

That is all the technical jargon we will bother you with in this booklet. As you will observe, it simply puts a framework on those things that you have probably always known intuitively anyway:

- that doing repetitive work without variety is unfulfilling and boring
- that being able to see a job through from beginning to end, instead of doing just a segment here or there, is a more satisfying way of working
- that knowing your work affects people's lives gives you a feeling that the work you do is important
- that a job where you can exercise a certain degree of independence and discretion is more satisfying than one where you have to obey inflexible rules or suffer supervisors "breathing down your neck"
- that everyone needs good feedback from their clientele on the quality of their work.

As you will observe, no very startling new truths here. What is perhaps startling though is the number of jobs where the above concepts are violated on an almost daily basis.

## **Why Me?**

Managers have a great deal of work to accomplish: so you may legitimately ask yourself, why me? Can't personnel or an outside consultant come in and do whatever needs doing in this job design business? The answer is no, because job design is not a question of applying some magical formula. Rather, it is a question of creating a changed organization. Only the on-site manager, the person who knows the intricacies, personalities, and operational parameters of that workplace, can bring together employees, imagination and applied knowledge to see new and innovative ways in which the work can be performed.

Your knowledge of your staff is perhaps the most important factor of all, because job design is, like so much else, a two-edged sword. Job redesign has great potential for benefitting employees and improving their level of productivity and contentment, but it also has the possibility of causing upset and distress. It is good classification practice to look only at job duties and not at incumbents, to ignore the "human factor": it is not good job design practice. Not everyone will seek or appreciate changes that increase the scope, variety, independence or delegated authority level of their jobs. But why would an employee not react positively to the concept of increasing the quality, level, and interest of his or her job? The experts have identified three principal factors.

### **The first relates to Employee Knowledge and Skill**

A key concept in internal work motivation is that positive feelings follow from good performance and negative feelings follow from poor performance. So where a job is low in motivating potential, internal motivation will be low, and the employee's feelings will not be affected much by how well he or she does. But if the job is high in motivating potential, then while good performance will be highly reinforcing, poor performance will lead to very unhappy feelings.