set up, prior to the observation, some systematic way of gathering evidence of what is actually happening during the teaching process.

Organization and Analysis. The observers, before discussing their findings with the team actually doing the teaching, should analyze and compare the data each has independently collected and should assess their validity. The observing team is then ready to meet with the performing teacher(s). (Those observers from the teaching team

itself will make a separate analysis of their findings and hold a separate conference with their team members who were doing the teaching.) Comments made to the teaching team should be constructive and positive. The observation cycle is successful when both the observers and the performing teachers gain something from the process; when both improve their teaching arts.

Finally, the observers themselves meet to discuss how they can improve their future observations.

Outcome of the Workshop

This workshop or model should have several positive outcomes. A participant going through this clinical process should have:

- Charted his own plan for continuous improvement
- Performed both in the teacher and observer roles
- Seen peer supervision as a practical way to teacher improvement
- Used measurable objectives and the individualization of instruction in planning and teaching
- Devised a plan for conducting a similar clinic in his own school system.

This clinical experience is no joy-ride, Bob Marcus. It is hard work and even painful work at times. Yet you can watch youngsters come alive in this super-charged environment. You are, of course, expected to make mistakes. But the mistake you will not have made is that of simply sitting on the sidelines. You have been there. You have actually done it. □

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