

need for equity in educational institutions and in curriculum by initiating appropriate curriculum institutes, publishing articles in *Educational Leadership*, and publishing special monographs.

6. Act as the catalyst to organize a national movement, such as an invitational convention or other forum which will have enough visibility and enough clout to focus national and even international attention on equity as it relates to women in educational leadership. Such a convention could result in a set of "Cardinal Principles" of equity, which could be used as referents to prick the collective conscience from

time to time as needed and refocus scattered efforts and weakened resolve.

The ASCD Women's Leadership Project:

Nancy Everts (Chair), University of Cincinnati, Ohio

Jacqueline Clement, Lincoln Public Schools, Mass.

Betty Dillon-Peterson, Lincoln Public Schools, Nebr.

Yvonne Ewell, Dallas ISD, Dallas, Tex.

Phil Robinson, River Rouge Public Schools, River Rouge, Mich.

Bernice Wolfson, University of Alabama, Birmingham, Ala.

Equity Project Emerges

To carry on the work begun by ASCD's 1982 Women's Leadership Project, an independent Women's Equity Project Committee is actively planning meetings and other events for ASCD's Annual Conference next March in New York. Send your suggestions to Barbara Pavan, Department of Educational Administration, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

If you would like to receive copies of the Equity Project's newsletter, contact Phyllis E. Robinson, 1367 Joliet St., Detroit, MI 48207.

Supervision Abstracts

CHERYL GRANADE SULLIVAN

What Causes Poor Performance?

In several field studies and a major laboratory study, Mitchell and Kalb¹ found that supervisors with experience in the task they were supervising tended to attribute poor performance to the environment. Inexperienced supervisors, on the other hand, blamed the individual subordinate for the difficulty. In general, explanations involving internal causes were more common than those pointing to external causes.

While these researchers stress the need for broader research than their study of proofreaders, bankers, and military personnel, they note that their results have some important practical implications for all supervisors. Their findings suggest that experience may make the supervisor more aware of external causes of poor performance such as a disruptive environment. Such information may lead to more accurate diagnoses of causes of poor performance, which consequently may lead to appropriate actions for improvement.

Administrators Are Key to Effective Supervision

Taking a dim view of current supervision, V. L. Schonberger² notes "an overall dissatisfaction with the inefficiency and lack of usefulness of present supervisory practices." He advocates a more analytical approach stressing

awareness of teaching behavior and urges supervisors and administrators to support one another. As specific examples of a more personal and productive approach to supervision for instructional improvement he cites Cogan, Sergiovanni, and Weller.

Schonberger says the administrator is the key to bringing about the required change and must act as the catalyst. Specifically, supervision must be thought of in terms of collaboration and consultation. The administrator is advised to encourage interpersonal contacts, collective goal setting, and open lines of communication between teachers and supervisors.

A Systems Approach to Supervision

Stressing that classroom-based instructional programs for supervision are inadequate, Dennis Borinstein³ advocates a systems approach designed to maintain interpersonal skills on the job. The training program described by Borinstein uses custom-designed videotapes and practice sessions.

Cheryl Granade Sullivan is Adjunct Assistant Professor of Education, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

Steps involved in the process include meeting with representatives of the group participating in the training, identifying critical skills, working through skill modules using videotapes that include role plays of effective use of the chosen skills, and skill practice sessions.

Borinstein's program is based on five principles that are crucial for success:

- Maintain self-esteem while maintaining standards
- Be specific about behavior
- Manage the consequences of behavior
- Communicate effectively
- Organize for results.

The training program and principles must be adapted to meet every organization's problems and situations. Borinstein notes that his approach leads to improvement for supervisors as well as supervisees.

¹T. R. Mitchell, and L. S. Kalb, "Effects of Job Experience on Supervisor Attributions for a Subordinate's Poor Performance," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, April 1982, pp. 181-188.

²V. L. Schonberger, "Effective Supervision: Coordinational Improvement of Instructional Activities of Professional Colleagues," *Education*, Winter 1982, pp. 129-131.

³D. Borinstein, "A Systematic Approach to Increasing Supervisory Skills," *Supervisory Management*, June 1982, pp. 35-39.

Copyright © 1983 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.