

MORRIS L. COOKE¹: I don't know that this is exactly in line with your suggested program, but I see Mr. Percy sitting here from the Clothcraft Shops, and I believe he can give us something.

I recall about six years ago, I think it was, a remark of Mr. Richard Feiss, member of this Society and the manufacturing manager of that plant, that there was a great demand for their goods at that time, and the sales force wanted to know why they didn't double the size of the plant. Mr. Feiss said that his reply had been that they wouldn't increase the size of their plant until they had a selling force that was able to sell the product of their plant good years and bad years, in season and out of season, because they considered giving continuity of employment first requisite in any manufacturing plant.

It seems to me, that in developing a scientific policy for sales, the effort should be to get as many as possible generally accepted principles, or laws if you choose to call them that; and as a little contribution to the discussion I want to suggest that this Society in advocating a sales policy must make continuity of employment absolutely fundamental.

About a week ago I brought together here in New York a group of production engineers to discuss the one matter of routing, and we argued all day long at the Engineers' Club, and there was only one unanimous conclusion: that there is no use scheming out a system for routing in the clothing industry unless we are going to assume a responsibility for giving continuous employment, because otherwise scientific manufacturing is impossible.

In my own thinking I arrive at the same conclusion—that there is no use scheming out a sales policy unless fundamental to it you make continuity of employment.

CHARLES E. PERCY¹: I came here primarily to listen because our sales problem during the past three or four years,—I don't know how long it was since Mr. Cooke talked to Mr. Feiss,—has been entirely one of holding salesmen back. We have been selling goods on an allotment for some time, and the clothing business is still in the seller's market. But I am very much interested, and one of the principal reasons I came to this meeting is to get help towards an answer which I know I must reach in a very short time, an answer

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to the question of spreading our sales over a longer period.

I don't know how many of you men realize it, but our entire output for the Fall of 1920 was sold in four weeks. Our entire output for the Spring of 1920 was sold in four weeks. I have a sales force of nineteen men who have travelled this year just eight weeks, and they are all pretty well paid men.

I have the problem of what to do with those nineteen men during the other forty-four weeks in the year. I haven't any great selling problem to tackle just now, but I have a problem coming of how to spread our sales throughout the year, and I feel personally that where I am going to get the most enlightenment is where I can get someone to tell me how to change the commission basis of selling to a more practical basis of compensation. I am hoping that before this meeting is over I may hear something along the lines of compensation. I have been working on that for a long while, and practically I don't get anywhere at all.

We have the big problem, not so much of selling our goods, as of how we can use our men throughout the year to sell business prestige and keep our organization before the retail clothiers of the country. That is the one big factor that I have to contend with; the question of getting the men to sell the institution rather than the clothing.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: I believe our Chairman is too modest; I am quite sure the Dennison Manufacturing Company has been able in the last few years to smooth out their curve of production through their sales, and I think the Chairman has something to tell along that line.

HENRY S. DENNISON¹: I can say that the principal part of the work of smoothing out that curve of production has been a selling job. It consisted, in the first place, of getting our selling department so organized that there was immediate and close contact with every part of it. We had about 250 salesmen scattered all over the world. The first problem was one of organization which we followed out on the district principles,—having a fairly large number of centers of selling—with the district manager really a working manager; that is part salesman and part manager who spent something like half his day in the office and the

¹Dennison Manufacturing Co., Framingham, Mass.; President of the Taylor Society; Chairman of this conference.

other half and sometimes a good deal more actually selling.

Then, having sufficient general sales managers right at our headquarters in close contact with the factory to cover those district managers, we aim to give them the service that they require. We had been working for some years eliminating the commission system. Our men are paid on salary entirely. The records of their service and of their work were perfected steadily,—I used "perfected" in a very loose sense because we are a long ways from perfect yet,—until we at this point were ready to definitely sell to them the idea that goods which were thought to be highly seasonal—Christmas goods—could be sold steadily the year round.

And one of the devices which we found of great value,—after proving by trial in one or two places that it could be done, so that we weren't asking for an impossibility,—was the device of concentrating a few salesmen upon a given district and seeing that they did the job. And when they did it in their district, convincing the rest of the selling crew that they could do it was almost automatic.

In most of our attempts to control the selling operations we have used that device; first making ourselves sure by experiment with the best salesmen that the proposition was possible, that we were approaching it in the right way, and then focusing our efforts upon the run of salesmen, taking the average ordinary salesman in some one typical district and starting him going. After we had done that in several districts, and they had become the best advertising material to the rest of the selling crew, we were ready practically to give instructions that such and such a policy should be followed out.

That has been the course in many of our other policies. We have changed gradually in the last fifteen years from a free-price policy, any salesman making pretty nearly every price he desired, to an absolutely fixed, uniform price policy. That was a very slow course, which depended upon the closeness of organization of the selling end, and was worked out step by step, very much by the method that I have indicated.

There was one point that was brought up by Mr. Crockett about which some of you must have something to say. That is the education of salesmen. How do you educate a salesman? Can anybody start us on that?

J. PASSMORE ELKINGTON¹: In response to your last question, I can simply say that in selling silicate of soda, which is a heavy chemical, we have been furnishing to the salesmen essays on each use, which the men carry in bound form for ready reference. Also, each month we send out to them a quiz on some use of the product which they are expected to answer on company time, and the replies to which are graded and summarized in sales conferences.

If I may, while I am on my feet, I would like to contribute another question. I wish some production engineer would tell us concretely how to analyze the salesman's job. Do you call travelling to the depot part of his job? I confess that I am so unlearned in Taylor management that I need some light on that. How do you begin to analyze the salesman's job from the time he leaves the office until the time he gets back, so that you have details to work upon,—not merely the gross results of his work?

THE CHAIRMAN: We have found that we were spending too much time in the education of salesmen on how the goods were made and what they were made of, which is of really quite secondary importance. It is what they are used for that is really of value in the distribution end.

MR. CROCKETT: Let us stick to the sales manager's job. I want to know more about my job. I don't think that sales managers realize just what their job is, and that job is getting to be very difficult in these days when it is a buyer's market instead of a seller's market. Let us find out what our job is from a scientific standpoint, and then we can thrash out the details.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: I don't believe that a question such as Mr. Crockett has asked can ever be answered in a meeting of this sort. I believe the only way you can get down to anything of that sort would be to have a questionnaire made up by a committee so that all the points that are bothering the sales manager could be brought out.

THE CHAIRMAN: I see Mr. Crockett quite agrees, and several others who also seem to agree. If it is conformable to your wishes, Dr. Person will manage to get up at least the beginning of a questionnaire—naturally with the help of some of you who are near at hand here. We have been a bit questionaired to death in the country. It is your own suggestion however. Will you here agree—we will use this registra-

¹Philadelphia Quartz Co., Philadelphia.