

A Positive Approach to Personnel Relations

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Terms Defined

A personal position paper is not research - with a bow to my colleagues on the program who are researchers - but is rather a contribution based on experience (good and bad), study, and hopefully thoughtful contemplation.

Personnel relations is a general term used here as synonymous with Personnel, Employee Relations, Manpower, Human Resources, and the host of other expressions in the field. If anything is excluded, it probably is the term Industrial or Labor Relations which seems to be used in the industry more frequently when all or part of the work force is unionized.

"Positive" personnel relations suggests two conditions. First, personnel relations is characterized by a consistent and systematic overview of the organization's personnel management philosophy, the personnel functions or sub-systems are integrated at least conceptually, and are applied or administered openly and consistently. The opposite term is "reactive." Second, if the philosophy or approach is successful, as viewed by the employee, then he or she will not feel the need to organize in self-protection.

To "organize" means here either unionize with affiliation with a traditional union, or form an association for the purpose of third-party representation. Either might be recognized by or fall under the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) as a bargaining agent.

Application

The position outlined here applied to the professional or semi-professional employees normally found in the organizations around a computer center or in the computer user organizations. Included are computer manufacturers' professional and semi-professional group applications. Arbitrarily excluded are factory work forces, sometimes referred to by the compensation term "hourly" (vs. salaried). However, the principles discussed are just as applicable to factory situations; the exclusion is for brevity in this paper and for better matching the expected interests of the audience at this conference.



As implied earlier, the organizations envisioned are not represented by third parties, unions or otherwise.

Role of Management

Line management and "top" management have a key role in any positive personnel relations program for any organization. At the very least, senior management must be aware of the potential contribution to the business of modern personnel management techniques, and therefore be willing to attract, retain, and appropriately compensate personnel management professionals.

More importantly, management must define and demonstrate a viewpoint on their human resources. Personnel management may be able to assist in this process; the viewpoint or concept could even be an evolving one. The essential point here is not to publish a motherhood document of "we believe....," but rather to demonstrate through the informal organization a consistent set of practices and actions such that a new manager - or employee - can see a pattern over a period of time and in fact can use the pattern to make decisions or judgements on a **daily basis**.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y may be useful starting points. Does management feel that employees are essentially **lazy** and opposed to the interests of the organization, or is the feeling or belief one of attempting to create the environment or situation such that employees can make the fullest contribution of which they are capable at a point in time? Apart from management's stated feeling, what do they do in daily practice?

At the individual manager's level, the issue is simply, what does he believe about people. In most organizations, the climate will be the summation - in actions - of the individual managers' viewpoints. Of course, the individual viewpoints may be unstated and the manager may be unaware of the perception of others on this aspect.

In spite of deep seated Theory X views of individual managers, management actions in total can be positively influenced and focused by a top management precept on the "view of people." Sometimes it can be the stated principles and examples of the leader-founder. See, for example, the T. J. Watson, Sr. book "Business and its Beliefs," in which it is claimed that IBM's success in both employment and market place is due to the explicit statement of just three guiding principles for all decisions. In a non-computer industry example, note General Electric's development in the '50's of a marketing approach to employee relations; apart from his notoriety

in union relations, Boulware successfully got a whole company to think of personnel matters in customer terms: jobs are products of real value and must be sold at prices of honest worth (not what the market will tolerate), employees must be kept fully informed of all that affects them - pro or con - or you "lose" the employee/customer, and so on.

As a final illustration of the important role of line management in positive personnel relations, consider the simple topic of man/manager inter-personal problem solving. In union environments, this process is commonly called the "grievance procedure." For the moment, accept the statement of principle that any organization should have an escape valve process by which any employee can carry a disagreement with his or her manager to a higher court without fear of recrimination regardless of outcome. The higher court could be the management chain, or the Personnel Relations organization, or the ombudsman concept which is growing in popularity. The key here is without recrimination. Regardless of the skill in packaging the problem solving policy document or even of top management's sincerity, employees will quickly find out how their manager feels about the process - and acts on it. Not uncommonly, a first line supervisor consciously supports the policy but violates it unconsciously by his actions as perceived by his organization. With a bow toward Herzberg, an effective problem solving procedure may buy management only small employee satisfaction gains, but an announced and ineffective procedure will buy huge losses.

Role of Personnel Relations Organization

The preceding section dealt with the key role of the non-Personnel Relations management of an organization. If "they" don't do their part, Personnel Relations has an easy and frequently used cop out. But Personnel Relations has a key role also, of course. As in the old mathematical-logic cliché, both are necessary and neither is sufficient.

Personnel Relations management must earn and win personal and professional credibility with management in order to meet the expectations of management noted earlier. Workshops and whole conferences have been devoted to how this win can be achieved. In the training function alone, the literature has many papers on how a particular training group fought for organizational survival and perhaps made a business contribution. Time and space do not permit a full exploration here, but this writer believes in summary that it would be helpful for Personnel Relations Management to refocus the arguments and energies into (a) better justification of business results

for the relations programs in a particular organization (vs. reliance on testimony of other companies' success with a particular program which may be irrelevant or inapplicable to the present organizational situation for a number of subtle reasons; a citation of well-known authorities; e.g., Myers, Herzberg, Maslow, et. al.; or simple altruism) and (b) improved personal credibility of the particular managers in Personnel Relations (vs. the traditional reliance on functional expertise; e.g., compensation) perhaps by better demonstration of knowledge of the business as a whole.

For discussion purposes, it will be helpful to see personnel management work as of two kinds or types. The first type is the whole area of business services such as interpreting and administering the benefit programs for employees, maintenance of employee files and perhaps the whole employee record and reporting system, administration of the cafeterias and other food services, employment, and so on. Organizationally, this type of personnel management work is usually decentralized to the plant or remote office level, or to a major component of the line organization such as Engineering; especially from the employee's viewpoint, this group is the "Personnel Office."

The other type or kind of personnel management work is the functions approach in which we find Compensation, Manpower Planning, Organizational Planning, Manpower Development (or training), and Employee Communications, among others. These functions interact with the line management of the business in various ways and hopefully present a systematic and integrated concept across the functions. The nature of the interactions varies with the individuals involved, of course, and by accidents of history. The range is from strong authoritarian (as in the case where Compensation largely determines individual salaries) to a catalytic involvement where the influence is highly personalized. (Walter Mahler and Associates of NYC, among others, have publications dealing with the catalytic process of personnel relations work.)

The functional area of personnel relations is the one more likely to influence line management toward a consistent and constructive view of people referenced earlier as essential to a positive personnel relations approach in an organization.

A trend in specialization of personnel relations professionals has been noted by the writer, based on larger organizations and a limited sample. Increasingly, professionals are coming up thru the ranks with experience

focused on either production/factory work forces, or professional work forces such as Engineering, Software, or Marketing. If this observation is accurate and generalized, then individuals in personnel relations work will find it increasingly difficult to jump in career path from one emphasis to the other, and line management may be further confused and dismayed by the variant demands of their personnel relations counsel as to the nuances of approach required for the two or more work-forces, heretofore perceived by management as more or less unified along some probably unspecified continuum.

Functions in Personnel Relations

The several likely functions of personnel relations have been referenced earlier. Here we will try to find the inter-relationships among them, as a part of the systematic whole. Each function has a wealth of specialized content, of course, which can be studied elsewhere.

-Manpower Planning

Manpower Planning is the analysis of "where are we now" and the detailing of staffing implications of "where are we going." As a minimum, one would expect tabulations of employment types on the payroll, such as sales, systems analysts, programmers, supervision and management, etc., and projections for each under planned growth or decline of the organization over time. Skill mix analysis for each employment category would be a further step.

Manpower Planning usually makes two kinds of study. The first is to forecast all phases of employment using the organization's long range business plan as input. Sourcing, the limits of internal growth, training cycles, and costs are examples of study elements. The second kind of study is to forecast changes of situation or environment as input to the business plan. For example, the requirements of affirmative action under Equal Employment Opportunity would likely come into the business plans from Manpower Planning. Another example would be Manpower Planning's assessment for their organization of Robert L. Patrick's prediction in the 1969 Annual Proceedings of Computer Personnel Research of the growth of the data base specialist in computing.

Clearly, Manpower Planning has the closest possible interaction with the organization's business plan. The plan is modified and tuned by the inputs of Manpower Planning, and the rest of Personnel Relations is influenced by the total plan as it has evolved at any given time.

-Organization Planning

Except in the largest Personnel Relations organization, Organization Planning may not exist as a formal sub-group but the function is accomplished somewhere. Organization Planning assists all levels of management in determining organization structure to accomplish the business objectives. On one hand, the counsel might be toward method, such as functional approach vs. product approach, or classical line and staff vs. matrix or project management. On the other hand, Organization Planning works with the realities of available resources and facts of the situation. To illustrate, a certain organizational method may be desirable but middle management is thought to be too inexperienced for the risks of such a method, so an interim step is planned while certain management development is instituted. Again, the boss' nephew is a part of the management structure and he must have a reasonable assignment both for his development and for appearances, but experience has shown that he goes to pieces under project pressures.

-Supervisory Methods

Supervisory methods refers to how the organization accomplishes its work. Rarely would a sub-group of Personnel Relations be formally organized by such a title, but the function is crucial. How work is directed affects most other functions, namely, performance appraisal, manpower development, compensation, and communications.

The immediate dimension in supervisory method is the degree to which individuals or groups determine aspects of their own work such as task identification, selection of alternative methods or even ends, scheduling, and the like. Some writers have identified this dimension as a continuum ranging from pure authoritarian to consensus decision making by teams. Considering the probability of differences from one part of the organization to another at a point in time, the effect of change over time, and the influence of individual manager personalities at all times, this conception may be too simple for the needs of Personnel Relations.

To illustrate, consider an organization that subscribes to the work direction method known as Management by Objectives, MBO. Imagine even that there is agreement on what is meant by MBO in that organization, and common forms and procedures are in place. The pitfall for Personnel Relations, of course, is to believe therefore that the impact of MBO as a process is the same throughout the organization. As experienced by the employee, one manager really wants his ideas, and the next

says he does - but doesn't mean it. For some managers, MBO is described overtly as simply a new and tricky way to continue to manipulate people.

Supervisory method obviously effects risk taking (or at least risk commitment) and measurement. In some instances MBO has been introduced and still maintained as a method of helping individuals and groups to find their highest contribution and achievement, while use of MBO as a measurement device in the same organization has quickly gotten objective setting into a game of cover your tail - and professional employees require little time to find, practice, and communicate the rules of the real game being played.

The point at hand is simply that how work gets done effects materially almost all aspects and functions of Personnel Relations, and the point cannot be over-emphasized in practice. Given only one project to be completed in a year, the most important one that the Personnel Relations organization can accomplish is to analyze in detail and incorporate in their programs how work gets done in the organization they serve.

-Performance Appraisal

The perennial challenge of performance appraisal follows logically after determination of how work is directed - or perhaps how it should be directed. Harvard Business Review has compiled a reprint series on performance appraisal which is excellent for the purpose of charting the conceptual and operational pitfalls in the subject area, and shows how to fail in a number of ways and occasionally how to succeed.

For our purposes, we should reference two concerns. The first is, how do we decide what should be measured in performance and then how do we measure it. What is the ideal and/or standard profile we are measuring against? Measurement of management performance certainly illustrates the point. Even in the field of programming, there is considerable debate on measurement; an excellent, recent and very readable book on programming measurement is Weinberg's "Psychology of Computer Programming."

The second concern is the precision with which we define the objective or purpose of performance appraisal in our positive personnel relations system. Normally, agreement can be reached that the prime purpose is to let the individual know how his management views the performance over a recent period. Sometimes the focus can be on specific performance improvement planning. Problems

arise when we ask the performance appraisal sub-system to serve other additional purposes, no matter how worthy. For example, if compensation adjustment forms must be accompanied by Performance Appraisal documentation, we find managers writing appraisals not for the benefit of the employee but for consumption of the compensation approval chain. Clearly, feedback honesty to the employee goes out the window and the rationalization is obvious: the salary increase was in the employee's interest, wasn't it? As a further example, suppose we decide that appraisals should be filed in the employee's permanent record, for use by other managers in considering the employee for some future advancement, for instance. The current manager is then reluctant to lay negative feedback on the employee, even though such feedback may be appropriate at the time, because a negative report in the permanent file may influence adversely some future manager against the employee's interest. Finally, some try to couple long term career planning and development to performance appraisal. Here the difficulty is the practicality of man/manager shifting the focus of the discussion from past results and immediate future improvements to long range aspirations and plans; too much is expected from one session and the longer term discussion should be put off to another meeting or considered in another sub-system entirely. To reiterate, performance appraisal is a difficult process at best and the objectives of performance appraisal should be narrowly and precisely defined and then left uncluttered with attempts to accomplish other ends in the same process.

There are well known principles in social science, physics, and engineering which teach that the act of observation or measurement may change the process or condition being measured. We would do well to remember these principles by analogy if not by direct application as we design the performance appraisal part of our positive personnel relations system.

-Development and Training

As used here, training is a set of techniques within the larger area of development. Other development methods might be coaching by the immediate manager, job rotation, special task force assignments, and changing the work environment such as by reorganizing the people or tasks.

From our point of view, the development function requires two efforts. The first is to discover (or establish) and communicate the desired profile of key job categories in terms of knowledge and skills required to perform the job to some level of competence. The work is classic but difficult. To illustrate the effort for one case,

the senior programmer/analyst, see the Gorman paper in the Eighth Annual Proceedings of CPR. The analysis of a given management job is more difficult but no less important. In any case, a point here is to distinguish what is from what should be. As implied earlier, the organization personality or pattern of managerial success must be taken into account; using Manpower Planning inputs and other data, management should make a conscious decision of the direction and degree of change, if any, from the present profile of a job or job category. The end purpose of the analysis, of course, is to plan the development and training steps to implement the desired profile.

The second effort follows from the first. Development takes place at the individual level, which is obvious, and requires an information system, which may not be so obvious. The author favors a periodic (at least annual) formal process in which employee and manager review the employee's abilities and aspirations and mutually plan the reasonable development steps including training for the near and longer range implementation of the career plan. The process takes place at all echelons, not just first level. The focus of this development review subsystem of the whole Personnel Relations system is on the employee/manager communication interface, and particularly on present job performance improvement as the beginning part of the plan. The mutual plan includes the commitment by each party to the steps for which each is responsible, and to the plan timetable; over commitment is to be avoided. The development review sub-system must be seen as a separate process, not a replacement for performance appraisal, not a part of compensation planning, not a sneaky way to get more work from the employee.

If nothing more than the man/manager discussions took place, the development review process would be valuable to the health of the organization. However, it would hardly be an information system in the sense mentioned earlier.

Without losing sight of the basic purpose and focus, the development review is rolled upward through the line organizations with the active consultation of Personnel Relations management. Each manager reviews the results of the interviews with his subordinates with his manager, and so on. Each manager prepares two documents in addition to the package of individual review forms. The first is a summary of the development actions, including training needs, with the planned timetable. The second is an organizational form showing for the manager and his subordinates the known replacements and degree of readiness from anyplace in the whole organization (not

just the manager's unit). No forced-choice is implied; no replacements may be known to the manager and none are listed. These two documents are copied and transmitted to Personnel Relations. As must be obvious, both are a needs input to the Development function, and the organizational analysis is of use to the Manpower and Organizational Planning functions described earlier. Thus, we have a systematic information flow that serves in several ways including the integration of top down business planning with bottom up human resource assessment.

-Compensation

In the author's experience, Compensation is the one functional **area** in which members of the organization find common agreement: everyone seems to want to be paid. Beyond that point, disagreement and misunderstanding grow rapidly. The author also notes a distressing surplus of experts in the field, the quantity being closely proportional to the number of employees, since being paid entitles one and all to comment critically on the manner and amount of compensation!

For our purposes, we will review the role of the Compensation function in the Personnel Relations system. Theories of compensation, statistical techniques, and so on are beyond the scope of this paper. Books are available to those interested in various aspects, and regional seminars by the American Compensation Association are very good for introduction to the subject and interaction with other Compensation professionals.

In perspective, Compensation is a key function in most businesses, since salaries and benefits often make up over half of the total costs in the organization. Such is recognized by top management, naturally, both from the proper management of that cost and from the necessity to reward and retain performers. The latter interest is sometimes confused with motivation and it is well to recall the Herzberg findings on compensation perception of professional employees regarding satisfaction vs. achievement incentive.

Compensation concerns itself with job evaluation, setting compensation rates or ranges for jobs or groups of jobs, measurement and reporting of compensation activity to management, and guiding operating managers in compensation decisions. Benefit determination and administration, and incentive system design and administration (such as for sales personnel or senior managers), are two more highly specialized and important parts of the function.

In terms of a positive personnel relations system, Compensation must balance two interests. The first is to ensure that parts of the organization are in step with one another in compensating work of similar or equivalent value. The second is to ensure that the whole compensation structure is in step with the competitive pressure of the employment area; for some professional categories, that area may be world wide. The relationship with competition is a policy decision of great importance to the whole organization; the decision to lead or lag competition median rates (determined normally by survey techniques using benchmark position descriptions) will affect in the long term, employment mobility on one hand and business costs on the other. Note that even compensation professionals may lose sight of the final arbitration of the marketplace; the pitfall is when the internal rates and relationships are assumed to have an ultimate reality of their own.

Salary planning or forecasting by line management is becoming a wide-spread practice and contributes a vital segment to the personnel relations information system. Salary forecasting is typically accomplished thru the whole organization at the same time, usually on an annual basis. Each manager plans the salary changes if any for each employee for the next year in terms of amount and timing. He uses general guidelines from Compensation that attempt to reflect average performance value increases in the organization along with cost of living shifts, and perhaps with other factors included. For the individual employee determination, the manager takes into account the sustained performance trend, comparison with peers, value to the organization, and growth rate. The manager's judgements are summarized statistically in a variety of ways so that one unit can be compared to another, and the impact for the whole organization can be determined.

The process can be iterative, with all or some managers requested to replan so their total result has the proper relationship with the whole.

From salary planning, the business has a reasonably precise cost estimate for budgeting. Personnel Relations can make a number of analyses, ranging from treatment of key backups and high potentials identified in the development review process, to data presentations of treatment of women and minorities as required in the current Revised Order 4 (EEO). The plans obviously provide a reference for tracking actual compensation actions as they occur during the planned period.

The emphasis in salary planning should be on generating the best plan possible with the information then in hand. Like all plans, it should be modified in implementation as new facts come to light, as for example, when an individual performance changes sharply from the anticipated - up or down. To treat the finally approved plan as rigid in implementation is to invite several kinds of game playing by managers, a distortion of the basic purpose of salary planning. On the other hand, feedback to the manager of the summary effect of his deviations from plan will aid him in a learning sense in future planning.

As a final thought on the Compensation function, consider carefully how the compensation system is described to employees. It is popular to sloganize the whole complicated process by simple expressions such as, "we pay for performance." We have noted earlier the difficulties in measurement in the first place, but more importantly, performance is not the only consideration at all. Most systems have to factor in peer comparisons, growth rates, and market shifts, among others, and last but not least, all organizations have to consider the cost impact on the business. Employees are intelligent - more so than we often assume - and the author urges honesty and openness in discussing the compensation system with them. Done well, employees will perceive the direction of the total effort and can tolerate the occasional inevitable inequity and can even accept the impact of salary increase suspensions when a business is in trouble - all if communications and managers' actions are perceived as honest, open, and a part of the Personnel Relations system.

-Employee Communications

Communications is at once a function, a continuing process, and a state of mind. Communications is the glue that holds the positive Personnel Relations system together.

The principle must be stated, accepted, and implemented by all management that employees should be informed to the greatest extent possible on all aspects that affect them, ranging from status of the business to details of the particular unit to which they are assigned. The principle is based in turn on the belief that employees can make a better contribution if they have a knowledge framework against which they can form and test work content judgements. The concept applies to all levels of employees and includes organization and functional orientation so any employee can see where his or her work fits in, where work comes from and goes to, and so on. Full communication does not assume that management

knows what employees need to know; the error here has two consequences: useful information will inadvertently be withheld, and the absence will create a credibility gap over a period of time.

Employee Communications is a function of Personnel Relations but communications is a responsibility of every manager, supervisor, and work leader.

The forms or media are of several kinds. There may be an employee newspaper, a management bulletin, work group meetings, staff meetings, employee round-tables with middle or upper managers, a written question and answer "box" approach in which questions or complaints to management can be answered individually and/or published for all, bulletin boards, etc. Even if an organization had all of these examples in its communications sub-system, management must not be lulled into thinking that they are sufficient by themselves. Again, employee communications is a state of mind.

Finally, communications must be a two-way process. Managers should be coached in the skill of honest listening and observation. As in other aspects of personnel relations, a hypocritical or superficial attitude by a manager here - as perceived by employees - will undo much of the gain of downward communication.

The above segments complete our look at the personnel relations sub-systems making up the whole system and philosophy. There are several more topics which we should examine briefly.

Policies and Procedures

Even small organizations have an informal systems of guides and directives, perhaps by a collection of memos from an executive. Larger businesses may have a formal unit which publishes policies and procedures, and maintains a "book" for all managers with a table of contents, cross references, and so on. Such a unit may be a part of the Personnel Relations organization or not.

In any case, most formalized policy and procedure compilations will be found to deal with personnel relations matters in over half of all material in the compilation. Therefore, Personnel Relations needs to be represented in any policy and procedure system, certainly in the review and approval cycle if not in the formulation stage. Even in non-personnel matters, such as a Financial directive, the implementation must be reviewed with an eye to the likely impact on and perception of employees

Policy and procedures is a difficult, thankless, but important task. The Personnel Relations individual or team assigned this area must be capable of calling on specific functional knowledge and yet maintain an overview of the whole business. From the point of view of positive Personnel Relations, policies and procedures must be actively managed and not allowed to grow like Topsy.

Employee/Organization Climate

The Personnel Relations organization must be aware that each unit or group in a business has a climate and that that climate is constantly shifting.

Climate studies, like attitude measurements, are tricky to manage and generally yield imprecise results. However, their importance in maintaining personnel relations perspective cannot be over-emphasized.

The author favors a two-pronged approach. First, all Personnel Relations organization employees should be coached/trained to report upward their climate perceptions and particularly changes. The personnel services workers are very important in this area since they have the more routine contact with employees. Second, formal climate surveys should be undertaken periodically, perhaps every two years throughout the business. Forming the survey questionnaire is a specialized task, and the data reduction and analysis is an amount of work that is usually underestimated.

Surveys are frequently supplemented by intensive interviews. For businesses without the requisite skills and resources in Personnel Relations, or if credibility or objectivity are in question, there are a number of firms who sell climate survey services; the reputable firms are happy to furnish references of related businesses in our industry.

The results of a climate survey are useful in a number of ways. First, even the Personnel Relations organization is likely to have a few surprises; in other words, their perception of the situation is recalibrated to the real world. Second, management will find high points and soft-spots that require program attention for months if not years to come. Third, Personnel Relations has a new basis for planning, selling, and implementing relations programs. Fourth, the potentials for third party intervention can be assessed unit by unit and for the whole business.

A key policy decision on communication of results must be made beforehand. Generally, taking of a survey

itself is perceived positively by employees; they are anxious to tell management how they feel. But this positive feeling can turn sour if they never hear the results or see any "action." The risk to management of a survey is to learn of employee concerns about which little can be done; for example, inadequate facilities for parking, or lack of a cafeteria, but the business may not be able to support changes in these aspects in the short run. This real risk of raising dissatisfiers can be partially offset by a commitment before-hand to communicate survey results. Even if the results are "negative," management has a chance to tell the honest story. The simple belief here is, better to have it on the table so we can talk about it than to have it buried and festering.

Needless to emphasize, individual anonymity in the survey must be guaranteed and survey results must be tabulated with care to avoid identification of small groups or particular units.

Teaching of Positive Personnel Relations

If a systematic and positive approach is appropriate for a business, then how can it be taught as a part of the implementation? (Other requirements for implementation, such as top management dedication, have already been referenced at least by indirection in the discussion of roles and functions.)

The first method is obvious. If the system is clearly defined and sufficiently documented, then it can be taught to managers in a tutorial fashion or by seminars.

The second method is also usually needed in addition. The training objective is to have all supervisors and managers see the importance of climate and the contribution of their actions to building or altering that climate. The training method is case simulation and can be implemented in two ways. The first way is to write a case in which some comparatively straight forward business decision, such as a 10% manpower cut, must be implemented across the board. The case of course is booby-trapped with all sorts of past sins such as inadequate performance measurement, inequitable compensation, insufficient communication foundation, an occasional executive's nephew or other favorite son salted in the ranks, and so on. After wrestling with the problem in small teams, the class reassembles to hear the "management presentation" of each team's solution. The lesson learned here, easily brought out by the workshop leader, is that supervisors must be concerned every day with good personnel practices or suffer from their sins when trying to implement a future action.

The other way of handling the case is to simulate an organizing campaign, in which each hour represents a week in the campaign after the NLRB notice of petition is received. The learning here is essentially the same with the possible additional benefit of teaching the awareness of third party organizing tactics.

The author has seen both case methods implemented with success as measured against the objective, but favors the former over the latter. The latter teaches material that cannot be used by supervisors in the short run, namely the counter-organizing techniques and legal snarls under NLRB. Also, in some organizations, the loyalty and identification of supervision with the management may be in question, and the effect might be to teach them organizing tactics that one might live to regret.

Summary and Conclusion

The paper has presented the personal position of the author on the subject of positive personnel relations. Terms were defined and the application pointed toward semi-professional and professional populations in the computer industry not presently represented by third parties.

The role of management and of Personnel Relations was shown along with their principal interactions. The functional aspects of Personnel Relations were examined with particular detail on their inter-relationships in the overall system.

The importance of organization climate was cited and a measurement method was discussed. Implementation of positive personnel relations, in terms of training options, was reviewed.

The negative interest in studying positive personnel relations is to avoid the threat of third party intervention with the resulting impact on the business.

A more positive view is that the same concept will not only achieve that preventative purpose but also produce a climate in which individuals may maximize their contribution and achievement, and increase the human resource productivity for the business, all because the concept is a practical and integrated implementation of the principal research studies and findings available in the field today.

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