

The rater was to indicate whether he was of higher, equal or lower rank than the person being voted on. You see they were expressing judgment not only downward on those of lower rank, which is the ordinary way, but also sidewise on those of equal rank and upward on those of higher rank.

This form failed for the reason that if you were rating your superior, John Jones, you might easily, as some did, cross out the wrong two ranks, (e. g. equal and lower) indicating that you were of higher rank than John Jones, instead of the reverse. That little difficulty led to the fact that five votes were cast showing that the voters were of higher rank than the head of the branch! However, instead of pointing out to the group where they had made their mistake, the tabulations were made up strictly according to the ballots, because we had promised the group that they would have the actual result of their own effort. When the group saw that five of them had indicated that they were of higher rank than the head of the branch, they said "this doesn't count for anything," and it didn't. So they set about correcting their own mistake. The reason I have shown you this mistake first is to remind you that where a group can correct its own mistake, it is far more educational than where the mistake is corrected for them. All the way through I hope you will recognize at work the principle that growth cannot be achieved for people; it must be achieved by them. That is the whole reason for participation of every kind.

The revised ballot (Fig. 2) which they devised corrected this mistake, and also simplified the voting process. You will notice the first ballot had a place for the name of only one person to be rated; which meant if you were rating twenty people you had to make out twenty ballots. In the revised form were listed on a single ballot all the names in the branch divided into three groups according to official rank. In the original revised form the names in each group were arranged alphabetically. (By a mistake the alphabetical arrangement was not maintained when fictitious names were substituted.) The two in Group 1 were the head of the branch (Mr. Armstrong), and his assistant (Mr. Benson) who would correspond to the superintendent and assistant superintendent in an ordinary shop.

Those in Group 2, so-called "unit heads," would correspond to shop foremen; Group 3 consisted of the non-executive employees. The names were divided into these three groups in order that the tabulator, by

EXPERIMENTAL BALLOT
MUTUAL RATINGS OF EMPLOYEES OF THE
BRANCH
My name appears in Group (1, 2 or 3)
as given below

| NAME | 1919 | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------|----------|
| | RATINGS ON BASIS OF 100% | | |
| Group 1 | Personality | Ability | Industry |
| Mr. Benson | | | |
| Mr. Armstrong | | | |
| Group 2 | | | |
| Mr. Sinclair | | | |
| Mr. McGraw | | | |
| Miss Reeson | | | |
| Mr. Jones | | | |
| Mr. Zoller | | | |
| Mr. Holden | | | |
| Mr. Pink | | | |
| Mr. Winslow | | | |
| Group 3 | | | |
| Miss Vickers | | | |
| Miss Reed | | | |
| Miss Johnson | | | |
| Mr. Smith | | | |
| Mr. Anderson | | | |
| Mr. Wall | | | |
| Mr. Rankine | | | |
| Mr. McCarthy | | | |
| Miss Brown | | | |
| Mr. Howard | | | |
| Mr. Jarvis | | | |
| Miss Stevens | | | |
| Miss White | | | |
| Mr. Marshall | | | |
| Mr. Cushing | | | |
| Mr. Blake | | | |
| Mr. Walker | | | |
| Mr. Payne | | | |
| Mr. Nelson | | | |
| Miss King | | | |
| Miss Kelly | | | |
| Mr. Rogers | | | |
| Mr. Sutton | | | |
| Mr. Smith | | | |
| Miss White | | | |
| Miss Hamilton | | | |

FIG. 2

noting in which group the voter stated he belonged, could sort the votes on each individual into those of higher, equal and lower ranks, as well as get the consensus of all ranks combined. Also, while on the first ballot they had voted on personality alone, on this they added two more qualities, viz., ability and industry. To guard against individual votes becoming known, the group decided that someone outside the group should attend to counting and tabulating the ballots. This was done.

The first rating on the revised ballot was taken March 4, 1919. Table I (insert) is a copy of the complete tabulation, which was reproduced by photostat and a copy given to every member of the group. The psychological value of such publicity of results will become increasingly evident. You will notice that all three qualities were grouped on a single sheet. The names were listed under each quality in the order of their relative standing in the total collective judgment, irrespective of official rank. The first column

under each quality shows the relative standing, the second the official rank (Group 1, 2, or 3), the third the name, the fourth the number of "estimators," and the fifth the total collective judgment, or "average" rating in per cent. The following columns show the number of estimators in each rank voting on the individual, and their respective estimates.

Let us examine a few of the more significant indications on these tabulations—significant equally, I hold, to the employer who wants to give a square deal and to the employee who wants to get one.

Many have asked: "Won't personal prejudice entirely govern the rating? Will not the idea in regard to a person's personality determine our idea in regard to his ability and his industry?" Well, let us look at the ratings of two men in this March 4 tabulation (Table 1). Mr. Benson, who was the assistant head of the branch, stands third in personality, twenty-fifth in ability and twenty-ninth in industry. Personal liking didn't do a great deal to maintain Mr. Benson's prestige when it came to judging his ability and industry! Now take the case of Mr. Zoller, standing thirty-seventh (third from the bottom) in personality, eighteenth in ability, and twenty-second in industry. I shall not describe the gentleman but you can draw your own conclusions. Briefly you get it this way: Mr. Benson was rated high in personality, low in ability, and lower in industry; as much as to say "he is a good enough fellow, but we don't think much of his ability, and he is lazy." On the contrary, Mr. Zoller was rated low in personality. He was not popular but they recognized his ability and industry and gave him credit for it.

An important consideration from an organization point of view, is the light a rating of this kind throws on conflicting judgments. You who are executives, think of the value to you to know the consensus of judgment of those below you on each individual no matter what his rank; how it would help you to find the right man and not make serious mistakes; and how, at least, it would open your eyes and make you think twice before taking definite action!

Who knows a man best, his superiors, his equals or his subordinates? Who knows him best, perhaps, cannot be finally decided; but, certainly, no one of the groups knows him completely. Before you can get the whole truth on which to promote a man, should you not get all three points of view about him, provided you can get them in a way that is fair, open, and above board?

Look at these cases of conflicting judgment. Twenty-three persons rated Mr. Kuntz (standing thirty) 74.13 in personality. Seven of those were his superiors in rank and rated him 84.57; sixteen equals rated him 70.18. Contrast Mr. Kuntz, who was rated by his superiors almost fifteen per cent higher than by his equals in rank, with Mr. Butler (standing nineteen) who was rated about ten per cent lower by his superiors than by his equals in rank.

Under ordinary conditions, if the "boss," the appointing officer, were debating between Mr. Kuntz and Mr. Butler for a promotion depending primarily on "personality," he would take Mr. Kuntz. But with a rating of this sort before him he would at least be inclined to pause and consider: "The fact that 'the crowd', sixteen of them, average fifteen per cent lower than we, his seven superiors, must mean that the crowd has something on Mr. Kuntz that we don't know about. I think I'll not risk a misstep until we know more. The crowd seems to think more of Mr. Butler than we do. Perhaps Mr. Butler has some strong qualities which the crowd recognizes and which we have not yet found out. Altogether, it is clear we need to go further into the situation."

Mr. Winslow, standing ten in personality, has 84.50 as the average of thirty votes cast. His two superiors rate him at 85; seven of equal rank rate him at 72.85, and twenty-two subordinates in rank rate him at 88.33. In other words, his superiors and his subordinates rate him high and he is not liked by his equals in rank. Those interested in following these three cases further will see that in ability and industry also, their ratings show similarly conflicting judgments.

No one rating, obviously, could be considered conclusive or final. Mr. Winslow or Mr. Kuntz or Mr. Butler—none of these men could be tagged as belonging forever in the particular relative standing in which we see them here. Remember, this was the very first effort of a group of forty employees in a big organization to undertake this self-determined problem of mutual appraisal. Naturally, there were many things which might be revised later, including their estimates of each other. They didn't know each other as well as they would later when their sense of responsibility had grown with use. So a vital essential in ratings of any sort is that they be periodic. I expect to see the day when mutual ratings will be as regularly periodic and as much a matter of course in well conducted industry as the expense analysis is today.