

A SURVEY AND ANALYSIS OF PERSONNEL TRAINING
PRACTICES IN SELECTED RETAIL FIRMS IN OKLAHOMA
CITY AND TULSA, OKLAHOMA

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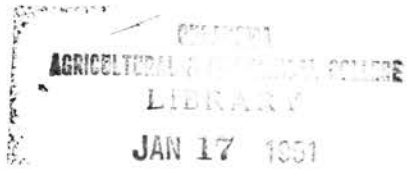
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M. V. P.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
LIST OF TABLES	v
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	10
III. THE RESPONDENTS OF THE SURVEY	24
IV. STORE TRAINING OF ALL SELLING EMPLOYEES	31
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	52
BIBLIOGRAPHY	57
APPENDIX	60

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. THE NUMBER, PER CENT, AND TYPE OF RETAIL STORES SURVEYED . . .	25
II. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF EMPLOYEES WORKING IN THE STORES SURVEYED	26
III. THE NUMBER, PER CENT, AND SEX OF THE TRAINING DIRECTORS . . .	28
IV. THE NUMBER, PER CENT, AND TITLE OF PERSONS DIRECTING THE SALES TRAINING PROGRAMS	29
V. THE TIME SPENT BY NEW SELLING EMPLOYEES IN TRAINING ACTIVITIES	32
VI. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES REPORTING FREQUENCY AND LENGTH OF TRAINING PERIOD FOR REGULAR SALES PERSONNEL . . .	33
VII. THE PER CENT OF TIME SPENT WEEKLY IN TRAINING BY SELLING EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED RETAIL STORES OF OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA	35
VIII. THE PER CENT OF TIME SPENT WEEKLY IN TRAINING BY SELLING EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED RETAIL STORES OF TULSA, OKLAHOMA	36
IX. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES EMPLOYING PARTICULAR METHODS OF INSTRUCTION IN TRAINING SELLING PERSONNEL	38
X. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES UTILIZING TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS IN TRAINING ACTIVITIES	40
XI. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES REPORTING PARTICULAR COURSES TAUGHT SELLING EMPLOYEES	41
XII. MEDIA USED TO TRAIN ALL SALES PERSONNEL	43
XIII. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES PROVIDING FINANCIAL AID TO SELLING EMPLOYEES FOR EXTRA TRAINING	45
XIV. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES WITH DIFFERENT FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES USED IN CHECKING SALES TRAINING EFFICIENCY	47
XV. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES WITH TYPES OF SHOPPING REPORTS USED IN CHECKING SALES PERSONNEL EFFICIENCY .	48
XVI. THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES REPORTING VARIOUS SOURCES OF SECURING SELLING EMPLOYEES	49

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Retailing provides the livelihood for many people in the United States. "More than 6,300,000 people, or about one out of every eight gainfully employed persons in the country are engaged in some phase of retailing."¹ The size and significance of retailing is further accentuated as one of the nation's largest industries by the fact that the annual business of American retail stores has a higher value than the combined products of farms, mines, oil wells, transportation industries, and electric light and power, and telephone and telegraph companies.²

The largeness of the retail industry, operating under the principles of free enterprise, offers the opportunity for the application of many abilities and talents. The requirements for the entering into retail competition are not restricted to capital, experience, or ability, but the opportunity is open to those who wish to compete in the final marketing of consumer goods. The relative ease with which one may engage in retailing without these prerequisites causes many retail failures, creating economic repercussions that are undesirable to both industry and the consumer. The industry as a whole realizes the limitations of its unrestricted nature, which helps to create high distribution costs. The National Retail Dry Goods Association states:

¹ Delbert J. Duncan and Charles F. Phillips, Retailing Principles and Methods, p. 707.

² United States Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstracts of the United States, pp. 906, 762, 558, 1003, 498. 1949.

While research is needed to develop new expense-saving methods and procedures to obtain a more efficient operation, a greater amount of energy and effort should be spent to accelerate the productivity of sales personnel.³

Many of the larger retail establishments agree with the National Retail Dry Goods Association and have established training programs for employees to increase the efficiency and the productivity of each salesperson.

✓ Statement of the Problem

The problem is to determine the educational and vocational training activities utilized in the training of sales personnel by the larger retail stores of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, to increase the efficiency and productivity of salespersons.

✓ Purpose

The purpose of this study is to make an investigation of the educational and vocational activities of the larger retail stores of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, in an attempt to answer the following questions:

- ✓ 1. To what extent are new and regular selling employees subject to training?
- ✓ 2. Specifically what types of teaching methods are used?
- ✓ 3. Who teaches the sales personnel?
- ✓ 4. What instruction is given the sales personnel?
5. What media are used in employee instruction?
6. What financial encouragement is given selling employees to promote extra educational activities?

³ Walter I. Ittinger and Leon J. Rosenberg, "Can Stores Be Managed From Ivory Towers," Journal of Retailing, XXV, (Summer, 1949), 56.

7. What methods of checking the effectiveness of the training program are utilized?

8. What sources are used to obtain sales personnel?

From this study it is hoped that a picture will be obtained of the means undertaken by retail stores to improve the effectiveness of sales personnel and that the educational opportunities which are available to new and regular employees in the larger stores of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma will be shown.

Need for the Study

With the cessation of hostilities of World War II and the rapid recovery of the European countries, the American economy has reverted from a seller's market to that of a buyer's market. With the day of easy sales gone and the return of selectivity and price consciousness on the part of the consumer, retailing is again a highly competitive business in which trained employees are a necessity. Tom Mahoney and Rita Hession say: "What a store will be tomorrow depends very largely on the extent and value of the training that employees received today."⁴

The scope of the retail training problem is stressed by Kenneth B. Haas:

More than 130,000 youths between the ages of eighteen and nineteen and 150,000 between the ages of twenty and twenty-four enter employment in the distribution field each year. In addition, thousands of older persons enter employment in distributive occupations from other fields. The distressing fact to remember is that virtually none of this vast number has had previous training for his job.⁵

⁴ Tom Mahoney and Rita Hession, Public Relations for Retailers, p. 76.

⁵ Kenneth B. Haas, Distributive Education, pp. 5-6.

Many of the people receive only the educational and vocational training that the public schools provide or the little that the organization they are employed by provides.

It is believed, therefore, that a survey is justified in order that the people entering retailing will know what vocational and educational activities are undertaken in the larger stores. The School of Commerce of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College has added a major in retailing within the Business Administration Department. The data revealed in this study may possibly be utilized as a basis for planning the retailing curriculum. This study should also contribute information of significance to management by showing what factors exist in particular local training programs.

Scope and Delimitation

The stores selected for this study and the officials contacted were as follows:

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

John A. Brown & Co.	Assistant Personnel Director	Mrs. Cook
W. T. Grant Co.	Manager	Mr. Young
Halliburton's	Personnel Director	Mr. Trapp
Harbour-Longmire	Operating Superintendent	Mr. Jennings
Montgomery Ward Co.	Personnel Director	Mr. Fonden
Sears Roebuck & Co.	Personnel Director	Miss Collins

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Brown-Dunkin	Personnel Director	Mr. Rydeen
Froug's Dept. Store	Personnel Director	Mrs. Conhaim
J. C. Penney Co.	Personnel Director	Mrs. Campbell

Vandever's Dry Goods Co.	Training Director	Mrs. Hanson
Clarke's Clothiers	Floor Manager	Mr. Coulter
Palace Clothiers	Personnel Director	Mr. McKee

This study is limited to large retail organizations whose policies and methods of operation would require some formal training for selling personnel. The criteria used for the selection of the large retail stores to be surveyed are:

1. A yearly average of 50 or more employees.
2. A definite training policy.
3. The willingness to cooperate.

These criteria for the selection of large retail stores limit the size of the sample included in this survey.

Definition of Terms

The terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Retail store: "A store engaged in the final stage of the marketing of consumer goods."⁶
2. Independent store: "A store which is separate from any other store in both ownership and operation."⁷
3. Chain store: "One of a group of four or more stores of similar type which is centrally owned, managed, and merchandised."⁸
4. New selling employee: The employee who has not had previous selling experience in the job involved.

⁶ Delbert J. Duncan and Charles F. Phillips, op. cit., p. 3.

⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

⁸ Ibid., p. 18.

5. Regular selling employee: "One who is not classed as a temporary, probationary, or part-time employee."⁹
6. Training: "Is the process of teaching fitness and proficiency in a specific job or task."¹⁰
7. Training coordinator: The individual who is delegated to coordinate the training activities with the actual store work.
8. Vocational activities: "Systematic instruction and drill designed to develop those knowledges, skills, interests, and aptitudes of, or pertaining to, an employment, vocation, occupation, or profession."¹¹
9. Educational activities: The general experiences which increase the knowledges or understandings of employees to better fit them to the retail environment.
10. Extra Training: Retail training provided by organizations and individuals not affiliated with the retail stores surveyed.

Source of Data

The primary data used in this study were obtained by personal interviews with individuals responsible for the personnel activities of their respective retail organization. The investigator used an outline form questionnaire with check lists and guide questions. In this way, the respondents were encouraged to talk so that the investigator could take down in the person's

⁹ Abraham A. Dessler, "Trends in Collective Bargaining and Union Contracts," Conference Board Reports, No. 71-3.

¹⁰ O. Preston Robinson, Retail Personnel Relations, p. 250.

¹¹ Kenneth B. Haas, op. cit., p. ix.

own words every remark that had any bearing on this study. From the seven independent retail stores and the five chain retail stores surveyed, twelve usable interview forms were secured.

Methods and Procedure

Before attempting to collect data for this study, the writer made a review of the current literature in the field of personnel administration with particular attention to sales training procedures. The thesis of Helen Knox Craig,¹² Training Programs of Retail Organizations in Washington, D.C., was acquired through an Inter-Library Loan and examined, giving the investigator suggestions for procedure.

The study reported employs the normative-survey method of research as defined by Good, Barr, and Scates:

It is concerned with the conditions that prevail in a group of cases chosen for study, and is essentially a method of quantitative description of the general characteristics of the group.¹³

Several questionnaire forms and the article by the Sub-Committee of the Marketing Research Techniques Committee, on the "Questionnaire, Preparation, and Interview Technique,"¹⁴ were studied to determine the information needed for the study and the best procedures for securing the data. A questionnaire was developed and submitted for criticism to the Business

¹² Helen Knox Craig, Training Programs of Retail Organizations in Washington, D. C., Unpublished Master's Thesis, George Washington University, 1946.

¹³ Carter V. Good, A. S. Barr, and Douglas E. Scates, Methodology of Educational Research, p. 286.

¹⁴ Sub-Committee of the Marketing Research Techniques Committee, "Questionnaire, Preparation, and Interview Technique," Journal of Retailing, XIV, (October 1949), pp. 417-425.

Education Seminar Class at Oklahoma Agriculture and Mechanical College, on January 10, 1950. A test check on the questionnaire was made by interviewing a former personnel director of a large retail organization and a practicing personnel director of a similar organization. The inadequacies of the interview form were then determined and the form revised. A copy of the final form is shown in the appendix, as Appendix A.

To obtain the selected retail stores to be interviewed in this study, the investigator visited the Chamber of Commerce of both Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. A group of large retail stores from each city was thus selected.

During the first interview with the store personnel officials, the purpose of the study was fully explained and permission granted to interview them at a later date. The permission to interview personnel officials about store operation was at times very difficult to obtain. The reasons given for their reluctance were:

1. They were busy.
2. A similar study was being made that had used too much of their valuable time.

When gathering the data, the writer gave the persons interviewed a duplicate copy of the questionnaire to read and follow during the interview. Interruptions were frequent because of the nature of the office held by the respondents.

All data was collected in three months, between January, 1950 and March, 1950.

After collection of data the questionnaire forms were divided into two groups: (1) Oklahoma City store data, and (2) Tulsa, Oklahoma store

data. The data on the questionnaire forms were transferred to a data worksheet. After the tabulation of data was made on the worksheet, the data were transferred to 16 tables.

Summary

Chapter I presents a statement of the problem; the purpose and the need for the study; the scope and delimitation; definition of terms; the source of the data; and a discussion of the methods and procedure used in this study.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

During the last two hundred years, scientific discoveries have transformed the economic relations of man more than the events of all the preceding centuries of human history. Foremost among the industrial changes has been the use of power-driven machinery which has replaced the simple tools of the hand laborer in manufacturing. Steam, electricity, and gasoline have reduced wind and water to subordinate positions as direct sources of power. All of these have aided man in getting a living and making his way from savagery to civilization.¹

Through technological progress, living conditions have been bettered in the material sense; yet economic security, emotional stability, and job satisfaction appear to be more difficult to attain today than during the early period of our country's development.

Hepner expresses this conflict as follows:

One striking psychological problem arises from the fact that our magnificent industrial and technical development has not resulted in equally magnificent emotional satisfactions for many of our citizens. Engineers, scientists, and inventors have produced a technological age which is truly marvelous, but which has not always satisfied the hearts and minds of the men who operate its machines, or of the customers who benefit from its products. We are like children playing with powerful but somewhat dangerous toys. We cannot always keep our employable people busy making the things we should like to buy.²

Gray appears to be in agreement with Hepner when he says:

. . . the American worker chooses, or is forced, to change his employment at intervals that may average nearly one change for each worker each year. The effective employment of this

¹ William H. Kiekhofer, Economic Principles, Problems, and Policies, p. 57.

² Harry Walker Hepner, Psychology Applied to Life and Work, p. 4.

great mass of people in such a way as to fill the economic and psychological needs of both employee and employer is a problem of great magnitude.³

In general, retail stores have been slow to recognize that a lag in human relationship exists in contrast to the technological improvements in industry.

What is the nature of retailing? The nature of retailing, according to O. Preston Robinson and Norris B. Brisco, is, "a highly humanized industry where the human factor plays an important part."⁴

Ittlinger and Rosenberg state: "To serve the customer and to distribute goods for customer satisfaction is the most fundamental function of retailing."⁵

In the past it was believed that goods well bought would sell themselves, but in recent years competition has become keener and the growing realization by management that more intelligent selling and efficient service are necessary for successful store operation.⁶ Along with this development has come a change in the attitude of the workers, of which there are usually three general types:

1. Those who select their jobs carefully from the point of view of permanency and seek earnestly to advance in them.
2. Those who select their jobs for permanency but are not particularly desirous of advancement.

³ J. Stanley Gray, Psychology in Human Affairs, p. 424.

⁴ Preston Robinson and Norris B. Brisco, Store Organization and Operation, p. 216.

⁵ Walter I. Ittlinger and Leon J. Rosenberg, "Can Stores be Managed from Ivory Towers?" Journal of Retailing, XXV, (Summer, 1949), 56-59.

⁶ O. Preston Robinson, Retail Personnel Relations, p. 216.

3. Those who seek only temporary employment.⁷

These employees who selected retail jobs and earnestly wished to get ahead, while waiting for advancement, became interested in employee problems and made various efforts to organize and present their problems to management. This attitude has done much to emphasize the importance of centralized personnel administration.

What is personnel management? Gordon S. Watkins and Paul A. Dodd state that personnel management was developed for a primary purpose.

They say:

A specialized management of personnel has been developed for the primary purpose of dealing with these neglected human forces in industry and business, seeking always that degree of coordination between mechanical and human elements which will not only result in the desired degree of efficiency but also assure the prevalence of equity in the whole scheme of employment relations.⁸

Robinson agrees more simply, when he says: "The job of personnel administration is to harmonize the demands of the workers with those of the management."⁹

Whether the store is large or small, it must maintain itself in such a way as to insure harmonious relations mutually beneficial to the store and its employees. Both want a successful and profitable business operation.

⁷ Ibid., p. 2.

⁸ Gordon S. Watkins and Paul A. Dodd, The Management of Labor Relations, p. 46.

⁹ O. Preston Robinson, op. cit., p. 7.

What is the proper placement of the personnel activity in the store organization? Many stores have elevated the personnel activity to the position of one of the major operating divisions of the organization. This arrangement misinterprets the real relationship of the personnel activity to the entire organization because the general responsibility is fundamentally store-wide and reaches into every phase of the business. There are two widely used plans for the organization of total personnel, the straight-line organization and the line-and-staff organization.¹⁰

Yoder distinguishes between them quite clearly:

In the straight-line organization, usually illustrated by a military unit, the flow of authority emanates from the president and is restricted to a line of subordinates, from the president to vice-presidents, from each of them to specific department heads, from the latter to specified supervisors and foremen. It may work well in small business units, but in larger firms, it requires too wide a range of responsibilities to facilitate efficient performance. In the line and staff organization, lines of authority flow from the president to line officers, but staff officers of equal rank are charged with responsibility for advising line officers on major specialized functions, on the theory that no line officer can be expert in all functions. This type of organization, generally utilized by most modern, large-scale industry, has been found far more effective than either the simple line organization or an attempt at a functionalized line organization. In the latter, minor executives represent major managerial functions, such as sales, production, or personnel.¹¹

The setting up of the personnel activity as a staff responsibility of administration has been found most satisfactory.

Management who perceives the need for a controlled guidance with regard to a better knowledge of business conditions and the problems of retail management may establish a program of employee training. What

¹⁰ O. Preston Robinson and Norris B. Brisco, op. cit., p. 62.

¹¹ Dale Yoder, Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, p. 12.

is employee training? According to Jucius, "By training is meant any process by which the skill and ability of employees to perform specific jobs is increased."¹² In the book, Store Organization and Operation, the following definition is given: "Training is a shortening of the educational processes and brings the employee to the point of skill more quickly than is possible by self learning alone."¹³

A small and medium-sized store may leave the function of training to the proprietor or manager, whereas a larger organization may require the services of a large group of people or a specialized department. Helen Marsh Lester thinks that, "Probably a store would have to be large enough to hire and train at least 200 persons a year to justify a separate training department."¹⁴ In any store, some organization plan for training must be developed for responsibility of operation. There are two types of training organizations, centralized and decentralized.

A centralized plan means that all formal instruction is given by regular members of a training staff. This method is carried on in the larger stores requiring a large expensive staff. In the decentralized plan, the training is done by a centralized staff of teachers in cooperation with buyers, merchandizers, executives, store managers, and other qualified personnel.¹⁵

There are divergent points of view regarding the merits of centralized and decentralized training instruction. Many feel that the delegation of

¹² Michael J. Jucius, Personnel Management, p. 242.

¹³ O. Preston Robinson and Norris B. Brisco, op. cit., p. 235.

¹⁴ Helen Marsh Lester, Retail Training in Principle and Practice, p. 5.

¹⁵ O. Preston Robinson, op. cit., p. 259.

authority for teaching retail employees is toward the decentralized training plan.

The current trend seems to be toward smaller training staffs. These staffs plan and supervise but delegate much of the actual teaching to operating executives, who know their employees and who have a keen understanding of the problems of their jobs.¹⁶

Regardless of the methods of organization, a fully organized training program should provide for the following groups of employees:

1. New employees--training for the job.
2. Regularly employed people--training on the job.
3. Potentially promotional people--training for the job ahead.¹⁷

Who is the training director? If the training needs of the organization are large, it will require a full-time director. The teaching, promotional, and executive training may be given by the director or under his direct supervision. The training director does not operate in a vacuum but works with people, and through them obtains cooperation and effective results. To be convincing and to put his plans into operation, he meets the continuous problem of salesmanship. As each new idea is introduced, its objectives must be sold not only to those who are to be taught but also to management. Formerly, his authority was implied by virtue of the fact that he was hired by top management to do a training job; today, many companies realize that the delegation of responsibility of training activities to the training director and his assistants in writing is helpful in handling their responsibilities. The written agreement or training policy is the statement of intentions and the establishment of authority for the training officer. John J. McCarthy states it thus:

¹⁶ O. Preston Robinson and Norris B. Brisco, op. cit., p. 237.

¹⁷ O. Preston Robinson, op. cit., p. 255.

Training policy should state, in specific terms the objective of training. It should outline the kinds of training that are to be given, by whom it is to be given, and to whom it is to be given. The responsibilities for training should be clearly established.¹⁷

What are the qualifications of a training director? There are many qualifications for a top-grade training director that must be considered in the selection of a person for such an important activity. Many large retail organizations ignore even the minimum requirements as stated by

Alfred M. Cooper:

1. His experience background should be similar to that of employees he must train.
2. He should have had experience in teaching vocational subjects in organizations similar to that in which he is now to supervise training.
3. He must have an understanding of trade and job analysis and the ability to conduct teacher-training classes for instructors and supervisors.
4. He must be an effective conference leader and possess the ability to train others as conference leaders.
5. He must have the ability to inspire confidence in those he will train.¹⁸

Cooper ignores one professional standard that Natalie Kneeland deems necessary, and that is the ability to use English effectively both verbally and in writing.¹⁹

The training director, after his selection and establishment of authority, is ready to install his training plans. The experienced director will make a survey of the organization to determine the needs of

¹⁷ John J. McCarthy, "Training is a Staff Function," Journal of Retailing, XXIV, (February, 1948), 6-13.

¹⁸ Alfred M. Cooper, Employee Training, p. 17.

¹⁹ Natalie Kneeland, "Personnel Work in Retailing--Boom Baby or Profession," Journal of Retailing XXI, (April, 1945), 87.

the training program, involving a survey of complaints, errors, labor turnover, and sales volume. This information is valuable for evaluation and reports on the training progress.

Top management thinks in terms of speed, but training directors think in terms of established educational principles which require time. Josephine Boyle states:

Most of the failures of the past have been the result of a disregard of well established educational principles:

1. Approach negative because of emphasis on error follow-up.
2. Failure to recognize individual differences.
3. Fallacy of quick results.²⁰

Cooper also feels that the training programs should begin modestly.

Unless circumstances make speed imperative, it is better that any training program begin modestly and expand as it proves its worth. Sometimes, however, this procedure is not possible, and the new training supervisor is asked to organize at once many types of training to reach nearly every employee in the organization. Such wholesale beginnings are disadvantageous to the program and to the training supervisor, since any slight error of method that creeps in will be multiplied as many times as there are courses of study inaugurated. In emergencies, large-scale training can be instituted, but whenever possible the training man should insist upon attacking first the training problem most imperatively demanding attention, solving it, and then moving on to another problem.²¹

In summation, a training director's function is in a staff department created to assist line executives in training their subordinates. The director is a versatile individual who must sell, organize, direct, supervise, and follow up the results of his functions.

What are the kinds of training? Vestibule or initial training is for all new employees to learn important information and skills about the job.

²⁰ Josephine Boyle, "Trends in Retail Training," Journal of Retailing, XXI, (February, 1945), 47.

²¹ Alfred M. Cooper, op. cit., p. 13.

This instruction usually covers store layout, store policies, store rules, and specific job duties, such as the use of the cash register.

On-the-job training begins after the initial training program ends and the employee is assigned a specific job. Follow-up training, as on-the-job training is often called, is employed to cover all the organized training activities designed to maintain workers at a maximum level of efficiency. This training will include the orientation into the new surroundings, reviews of job procedures, special training tours, store psychology, and individual job instruction. Such courses as salesmanship and textiles are taught in centralized classrooms, and the other types of job training mentioned are given by a decentralized staff under the supervision of or in agreement with the central training staff.²²

Another type of training, promotional or executive, is a highly organized and supervised program divided into practical and theoretical work. In the past it has been the custom to "steal" necessary key personnel, but the trend is toward the obtaining of "home-grown" executives by a systematic scheme of training within the organization. Management has discovered the merits of junior executive training programs, as expressed by Corinne J. Carden:

One advantage is the speed with which a well selected person can be taught the essence of the experience of senior executives in many different fields. The other is the influence on the entire working force of a plan which really promotes within.²³

This plan has provided for necessary personnel for executive positions which are sometimes found vacant at inopportune times.

²² O. Preston Robinson, op. cit., p. 290.

²³ Corrine J. Carden, "Executive Training," Journal of Retailing, XXII, (February, 1946), 1.

Retail training should not be limited to any one group of select employees. According to C. J. Corbin, the new employee is the recipient of the largest portion of the training activity of any one retail organization. Yet some of the most successful retail organizations believe in employee training not only for the new employee but also for the worker with potential promotional possibilities.²⁴

How are employees selected for training? All employees in the modern retail organization receive training. The promotional training within the organization is facilitated, in its selection of employees for training, by an examination of the records of persons who have demonstrated a reasonable degree of success on the job. Also the results of psychological tests, personal interviews, employment records, intelligence tests, speed and accuracy tests, and physical examinations play an important part in the selection of a qualified participant in the training program.

Among the qualifications necessary for promotion within the organization are the following:

1. Health
2. Integrity
3. Industry
4. Practical experience
5. The inquiring mind
6. Judgment
7. Enthusiasm
8. Capacity for following through

²⁴ C. J. Corbin, "Survey of Department Store Training Methods," Journal of Retailing, XVII, (February, 1941), 16.

9. The ability to marshal and coordinate all of his knowledge, talents, and courage to put his decision into action.

The first four qualifications are considered "foundation stones." The remaining qualifications are important, and can be built on the basis of the first four.²⁵

How are training needs determined? The personnel director can use observation methods, but there are always tangible facts in the records of the organization. Examples of topical kinds of evidence are high labor turnover, high wage ratio, tardiness, absenteeism, poor morale, and customer complaints. The director looks at these facts and tries to determine the underlying causes and conditions. On the basis of the findings, he tries to develop a training which will rectify shortcomings. This will require training for someone and for something. A new concept of a scientific approach to job evaluation has developed for retailing in recent years that has eliminated some of the hit and miss selection of training and personnel. This scientific approach is job analysis, which is quite young in retailing, but which is not new to industry. In the past it was felt that it was extremely difficult to determine the basis for a job which had varied activities or for which the actual production could not be accurately measured.²⁶ Paul H. Nystrom defines this scientific approach as follows:

Job analysis is a thoroughly systematic study made of any particular work or job to determine what must be done, the best methods of performance and of the particular qualifications needed to get the best results.²⁷

²⁵ Corinne J. Carden, op. cit., p. 1.

²⁶ Norris B. Brisco, "Job Evaluation," Journal of Retailing, XXI, (October, 1945), 97-98.

²⁷ Paul H. Nystrom, Retail Store Operation, p. 259.

O. Preston Robinson similarly describes job analysis as: "A scientific study of every phase of a job, including its nature, the conditions which surround it and the type of operative necessary to fill it."²⁸

Since all training is concerned with jobs and the methods of developing personnel necessary to fill them successfully, personnel departments and research staffs have evaluated jobs in the retail organization and have found a ready source of job information upon which training plans and selection can be based.

How does the personnel department keep retail personnel hired and trained on a satisfactory performance level? Retailing is a personal service business in which the quality can only be measured by customer satisfaction. Therefore, management must know at any specific time which employees are succeeding, which are failing, and why. There are two general procedures, according to the National Retail Dry Goods Association: "keeping continuous and essential records of employee performance and taking inventory of employees."²⁹ In larger retail organizations there is a tendency to have periodic evaluations of personnel by a personal interview. The factors usually appraised are: personality, attendance, sales, industry, initiative, cooperation, accuracy, loyalty to the firm, health, and the ability to assume responsibility. In many interviews the records of production are evaluated to determine whether or not each employee is earning his salary.

Personnel reviews consider many factors, but there are many that cannot be judged by local personnel groups without the aid of outside help. The best method of obtaining this outside help is by "shopping." In this

²⁸ O. Preston Robinson, op. cit., p. 43.

²⁹ National Retail Dry Goods Association, The Retail Personnel Primer ..., pp. 103-105.

procedure, an individual or agency is employed to make purchases from different employees, and afterward to write a report describing the important points regarding salesmanship as well as the appearance of the salesperson.

The individual performance records and ratings made available by the foregoing continuous reviewing processes divide employees into several groups for management:

1. Those who deserve a raise or promotion.
2. Those who should stay where they are.
3. Those who should be shifted to another department.
4. Those who should be discharged unless they show improvement before the next periodic review.
5. Those who should be discharged.³⁰

Keeping employee performance records is basic in personnel control to maintain workers at the highest levels of efficiency and productivity.

Summary

Retailing is a highly humanized industry in which the human factor plays an important part.

Personnel management is the harmonizing of the demands of the workers with those of the management. Personnel management set up as a staff responsibility of administration is the most satisfactory plan of organization.

Retail training is the process by which the skill and ability of employees to perform specific jobs are increased. Retail training is carried on by two plans: (1) the centralized plan in which all formal

³⁰ Delbert J. Duncan and Charles F. Phillips, Retailing Principles and Methods, p. 545.

instruction is given by the regular members of a training staff, and (2) the decentralized plan in which the training is done by a centralized staff of teachers in cooperation with buyers, merchandisers, executives, store managers, and other qualified personnel. There are three kinds of retail training:

1. Vestibule
2. On-the-job
3. Executive

The training director of a retail store is a versatile individual who must sell, organize, direct, supervise, teach, and follow up the results of his functions.

Job analysis has materially helped the retail problems of employee selection and training.

Employee evaluation is carried on in retail stores by personal reviews and by "shopping" reports.

CHAPTER III

THE RESPONDENTS OF THE SURVEY

In this survey of the educational and vocational activities for selling employees of selected retail stores in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, an effort was made by the use of the personal interview procedure to obtain data that were clear, logical, fair, and realistic.

As a background for analyzing and interpreting the results of this survey, an analysis is presented in this chapter of the respondents in terms of the type of stores, the number of employees, the sex of the training directors, and the title of the individuals directing the sales training programs of the stores surveyed.

In Table I are shown data concerning the type, number, and percentage of the selected retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Seven, or 58.3 per cent, of the respondents, were independent retail stores; and 5, or 41.7 per cent, were chain retail stores.

The distribution of stores as between independent retail stores and chain retail stores was realized by the delimitations of the study by which stores were selected according to:

1. A yearly average of 50 or more employees.
2. A definite training policy.
3. A willingness to cooperate in the study.

Table II presents the total number of all employees working in the stores, by number and percentage of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Five, or 41.6 per cent, of the respondents employed between 100 and 200 people; 2, or 16.6 per cent, of the respondents employed less than 100 people.

TABLE I
 THE NUMBER, PER CENT, AND TYPE OF RETAIL STORES
 SURVEYED

Type	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Independent	5	83.4	2	33.3	7	58.3
Chain	1	16.6	4	66.7	5	41.7

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 5, or 83.4 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, were independent stores; 2, or 33.3 per cent of the stores in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, were independent. A total of 7, or 58.3 per cent, of all the stores surveyed, were independent retail stores.

TABLE II

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF EMPLOYEES WORKING IN
THE STORES SURVEYED

Number of Employees	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
0 - 99	1	16.6	1	16.6	2	16.6
100 - 199	3	50.0	2	33.3	5	41.6
200 - 299	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3
300 - 399	-	-	-	-	-	-
400 - 499	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3
500 - 599	1	16.6	1	16.6	2	16.6
600 - 1000	1	16.6	-	-	1	8.3
Total	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 1, or 16.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, had less than 100 people employed; 1, or 16.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, had less than 100 people employed. A total of 2, or 16.6 per cent of all the stores surveyed, had less than 100 people employed.

It is interesting to note that 8 of the 12 retail stores surveyed employed less than 300 people. Only 3 retail stores employed more than 500 people. Because of the small number of stores included, no definite conclusions can be stated as to the relation between size of stores, based on number of employees, and the nature of the training programs.

Table III reveals the sex of the training directors, by the number and percentage of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Seven, or 58.3 per cent, of the respondents had male training directors; 5, or 41.7 per cent, had females for this position.

While it is shown that men predominate as training directors, it is worth noting that nearly half of the directors were women.

While it was not a purpose of this study to obtain information concerning the personal qualifications of the training directors, it is interesting to note that in the course of the interview, 3 of the directors indicated that they had had previous experience as teachers in public schools.

Table IV shows the titles of the officials who were responsible for the coordination of sales training with the actual store work, by number and percentage of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Seven, or 58.5 per cent, of the personnel directors acted as coordinators; 2, or 16.6 per cent, were training directors acting as coordinators.

The personnel directors of all the stores surveyed were found to be largely responsible for the coordination of training activities with store work, in addition to other personnel duties. This fact was explained to the writer as being the result of top management not fully realizing the significance of sales training. It was also expressed that some of the

TABLE III
 THE NUMBER, PER CENT, AND SEX OF THE TRAINING
 DIRECTORS

Sex	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Male	3	50.0	4	66.6	7	58.3
Female	3	50.0	2	33.4	5	41.7
Total	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 3, or 50.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, had male training directors; 4, or 66.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, had male training directors. A total of 7, or 58.3 per cent, of all the stores surveyed, had male training directors.

TABLE IV
THE NUMBER, PER CENT, AND TITLE OF PERSONS
DIRECTING THE SALES TRAINING PROGRAMS

Title of Training Coordinator	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Training Director	1	16.6	1	16.6	2	16.6
Personnel Director	4	66.8	3	50.2	7	58.5
Operating Supt.	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3
Store Manager	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3
Floor Manager	1	16.6	-	-	1	8.3

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 1, or 16.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, had a training director for their sales training program; 1, or 16.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, had a training director for their sales training program. A total of 2, or 16.6 per cent, of all the stores surveyed, had a training director to coordinate their sales training activities.

stores, with their small number of selling employees, did not need a separate training director because their personnel director had time available to handle the sales training activity along with his other duties.

Summary

The data in Chapter III show that 12 retail stores in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma were surveyed. The number of employees in the stores ranged from less than 100 to 1,000. Seven, or 58.3 per cent, of the 12 training directors were men while 5, or 41.7 per cent, were women. Of the 12 officials responsible for the coordination of training activities, 7, or 58.4 per cent, were personnel directors; 2, or 16.6 per cent, were training directors.

CHAPTER IV

STORE TRAINING OF ALL SELLING EMPLOYEES

Two groups of selling employees in any retail store should receive training: (1) the new selling employees, and (2) the regular selling employees.

Data concerning the training of selling employees in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma are presented in Chapter IV.

Time Spent by New and Regular Selling
Employees in Training

Table V reveals the length of time spent in orientation training activities for new selling employees, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Four, or 33.4 per cent, of the respondents, spent 1 hour in orientation training; 2, or 16.7 per cent, spent only one-half hour in training; 2, or 16.7 per cent, spent 2 hours; and 1, or 8.3 per cent, spend 3 days in the induction training.

Thus, the length of orientation training varied among the stores from one-half hour to 3 days. It is interesting to note that only 2 of the stores surveyed reported that more than one-half of a day was devoted to induction training. The length of induction training was explained by the persons interviewed, as being a result of established training policies for new selling employees.

Table VI shows the frequency of training periods and time spent in educational activities for regular selling personnel, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Eight, or 66.6 per cent, of the respondents, had weekly training periods; 2, or 16.6 per cent, had daily periods; 1, or 8.4 per cent, bi-weekly meetings; and 1, or 8.4 per cent, had bi-monthly meetings.

TABLE V

THE TIME SPENT BY NEW SELLING EMPLOYEES IN TRAINING
ACTIVITIES

Length of Orientation Training	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
One-half Hour	2	33.3	-	-	2	16.7
One Hour	1	16.7	3	50.0	4	33.4
Two Hours	2	33.3	-	-	2	16.7
Three Hours	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3
Four Hours	1	16.7	-	-	1	8.3
Two Days	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3
Three Days	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3

This table is to be read as follows: Row two reading from left to right shows that 1, or 16.7 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, spent one hour in orientation training for new sales personnel; 3, or 50.0 per cent, of stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, spent one hour in orientation training for new sales personnel. A total of 4, or 33.4 per cent, of all the stores surveyed reported as spending one hour for the orientation training of new sales personnel.

TABLE VI

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES REPORTING
FREQUENCY AND LENGTH OF TRAINING PERIODS FOR REGULAR
SALES PERSONNEL

Frequency of Training Period	Tulsa Stores					Okla. City Stores					Total	
	Minutes				Per Cent	Minutes				Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
	15	30	60	Total		15	30	60	Total			
Daily	1	1	-	2	33.4	-	-	-	-	-	2	16.6
Bi-Weekly	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	16.7	1	8.4
Weekly	-	2	2	4	66.6	-	2	2	4	66.6	8	66.6
Bi-Monthly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	16.7	1	8.4
Total	1	3	2	6	100.0	1	2	3	6	100.0	12	100.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that of the stores surveyed, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1 store spent 15 minutes daily in training; 1 store spent 30 minutes daily in training regular sales personnel. A total of 2, or 33.4 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, had daily training for regular sales personnel. None of the stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, had daily training for regular sales personnel.

The length of training meetings varied among the stores from 15 to 60 minutes. Five, or nearly one-half of the stores, used the 30-minute training period. Five of the stores used the 60-minute training period. It was brought out in the interviews that the length of training period was not rigid, but was flexible and was changed to meet the particular needs of each organization.

Table VII shows the per cent of time spent weekly in training activities by employees of the retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

By dividing the number of hours spent weekly on the job into the number of hours spent weekly in training the per cent of working time spent in training is obtained. Three of the selected retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma spent 2.5 per cent of their working time in training.

By further analysis Table VII reveals the weighted average time spent weekly in training activities by selling employees of the selected retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The number of hours spent weekly in training, when weighted by the number of store employees, gives a total of 1,288.5 employee hours; the number of hours spent weekly on the job, when weighted by the number of employees in all stores is 59,840 employee hours.

By dividing the total weighted number of employee hours spent weekly on the job into the weighted total number of employee hours spent weekly in training, it is found that on the average 2.2 per cent of the employees weekly working time, is spent in training in the retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Table VIII shows the per cent of time spent weekly in training activities by employees of the retail stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

TABLE VII

THE PER CENT OF TIME SPENT WEEKLY IN TRAINING BY SELLING EMPLOYEES
IN SELECTED RETAIL STORES OF OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Number of Employees (1)	Number of Hours Spent Weekly by Employees		Total Employee Hours		Per Cent of Time Spent Weekly in Training
	In Training (2)	On the Job (3)	In Training (1)X(2)	On the Job (1)X(3)	
500	1	40	500	20,000	2.5
140	1/2	40	70	5,600	1.3
106	1	40	106	4,240	2.5
250	1	40	250	10,000	2.5
450	3/4	40	337.5	18,000	1.9
50	1/2	40	25.0	2,000	1.3
Total	XX	XX	1,288.5	59,840	XX

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that a store with 500 employees spent 1 hour weekly in training activities; a total of 40 hours a week on the job. By using the number of employees in each store as the weight and multiplying this number by the time spent weekly in training, a total of 500 weighted hours spent in training is obtained. By using the number of employees in each store as the weight and multiplying this number by the time spent on the job a total of 20,000 weighted employee hours spent on the job is obtained. By dividing the time spent weekly on the job into the time spent weekly in training, it is found that 2.5 per cent of the employees' time was spent in training. The total row reading from left to right shows that 1,288.5 total weighted employee hours were spent weekly in training; 59,840 total weighted employee hours were spent weekly on the job. By dividing the total weighted time spent weekly on the job into to total weighted time spent in training, it is found that the weighted average time spent in training by employees in all the stores surveyed, was 2.2 per cent of their total working time.

TABLE VIII

THE PER CENT OF TIME SPENT WEEKLY IN TRAINING BY SELLING
EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED RETAIL STORES OF TULSA, OKLAHOMA

Number of Employees (1)	Number of Hours Spent Weekly by Employees		Total Employee Hours		Per Cent of Time Spent Weekly in Training
	In Training (2)	On the Job (3)	In Training (1)X(2)	On the Job (1)X(3)	
500	1	40	500	20,000	2.5
125	3	40	375	5,000	7.5
125	1	40	125	5,000	2.5
1000	1	40	1000	40,000	2.5
50	3/4	40	37.5	2,000	1.9
125	1/2	40	62.5	5,000	1.3
Total	XX	XX	2,100	77,000	XX

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that a store with 500 employees spent 1 hour weekly in training activities; a total of 40 hours a week on the job. By using the number of employees in each store as the weight and multiplying this number by the time spent weekly in training, a total of 500 weighted hours spent in training is obtained. By using the number of employees in each store as the weight and multiplying this number by the time spent on the job a total of 20,000 weighted employee hours spent on the job is obtained. By dividing the time spent weekly on the job into the time spent weekly in training, it is found that 2.5 per cent of the employees' time was spent in training. The total row reading from left to right shows that 2,100 total weighted employee hours were spent weekly in training; 77,000 total weighted employee hours were spent weekly on the job. By dividing the total weighted time spent weekly on the job into the total weighted time spent in training, it is found that the weighted average time spent in training by employees in all the stores surveyed, was 2.7 per cent of their total working time.

By dividing the number of hours spent weekly on the job into the number of hours spent weekly in training the per cent of working time spent in training is obtained. Three of the selected retail stores in Tulsa, Oklahoma spent 2.5 per cent of their working time in training. One store spent 3 hours weekly in training of selling employees. The floor manager stated that his store was a specialty store selling fashion merchandise that required well-trained selling employees.

Table VIII shows the weighted average time spent weekly in training activities by selling employees of selected retail stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The number of hours spent weekly in training, when weighted by the number of store employees, yields a total of 2,100 employee hours; the number of hours spent weekly on the job, when weighted by the number of employees in all stores, is 77,000 employee hours.

By dividing the total weighted number of employee hours spent weekly on the job into the weighted total number of employee hours spent weekly in training, it is found that on the average, 2.7 per cent of the employees' weekly working time is spent in training in the retail stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Table IX reveals the methods of instruction used to train selling employees, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City, and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used the group conference method for employee instruction; 6, or 50.0 per cent, used demonstrations; and 5, or 41.6 per cent, used the sponsor method of instruction.

While nearly all of the stores used group conferences for instructional purposes, 2 of the stores used demonstrations and sponsor supervision as

TABLE IX

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES EMPLOYING
PARTICULAR METHODS OF INSTRUCTION IN TRAINING SELLING
PERSONNEL

Methods of Instruction	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Group Conferences	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Demonstrations	3	50.0	3	50.0	6	50.0
Sponsor Supervision	4	66.6	1	16.6	5	41.6

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, used the group conference method of instruction for training sales personnel; 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, used the group conference method of instruction for training sales personnel. A total of 12, or 100.0 per cent of all the stores surveyed used the group conference method for the instruction of selling personnel.

well. It was said in the interviews with some personnel officials, that the sponsor system was used primarily for introducing new selling employees to their work.

The Instructors, Courses, and Media Used
to Train Selling Employees

Table X shows which persons were used as instructors to train selling employees, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used the education officers for instructors; 8, or 66.6 per cent, used department heads; 5, or 41.6 per cent, used buyers; and 5, or 41.6 per cent, used selected employees for instructional purposes.

The using of department heads, buyers, and selected employees for teaching by 10 of the stores surveyed indicates that the stores thus reporting were operating a decentralized training program. This procedure puts the actual job of teaching in the hands of those who have the closest contact with the workers and the job requirements.

By further analysis of data in Table X, it is shown that only 2 store owners, of the 7 independent stores surveyed, participated in training work. The number of chain store owners that participated in training activities could not be determined because the selected retail chain stores surveyed were stock companies owned by many people.

Table XI reveals courses taught to selling employees, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, taught store policies and salesmanship; 11, or 91.6 per cent, taught store organization; 10, or 83.3 per cent, taught store layout; and 8, or 66.6 per cent taught merchandise information.

TABLE X

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES UTILIZING
TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS IN TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Instructors Utilized	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Selected Employees	5	83.3	-	-	5	41.6
Department Heads	5	83.3	3	50.0	8	66.6
Buyers	2	33.3	3	50.0	5	41.6
Education Officer	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Outsiders	2	33.3	1	16.6	3	25.0
Owner	2	33.3	-	-	2	16.6

This table is to be read as follows: Row two from left to right shows that 5, or 83.3 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, used department heads for training instructors; 3, or 50.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, used department heads for training instructors. A total of 8, or 66.6 per cent, of all the stores surveyed used department heads for training instructors.

TABLE XI

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES REPORTING
PARTICULAR COURSES TAUGHT SELLING EMPLOYEES

Courses Taught	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Store Organization	6	100.0	5	83.3	11	91.6
Store Policy	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Store Layout	6	100.0	4	66.6	10	83.3
Salesmanship	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Merchandise Information	3	50.0	5	83.3	8	66.6
Stock Control	1	16.6	5	83.3	6	50.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, taught store organization to selling employees; 5, or 83.3 per cent of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, taught store organization to selling employees. A total of 11, or 91.6 per cent of all stores surveyed taught store organization to selling employees.

In the interviewing process it was said that store organization, store policies, store layout, and salesmanship were taught in the orientation process, with salesmanship being stressed in subsequent sales training meetings. The 4 stores not offering merchandise information left this matter to the employees' own resources. This seems to indicate that some of the training directors apparently overlook that merchandise information is basic material from which the salesman builds his selling points and the consumer reasons for buying.

Table XII shows the media used to train selling employees, by number and per cent of selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used manuals for training; 12, or 100.0 per cent, utilized training bulletins; 8, or 66.6 per cent, used charts and models; and 8, or 66.6 per cent used sound slide film.

The manuals used by the respondents were of several types. The most common type used was the handbook giving information about store policies, store organization, store history, and rules and regulations. Merchandise manuals were frequently used, giving information about merchandise and the methods for selling it.

Bulletins, as shown by the data, were used extensively for the dissemination of merchandise information and general store information.

Further analysis of data in Table XII indicates that motion and still pictures played an important part in employee training. It was said in the interviews, that most of the films were shown by manufacturers to promote their specific products.

TABLE XII
 MEDIA USED TO TRAIN ALL SALES PERSONNEL

Media	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Manuals	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Lecturing	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Sound Slide Film	3	50.0	5	83.3	8	66.6
Silent Slide Film	1	16.6	1	16.6	2	16.6
Silent Moving Pictures	2	33.3	1	16.6	3	25.0
Sound Moving Pictures	3	50.0	2	33.3	5	41.6
Charts & Models	4	66.6	4	66.6	8	66.6
Practice Sessions	3	50.0	2	33.3	5	41.6
Store Magazine	3	50.0	4	66.6	7	58.3
Training Bulletins	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
View-graph	-	-	1	16.6	1	8.3

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, used manuals to train sales personnel; 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, used manuals for training sales personnel. A total of 12, or 100.0 per cent of all the stores surveyed, used manuals for training sales personnel.

Data are shown in Table XIII concerning the financial aid given all selling employees for defraying costs of extra training, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Two, or 16.6 per cent, of the respondents, paid the complete costs; 5, or 41.7 per cent, financed part of the costs; and 5, or 41.7 per cent, made no contribution to outside training expenses.

Most of the stores surveyed encouraged extra training activities. Five of the stores paid part of the costs for extra training as a basis for stimulating interest, with the feeling that if part of the expense was borne by the employee his benefits would be greater. This feeling was expressed by a personnel director in these words: "Those that attend extra training activities do not need the training, while those that do need it, never attend." Another official made the statement that they had discontinued financial aid for extra training in his store because less than 15 per cent of the employees were ever interested. The reason for this lack of interest may be in the nature and scope of the program of extra training offered, or in the failure of management to sell the program to employees. The outside training most frequently used consisted of short courses in personality and memory development. The programs encouraged were those presented by Dale Carnegie, Paul McNutt, Elmer Wheeler, Paul Parker, and the State Distributive Education Service. The sales training officials in the Tulsa stores stated that the training provided under the direction of the State Supervisor of Distributive Education was very good. Likewise, the training officials of the Oklahoma City stores expressed desire for this service.

TABLE XIII

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES PROVIDING
FINANCIAL AID TO SELLING EMPLOYEES FOR EXTRA TRAINING

Financial Aid Given Trainee	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Complete Costs	1	16.6	1	16.6	2	16.6
Partial Costs	2	33.4	3	50.0	5	41.7
None	3	50.0	2	33.4	5	41.7
Total	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 1, or 16.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, paid the complete costs of extra training; 1, or 16.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, paid the complete costs of extra training. A total of 2, or 16.6 per cent of all the stores surveyed paid the complete costs of extra training for selling employees.

Methods Used to Check Sales Training Efficiency

Table XIV shows the follow-up procedures used in checking sales training efficiency, by number and per cent of the selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used service shopping reports; 9, or 75.0 per cent, used personal ratings and reviews; and 8, or 66.6 per cent, utilized the error and complaint method.

Service shopping reports were considered by the officials interviewed as a standard phase of follow-up procedure, because of the impartial judgment of an outside agency. Personal ratings and reviews conducted by 9 of the 12 stores, were conducted at 6-month intervals. The personnel directors in the remaining 3 retail stores stated that a personal review was not made, or if one was made, it was conducted only as a dismissal function.

Table XV shows the types of shopping reports used to check the sales efficiency of selling employees, by number and per cent of selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Ten, or 83.3 per cent, of the respondents used a professional shopping service; and 3, or 25.0 per cent, used a store-operated shopping service.

The store-operated shopping service used by 3 of the 12 stores surveyed was carried on by large retail organizations that could successfully perform this operation without hiring extra personnel. The professional shopping service was performed by two outside organizations: the Willmark Company and the Garrison Company.

Sources of New Selling Employees

In Table XVI are shown the sources used to obtain selling employees, by number and per cent of selected retail stores surveyed, in Oklahoma City

TABLE XIV

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES WITH DIFFERENT FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES USED IN CHECKING SALES TRAINING EFFICIENCY

Training Follow-up Procedures	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Service Shopping Reports	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0
Error & Complaint Reports	4	66.6	4	66.6	8	66.6
Questionnaire & Examinations	1	16.6	2	33.3	3	25.0
Personal Rating & Reviews	4	66.6	5	83.3	9	75.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row two reading from left to right shows that 4, or 66.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, used error and complaint reports to check their sales training efficiency; 4, or 66.6 per cent. of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, used error and complaint reports to check their sales training efficiency. A total of 8, or 66.6 per cent of all the stores surveyed used error and complaint reports to check their sales training efficiency.

TABLE XV

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES WITH TYPES OF SHOPPING REPORTS USED IN CHECKING SALES PERSONNEL EFFICIENCY

Shopping Reports	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Professional Service	4	66.6	6	100.0	10	83.3
Store Operated Service	2	33.3	1	16.6	3	25.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 4, or 66.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, used professional shopping service reports to check the sales efficiency of their sales personnel; 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, used professional shopping service reports to check the sales efficiency of their sales personnel. A total of 10, or 83.3 per cent of all the stores surveyed used professional shopping service reports to check the sales efficiency of their sales personnel.

TABLE XVI

THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF RETAIL STORES REPORTING
VARIOUS SOURCES FOR SECURING SELLING EMPLOYEES

Sources of Employees	Tulsa Stores		Okla. City Stores		Total	
	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Employment Agencies	6	100.0	4	66.6	10	83.3
Referrals	5	83.3	4	66.6	9	75.0
Newspaper Ads	5	83.3	5	83.3	10	83.3
Correspondence	-	-	3	50.0	3	25.0
Colleges	3	50.0	5	83.3	8	66.6
High Schools	5	83.3	1	16.6	6	50.0
Walk-ins	6	100.0	6	100.0	12	100.0

This table is to be read as follows: Row one reading from left to right shows that 6, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores surveyed, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, used employment agencies as a source for securing selling employees; 4, or 66.6 per cent, of the stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, used employment agencies as a source for securing selling employees. A total of 10, or 83.3 per cent of all the stores surveyed used employment agencies as a source for securing selling employees.

and Tulsa, Oklahoma. Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used walk-ins; 10, or 83.3 per cent, used employment agencies; and 10, or 83.3 per cent, advertised in newspapers for selling employees.

Of the 7 sources of selling employees stated, the most frequent source is a personal application, which is called by the trade a "walk-in." The data revealed in this study show that in order to obtain employment in the retail stores surveyed an applicant must establish an aggressive policy of seeking employment through one or more of the following means and agencies: employment agencies, personal applications, newspaper ads, and friends. It is also shown by the data that public high schools and colleges are not being used very extensively as sources of selling employees.

Summary

Chapter IV includes data concerning the training of selling employees in selected retail stores of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The data reveal that orientation training for new selling employees varied among the stores from one-half hour to 3 days. Only 2 of the stores surveyed reported that more than one-half of a day was devoted to orientation training.

The data show the length of training for regular selling employees ranged from 15 to 60 minutes. Eight, or 66.6 per cent, of the respondents had weekly training periods; 2, or 16.6 per cent, had daily periods; and 1, or 8.4 per cent, bi-weekly meetings.

It is shown by the data that on the average 2.2 per cent of the selling employees' weekly working time, in the retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was spent in training. In the retail stores

surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma, it was found that on the average 2.7 per cent of the selling employees' weekly working time was spent in training.

The data show that 12, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents used the group conference method for instruction; 6, or 50.0 per cent, used demonstrations; and 5, or 41.6 per cent, used the sponsor method of instruction.

The data further reveal that the education officers, department heads, selected employees, and buyers were generally used for instructional purposes.

The data also show that store organization, store policies, store layout, salesmanship, and merchandise information were taught.

The study shows that the surveyed retail stores placed the greatest emphasis on training bulletins, charts and models, and films as media for training of selling employees.

Financial aid was given selling employees for extra training by 7 of the surveyed retail stores and 5 gave no such aid.

The data show that 12, or 100.0 per cent, of the stores used service shopping reports; 9, or 75.0 per cent, used personal ratings and reviews; and 8, or 66.6 per cent utilized the error and complaint reports for checking sales training efficiency.

Data reveal that the personal applications, employment agencies, and newspaper ads are the primary sources for obtaining selling employees by the selected retail stores surveyed.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study, as set forth in Chapter I is to make an investigation of the educational and vocational activities utilized in the training of sales personnel by the larger retail stores of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, as a basis for increasing the efficiency and productivity of salespersons.

Data used in this study were obtained from 12 usable questionnaire forms obtained by personal interviews with the individuals responsible for the personnel activities of 12 selected retail stores in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma. These data are presented in tabular form and analyzed in the preceding chapters.

The most significant findings are summarized as answers to the specific questions that were listed in Chapter I of this study.

1. To what extent are new and regular selling employees subject to training?

Four, or 33.4 per cent, of the respondents to this survey spent 1 hour in orientation training for new selling employees; 2, or 16.7 per cent, spent one-half hour in training; 2, or 16.7 per cent, spent 2 hours; and 1, or 8.3 per cent, spent 3 days in the orientation training.

Regular selling employees of the respondents had daily, weekly, bi-weekly, and bi-monthly training periods. Two, or 16.6 per cent, of the respondents, had daily training periods; 8, or 66.6 per cent, had weekly periods; 1, or 8.4 per cent, had bi-weekly meetings; and 1, or 8.4 per cent, had bi-monthly training meetings.

The length of training meetings for regular selling employees varied among the stores from 15 to 60 minutes. Five, or nearly one-half of the stores, used the 30-minute training period. Five of the stores used the 60-minute training period.

The average time spent weekly in training activities by employees of all the selected retail stores surveyed in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma was 2.2 per cent of their weekly working time.

The average time spent weekly in training activities by employees of all the selected retail stores surveyed in Tulsa, Oklahoma was 2.7 per cent of their weekly working time.

2. Specifically what types of training methods are used?

Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used the group conference method for employee instruction; 6, or 50.0 per cent, used demonstrations; and 5, or 41.6 per cent used the sponsor method of instruction.

3. Who teaches the sales personnel?

Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used the education officer for an instructor; 8, or 66.6 per cent, used department heads; 5, or 41.6 per cent, used buyers; and 5, or 41.6 per cent used selected employees for instructional purposes.

4. What instruction is given sales personnel?

Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, taught store policies and salesmanship to selling employees; 11, or 91.6 per cent, taught store organization; 10, or 83.3 per cent, taught store layout; and 8, or 66.6 per cent, taught merchandise information.

5. What media are used in employee instruction?

Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used manuals for training selling employees; 12, or 100.0 per cent, utilized training bulletins; 8, or

66.6 per cent, used charts and models; and 8, or 66.6 per cent, used sound slide film.

6. What financial encouragement is given selling employees to promote extra educational activities?

Two, or 16.6 per cent, of the respondents, paid the complete costs of extra training for selling employees; 5, or 41.7 per cent financed part of the costs; and 5, or 41.7 per cent, made no contribution to outside training expenses.

7. What methods of checking the effectiveness of the training program are utilized?

Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used service shopping reports to check the effectiveness of their sales training efficiency; 9, or 75.0 per cent, used personal ratings and reviews; and 8, or 66.6 per cent, utilized the error and complaint method.

8. What sources are used to obtain sales personnel?

Twelve, or 100.0 per cent, of the respondents, used personal applications for a source of obtaining selling employees; 10, or 83.3 per cent, used employment agencies to find selling employees; and 10, or 83.3 per cent, advertised in newspapers.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following conclusions appear to be warranted:

1. The personnel directors of the total stores surveyed were largely responsible for the coordination of training activities with store work. This practice may indicate that management in the retail stores surveyed does not consider that the training programs warrant the employment of special training directors employed for that purpose.

2. Because of the small number of stores included no definite conclusions can be stated as to the relation between size of store, based on the number of employees, and the nature of the training programs. One might, however, expect the larger stores to stress special training programs more so than the small stores because of large-scale operating advantages.

3. The using of department heads, buyers, and selected employees for teaching by 10 of the stores surveyed indicates that the stores thus reporting were operating a decentralized training program. This type of training program has the possible advantage of keeping the training program closely tied in with actual store problems and policies.

4. Only 8 of the 12 stores reporting to this survey taught merchandise information. This would seem to indicate that 4 of the training directors were apparently overlooking the opportunity of presenting merchandise information through regular training courses. It may indicate that these training directors were failing to realize the importance of systematically presenting merchandise information to the salesman through organized instruction.

5. It was the opinion of the individuals in charge of training in the stores surveyed that only a small per cent of their retail selling employees were interested in extra training activities. The reason for this lack of interest may be in the nature and scope of the program of extra training offered, or in the failure of management to sell the program to employees.

Recommendations

On the strength of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

1. Since this study was limited in scope to the selling employees of 12 large retail stores in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma, it is recommended

that similar studies be made of all large retail stores in Oklahoma. It is believed that studies would be useful to future selling employees in determining what educational and vocational opportunities are available in the larger retail stores of Oklahoma.

2. It is recommended that similar studies be made of the educational and vocational activities that are available to future retail selling employees in small retail stores of Oklahoma.

3. It is recommended that studies be made to determine the duties and responsibilities of the retail store training director.

4. It is further recommended that a study be made of the extra training activities offered to retail selling employees in large and small retail stores in Oklahoma.

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APPENDIX

1. Store Name _____

2. Person Interviewed _____

3. Do you have a definite training program? Yes No If not, why?

4. How long has the training program been in existence? _____

	New Selling	Regular
5. Average number of employees	_____	_____

6. What is the length of the training?

Hours _____

Days _____

Weeks _____

No specified length _____

7. What types of teaching methods are used?

Full time day classes _____

Part time day classes _____

Hour-a-day classes _____

Group Conferences _____

Sponsor supervision _____

Demonstrations _____

8. What instruction is given?

Store organization _____

Store policy (Credit & etc.) _____

Store layout _____

Salesmanship _____

Merchandise Information _____

Stock control _____

9. Who teaches the classes?

Selected employees _____

Department heads _____

Buyers _____

Store education officer _____

Outsiders _____

10. What media are used in employee instruction?	New Selling	Regular
Manuals	_____	_____
Lecturing	_____	_____
Sound slide film	_____	_____
Silent slide film	_____	_____
Recordings without films	_____	_____
Moving pictures, silent	_____	_____
Moving pictures, sound	_____	_____
Charts & Models	_____	_____
Practice sessions	_____	_____
Correspondence courses	_____	_____
Store magazines	_____	_____
Training bulletins	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

11. Do you have a follow-up on the effectiveness of the training program?
 Yes No

12. If so, what methods do you use?
 Service shopping reports _____
 Error & complaint records _____
 Questionnaire & periodic examinations _____
 Personnel ratings & reviews _____

13. Does the store help finance outside educational courses?
 (Dale Carnegie, etc.) _____

14. What agencies do you use to obtain your employees?
 Employment agencies _____
 Recommendations _____
 Advertisements for help _____
 Correspondence _____
 College _____
 High School _____

Typed by:

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