

is the individual to be held responsible for its efficient conduct. It is his function to understand the details of office organization and management.

The First Essential Element.—The most elusive factor in any organization, whether it be in an office, factory or construction outfit, is the man element, and the many articles and books published on the art of handling men, hiring and dismissing employees, are evidences of this fact.

Directing an office force so that it will work harmoniously and with maximum efficiency is a hard problem to solve, because, unlike the manufacturing end of the business, the employees of an office cannot be placed upon a strictly scientific management basis. Their work is too varied, requires the exhibition of more individual intelligence and is dependent upon too many indeterminable factors but yet the principles of efficiency are as capable of application in the management of an office as they are anywhere else.

The most important point to deal with is the selection of the employees, which should be given a great deal of consideration. Many of the very large corporations have approached this problem in a pseudo-scientific manner, that is, every applicant for a position is carefully tested before they are employed, and in addition to that, they are thoroughly trained in the company's policies, plan of organization, the nature and scope of its work and the specific duties he is to perform.

Experts tell us that, on the average, it costs about one hundred dollars to "break in" a new office employee, which includes the cost of the time devoted to the purpose by higher-priced employees, the material wasted, and the mistakes that are made. Therefore, it should be worth spending a few dollars to apply definite, prescribed tests to every applicant for an office position, and to train them after employment. This course of training will naturally depend upon the size of the office and nature of the work. It may consist of an office manual or a rule book which is given to the new employee to study, preparatory to a written or oral examination, or it may consist of a training school such as some of the large companies use. After all, there is nothing very complex about properly selecting and training employees for an office. It is a simple, commonsense procedure which will mean the probable saving of 90% of this hundred dollars.

Coupled with the selection of employees is the importance of assigning to them the duties which they are by nature best fitted to perform. In cases where there is an original examination it is only a matter of carrying the process a step farther and determining what qualifications are necessary to perform a given kind of work. For example, in the mailing department, it has been established that an active, nervous girl can turn out more work than a calm, self-contained girl, even though the latter may move decisively.

There are a great many business men who forget that a human being is not a man-made creation. When clerks are found who are not capable of doing the work assigned to them, it is wrong to glare at them and make them feel as if they had committed a crime, because, in most cases, it isn't the clerks' fault. The fault usually lies, either in selecting the wrong kind of employee for that particular office organization, or in selecting the wrong kind of employee for that particular task. If no error has been made in either of these respects, in all probability the employee hasn't received the right kind of training.

The Second Essential Element.—There is only one way to be modern, and that is to avail yourself of every essential modern device that offers you greater potentialities and facility in your work. It isn't enough that you can "get the work done" with the methods of yesterday; that attitude makes for retrogression. So, in order to produce the volume of work demanded in a modern office, in order to insure speed and accuracy, you will have to keep up with the times, and you must do away with human energy whenever you can replace it profitably with machine energy.

Even to-day there are many business men who will not use dictating machines, sealing and stamping devices, duplicating machines, addressing machines and other office appliances, but let it be remembered that all production is the result of some kind of energy. You can write a letter on a piece of board, using a piece of chalk, and you can write the same letter, in much less time, doing a neater job, with the use of a piece of white paper, pen and ink, but you can still do a much better job with a greater saving of time by the use of a typewriter.

Modern office practice has developed many wonderful time and labor-saving devices, and it isn't sufficient to call a new device "new fangled" and let it go at that, because there are very few office appliances now in existence that do not deserve at least an analysis as applied to your own office problems. It isn't good business to use a variety of desks and filing cabinets to do the same kind of work, because there is always one style, one method, one kind of operation that is more efficient than others. It is the executive's business to select the one best way and to apply it wherever it should naturally come into play. And that is what is known as standardization. This problem of equipping an office with machinery, cabinets, desks, etc., that will help cut out useless space and economize time is the second factor to be studied in the creation of a result-producing office organization.

The Third Essential Element.—The problem of laying out the office floor space is hardly suitable for discussion at length in an article of this kind. Economy and dispatch are very important factors in office work, therefore it is necessary to give careful attention to the arrangement of office furniture so that the floor space will not be wasted, and that time and energy will not be consumed in long trips about the office. Economy, the first mentioned factor, is secured by a layout of desks and office fixtures which makes use of every available foot of floor space, letting nothing go to waste in useless aisles and unoccupied corners. Convenience demands that the office force should be grouped by departments, with clerks near the persons from whom they take orders, and filing cases near the desks of the men by whom they are used.

In plotting a room for office work, arrange the desks from the centre and work outward towards the walls, for wall space is better used for filing cases than for desks. In a large office, a neat alignment of desks in rows, with regular aisles, will secure the greatest economy of space with an appearance of order.

Partitions should be used sparingly, if at all; even railings impede the free movement of an office force, and the space taken up by them, and the necessary aisles on each side, could be put to more profitable use. An office without partitions brings the entire force under the eyes of the office manager.

And finally, there is the effect upon visitors to be considered. It makes all the difference in the world to your