

is, indeed, often enough no live appreciation of any professional bond linking together the various branches and grades of the management within the confines of one single plant. There is little articulate feeling that all who practise any part of the art of management are capable of being bound together in a common profession, based on a common technique, employing a common method, and pursuing a common purpose. That method—the scientific method—is not yet by any means being generally practised. That purpose—the common purpose of management—has not yet by any means been generally adopted. Consequently, the practitioners of management have not yet come to feel any strong and vivid corporate relationship. There is comparatively little corporate organization, therefore little corporate research or corporate literature. We lack our Taylor Society. We lack that free interchange of experience and information between individuals and businesses which, in the United States, has been carried some way

and is an essential of all-round progress. We lack, further, that literature on management which forms a practical link between every reader. These will and must come—practical expressions of a corporate feeling. We have our beginnings but they are nothing more. They contribute comparatively little to the leavening of the whole. But I regard the formation of some definite corporate organization, representing the thought and mentality of management—viewed as the guiding partner in industry, welded together in a professional association as the next great step to be taken. It is high time that the dividing walls were razed to the ground, the shutters which hide us from each other, taken down, and all our experiments, experiences, information, standards, practices and plans brought together for the good of the whole. Then truly might we look to management, as a body, achieving a professional status, actuated by a corporate motive and applying to all its problems the proven methods of science.

THE old-time concept of personnel work as "putting square pegs into square holes" is entirely inadequate. Clearly there is a family resemblance between the "square peg" concept and the statement that personnel work consists of man-analysis, job-analysis and the bringing of man and job together. Man-analysis is essentially discovering the shape of the peg; job-analysis is essentially discovering the shape of the hole. The phrase "The right man in the right place" is obviously an echo of the square peg idea.

The inadequacy of the square peg concept arises from the fact that it sharply discriminates between the worker and his job and tends to regard each as a rigid, inelastic entity. Under this concept, industry's task is to bring two rigid, inelastic units together which fortunately are so shaped that they fit. The coldness and mechanicalness of this point of view is obvious; it is not surprising that it results so frequently in an impersonal jig-saw-puzzle attitude toward the problems of industrial personnel. There is no recognition here of the fact that men and jobs are changing in themselves, and plastic, yielding here and giving there to outside pressure. There is no acknowledgment of the common fact that with exposure to a square hole, a round peg (we are speaking of human pegs now) tends to become squarish; there is no appreciation that the square hole takes on

a certain round appearance.

This new point of view in industrial personnel differs from the square peg concept in that it recognizes that the job exercises an influence upon the worker and, conversely, that the worker exercises an influence upon the job. . . .

This leads us to the conception of the worker-in-his-work as an entity all by itself. We do not think of the hiring of a worker as the connecting of a man with a job; it is the creation of a worker-in-his-work unit. We do not think of the release of a worker as the separation of a man from his job; it is the destruction of that particular worker-in-his-work unit.

The hiring of a new worker for the job will not reproduce the same worker-in-his-work unit; a new worker-in-his-work unit has been brought about. The transfer of the worker to another job will not reproduce it; again another new worker-in-his-work unit has been created.

Management's task is to make each and every worker-in-his-work unit as effective as possible. The achievement of this task makes it necessary to consider each worker-in-his-work unit from three different angles—from the points of view of Capacities, of Interests, and of Opportunities. (Scott and Clothier, *Personnel Management*, pp. 13-15.)

THE PRESENT STATUS OF STATISTICAL RESEARCH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF BUSINESS

By C. L. SWEETING¹ AND D. K. PFEFFER²

IN THE recommendations of the Committee on Unemployment and Business Cycles of President Harding's Conference on Unemployment it is advised that "we need further development of special research into economic forces, into business currents, and into broad questions of economic method. Industries generally recognize the need of research in physical science. Laboratories have been equipped with large staffs of trained workers. A similar recognition of the importance of economic research and the interpretation of economic facts would be the beginning of better control of business conditions by business men."

The writers have attempted to ascertain the extent to which precise statistical procedures are being used as aids in the stabilization of business. Our primary purpose was to provide the most needful context for our courses in business statistics in order that our students might be prepared to serve the real demands of present day business. It was felt in addition that the spread of information as to the possible uses of statistics might encourage statistical investigation and assist the carrying into effect of the foregoing recommendation.

With the sanction and support of the College of Business Administration of Syracuse University where we were then engaged, a questionnaire (p. 217) was sent to five hundred business concerns in the United States and Canada. Of these one hundred and eighty were submitted by the Taylor Society to its members. The other companies were chosen on the basis of large capitalization and volume of business, since it was believed that these "big businesses" are the most likely field for statistical research and would naturally be the first to adopt a program of statistical coordination such as our questionnaire suggested.

¹ Director, Division of Business Administration, Rhode Island State College.

² Instructor in Economics, Emory University.

The difficulties in formulating any questionnaire to be answered by executives in various fields and types of business are, of course, obvious. No single statistical program would be appropriate to a wide range of activities. The questions in the form used are most applicable to manufacturing and least pertinent to the extractive industries and wholesale trade. Accordingly our results do not show how profitable research activities are found in the latter types of industry.

The second difficulty was in the framing of questions so that they would have a precise and definite meaning and at the same time would not be expressed in language too involved and too technical to convey meaning to the executives who received them. That we did not meet this difficulty is obvious. The numerous reactions by letter evidenced that many questions were too broad to permit of unqualified answers. On the other hand, in an endeavor to be precise, we frequently used terms new in the experience of the most successful business man. While only one executive asked for the loan of a statistician, many others may have refrained from answering because they did not fully understand the questions. One reply was qualified in an accompanying letter: "Whether or not my answers are correct depends on just what one considers 'mathematical and statistical method.' While I might consider that we did use mathematical and statistical methods I can conceive of some experts differing with me." Here is a difficulty that must be remembered in considering the tabulation of replies.

In all sincerity we must acknowledge the willingness of the successful business man to cooperate with the too often bothersome academician. A fair number of nearly complete answers were returned (about 15 per cent) with several very encouraging letters from executives fully appreciative of an effort to plan a practical business course in business statistics.

Many business men religiously guard the "secrets of the business" and are at once suspicious of any ques-