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Management and productivity
in Botswana.

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MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY
IN BOTSWANA

BY

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AN IDM DEVELOPMENT STUDY



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A Review of management practices in Botswana, and their impact on employee productivity originally prepared for the Presidential Commission on Economic Opportunities by Peter J. Olsen of tsa Badiri Consultancy (Pty) Ltd. Gaborone, May, 1982.

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MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY

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SECTION 1

Introduction

Many people giving evidence to the Commission have complained about what they have perceived as low levels of productivity among Batswana workers. Poor worker productivity is cited as one of the major reasons why enterprises fail to expand.

This complaint, however, is nothing new, and low productivity has been a long standing and consistent criticism leveled at the Batswana workforce. In April 1976, for example, the late B.K. Kgari, then Minister of Home Affairs, quoted, when addressing workers in Francistown, an employer's representative as having said "in terms of production one expatriate is equal to five Batswana." Professor Lipton states categorically in his study of Employment and Labour Use in Botswana (para 5:15) that there is "Evidence of poor productivity in Botswana." He goes on to cite examples of farm fencing being 40% lower than in Zambia or Zimbabwe, and clerical workers in banking producing 15-25% less work than elsewhere in Southern Africa.

The Minister of Finance and Development Planning, the Hon. P.S. Mmusi, as Minister of Home Affairs, also questioned whether Batswana are working as hard as they are capable of doing. In an address to the Botswana Federation of Trade Unions General Council in June 1979, he urged trade unionist to encourage their members to work harder.

During recent meetings of the minimum wages councils, low worker productivity was one of the main arguments used by employers against any increase in the minimum wage. Members of Parliament too, have been particularly critical of the level of productivity in the public service. Repeated attacks on the service led (perhaps indirectly) to the formation of an inter-ministerial committee on productivity in the Public Service nearly four years ago. When NEMIC was re-constituted, productivity was re-emphasised as a central concern with the establishment of a sub-committee whose terms of reference included advising on ways and means of improving productivity.

It is very clear, therefore, that there is considerable concern for what is seen as a major problem with the Motswana worker. However, as Professor Lipton points out "employers of Batswana (and here he includes Government)... for all their complaints do rather little..... to cure low productivity." The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Productivity in the Public Service appears to have sunk with barely a trace. The NEMIC sub-committee on productivity has not met. Payment schemes linked to production - advocated in Government's 1972 White Paper on National Policy on Incomes, Employment, Prices and Profits - are virtually non-existent. The complaints, nevertheless, continue. Some members of Parliament, for example, debating the Employment Bill earlier this year, argued that workers did not deserve better conditions of employment because they were 'unproductive' and 'lazy'.

Despite these repeated complaints there is virtually no hard evidence to support the contention that Botswana workers are characterised by low productivity. Professor Lipton, for example, quotes subjective judgements of businessmen with experience in Botswana and elsewhere in Southern Africa. We have only been able to find one study which actually compares levels of out-put. This is a 1974 study on the construction industry which places Botswana bricklayers at the bottom, in terms of number of bricks laid per day, of a list which includes Zambia and South Africa.

If one takes the traditional economic definition of productivity as the relationship between inputs and outputs, productivity in Botswana as a whole is increasing. Between 1971/72 and 1978/79 Gross National Product (G.N.P) - the value of a goods and services produced within the country rose by nearly 400% at current prices, while the formal sector workforce rose by only 83% and the entire labour force by an estimated 30%. This is a very considerable increase in productivity of the nation in the economic sense. It tells us nothing, however, about how hard we are working, but reflects the increased value of beef exports, and in particular, the value of diamonds produced.

Moreover, productivity in the economic sense depends not only on the value of the out-puts, but also on inputs, and, in particular with regard to the individual employee, the type of technology employed. A local liquor manufacturer, for example, was able to boost production by installing a labelling machine.

His costs were reduced by retrenching half the workforce engaged on labelling, and the savings on wages and his increased production soon covered the costs of buying the machine. Those employees remaining, in terms of out-put, were clearly more productive than before, but they do not work any harder.

The complaint, therefore, is not productivity in the economic sense, but rather the out-put of employees through their own physical or mental efforts, regardless of the value of the output, or the technology employed.

Employers and managers are complaining that people are just not working hard enough. Moreover, they invariably blame the worker, describing him or her as being 'lazy' and having the 'wrong attitude' towards work.

In the light of these complaints, we have been asked to:-

"review current management practices and make recommendations on ways and means of improving labour productivity."

Inherent in these terms of reference, and a basic premise of this study, is that low productivity is a management problem rather than a worker problem. All workers have the potential to work hard, and it is up to the management to tap this potential. The objective of this study, therefore, is to examine management practices to see whether they do contribute to tapping this potential, or, whether they inhibit the utilisation of this potential, resulting in under-employment and low levels of productivity.

The study can do no more than scratch the surface of such a broad topic as management and productivity. Moreover, because of lack of detailed information, it is somewhat academic in presentation and content, and many comments and conclusions will be based on subjective argument drawn from few observations and measurable 'facts'. It does hope, however, to illustrate the impact different management practices can have on productivity.

The study presents certain management principles and practices, and through brief case studies, illustrates the impact such practices can have on productivity. The case studies are drawn from nearly six years of dealing with labour-management problems and disputes as a member of the Government's Department of Labour, and 18 months experience as an independent management consultant, and visiting lecturer in management and personnel management at the Institute of Development Management, Gaborone.

Following the summary of conclusions and recommendations, Section 3 looks very briefly at the role of the manager, and examines current attitudes towards management. Subsequent sections pick up critical management functions and examine practices in the areas of:-

Section 4 - Planning and setting objectives for employees.

Section 5 - Organizational Structure and work methods

Section 6 - Motivation and Wage and Salary payment systems

Section 7 - Leadership and Supervisory Styles

Section 8 - Disciplinary systems and procedures.

Section 9 - Training, appraisal and employee
development.

The final section attempts to draw tentative conclusions and make recommendations as to what steps can be taken to develop a greater awareness of techniques aimed at improving productivity.

SECTION 2

Summary of conclusions and recommendations.

This study has emphasised that the level of employee productivity is fundamentally a management problem and responsibility, and that the primary cause and answer to the problem can be found in management practices currently being used in Botswana.

We have concluded from a review of management practices that there is a lack of understanding of the role and function of the manager and managerial techniques arising out of a failure to provide adequate training. Moreover, in Section 3 we argue that there is an absence of a middle-level managerial identity, resulting partly from a perceived lack of trust on the side of employers and senior managers, and partly from highly centralised authority structures. Both these factors discourage managerial action to raise productivity.

Section 4 examines planning and highlights the need to plan according to organisational objectives and measures of performance. Without such measures, linked to objectives, it becomes difficult to set productivity targets and evaluate employee performance. Attention is also drawn to such management planning tools as management by objectives, job analysis and job descriptions, and planning techniques such as PERT.

The next Section, Section 5, in reviewing working methods, shows how, through the systematic study of work, better working methods leading to higher productivity can be achieved. Section 6 on motivation

and payment systems illustrates that current payment systems based primary on time provide little incentive to higher out-put, and advocates the adoption, wherever possible, of payment by results systems. This, however, is dependent upon measures and standards of performance.

The 'identity crisis' facing middle level managers is explored in Section 7, where we try to show that lack of identity leads to extreme, and inconsistent styles of leadership and supervision. Highly centralised and lengthy disciplinary procedures, are a major handicap to maintaining discipline, and there is an increasing reluctance among managers to impose discipline, and for workers to acknowledge the authority of those in supervisory positions. This is the main conclusion in Section 8 on disciplinary systems and procedures.

Current training philosophy is the focal point of attention in Section 9 where it is emphasised that the lower level skill and task oriented philosophy is creating problems not only of productivity but also in the area of localisation.

Our recommendations in the final section stress that, while attention should also be paid to lower level employees, the key to increasing productivity rests with management. Employers, including Government should ensure that management training is a pre-requisite to advancement into managerial positions. Authority systems and delegation of responsibilities should reflect an under-lying trust in managers, particularly at the middle level, and this will necessitate decentralisation of authority. Managers who feel trusted by their employers are more likely to accept accountability for the performance of subordinates.

We put forward suggestions for ways and means of raising awareness of management techniques for improving productivity, including publication of productivity hand books by Government, and a greater input into management practices by the Botswana Employers Federation, and business technical assistance agencies such as BEDU and PFP. The Manpower and Productivity Committee of NEMIC must play an active part in research into productivity and dissemination of information on productivity.

Government should take a lead in developing measures of performance across as many tasks as possible, and through practical research try to establish standard rates. Manpower allocation should be dependent upon departments being able to demonstrate, with measures of performance and volume of work, that additional staff is required.

Active encouragement should be given to the introduction of payment by results systems whenever possible, and Government should introduce task work and measured day work for lower level employees. Departmental managers should be responsible for establishing such systems and should have greater authority over distribution of awards, and disciplinary powers to correct poor performance.

Determination of responsibility for training within Government, and between Government and the private sector should be urgently resolved. Focus of attention, particularly in this technical and vocational fields of training should be switched to higher level, broader based training to meet actual needs, and reflect the technology employed in the country in the formal sector.

SECTION 3

The Role of the Manager

The role of the manager is to plan, organise, direct and control the activities of others, in order to achieve as efficiently as possible the objectives of the organisation. The manager's function is to carry out these tasks, to enable employees at lower levels to perform their duties and responsibilities. In our experience there does not seem to be a clear understanding of the role of the manager, or the division between managerial and operational duties. This is having a significant impact on productivity.

Firstly, managers are too much involved in routine, day to day operations. They are carrying out many tasks, and in particular taking decisions, which should be made lower down in the organisation. Consequently clear planning, setting of objectives and organisation are suffering. Why is this taking place?

One clear explanation is that employees receive little management training before being placed in managerial, or even supervisory positions. Particularly in Government, employees progress on the basis of length of service, without receiving special management training prior to promotion to senior positions. Subsequent sections examine some of the management skills which are essential tools of the manager, which many managers have not been trained to use.

Because they do not know what their role is they tend to continue to perform tasks they were doing at lower levels, and feel safer in routine day to day activities.

Secondly, decision making tends to be highly centralised and managers at all levels have insufficient authority over resources and personnel to operate effectively. As we point out in Section 8, even senior managers have very little control in some organisations over discipline.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most worrying feature of management in Botswana is the very slow development of a managerial identity, and positive managerial attitudes and values. As an employee progresses into supervisory, and managerial positions he should be increasingly identifying himself with his employing organisation. His own success should become linked with the success of his employer. He increasingly become 'one of them' than 'one of us'. This does not seem to be taking place.

On the contrary, many Botswana managers quite openly say they do not feel like managers and are some of the most vocal critics of their employers, more vocal, in fact, than lower level employees. However, they also do not feel like ordinary employees and recognise that their concerns and problems are significantly different than ordinary workers. They are facing an 'identity crisis' which faces all managers at some stage in their career. In Botswana, however, it seems to be particularly acute.

The sudden development of supervisory and managerial unions, and the rejection of staff associations is, we feel, symptomatic of this identity crisis, which we have studied in some depth. In the private sector, there is a widespread feeling among citizen middle managers that they are not being given managerial responsibilities and authority because they are not trusted by their predominantly expatriate senior managers. Moreover, they allege that in some cases this was done deliberately to delay localisation. In one study of employee attitudes, for example, this perceived lack of trust, was the predominant cause of 'frustration' among managers. They complain about being excluded from staff meetings, which the previous expatriate incumbent used to attend; of not being given access to necessary information on the grounds of confidentiality, and, in particular, being shouted at in the presence of their subordinates.

Similar perceptions of a feeling of mistrust pertained in many disputes involving localisation.

In Government too, though to much lesser extent, middle level managers feel they are not trusted. Centralisation of decision making, for example, can be interpreted as a reflection of lack of trust of lower level employees.

In any population there will be a normal distribution of persons with little ability and trustworthiness, those with average ability, and those with exceptional ability. Care must be taken, however, that authority systems are not established on the negative assumption that the population is predominately made up of people with little ability. Centralisation of authority can be seen as being based on this assumption, and managers who perceive that the organisation does not trust them and questions their ability, are hardly likely to work productively.

As we raise in Section 7 on leadership and supervision, subordinates also question the ability of managers, and thus the manager, and supervisor, are rejected by both employees and more senior management, creating this 'identity crisis'. Unless efforts are made to integrate middle level managers into the management system and structure this key position will fail to make its vital contribution towards raising productivity. As Section 7 will emphasise leadership and supervisory styles reflect the perceived identity of the manager himself, as well as the perception of those he manages.

This is why it is critically important that more emphasis should be placed on management training, and the adoption of effective management practices. If an employer fails to train his managers (or other employees) it is not surprising that he has little confidence in their ability.

SECTION 4

Planning and Management by objectives

A particularly neglected area in management in Botswana is systematic planning at organisational level, and the turning of organisational policies into specific plans of action. In particular, there is a failure to establish clear organisational objectives, not only for the organisation as a whole, but for every individual within that organisation.

Establishing specific objectives, and then developing and implementing programmes of action to achieve them, not only ensure that employees know what they are supposed to be doing, and provide guidelines on how to do it, but they also provide a measure of performance. As we will stress in subsequent sections, this absence of measurable standards of performance critically affects such key areas as pay, discipline and training.

Let us take an example of how planning and objective setting could work in a Government Department such as Radio Botswana. One of Government's information policies is that there should be as much locally generated news and information as possible broadcast in the bulletins. How can this policy be translated into specific objectives? In conjunction with the new staff, the news editor would set successively higher targets based on the percentage of news stories with local content in the bulletins. Analysis of the content of each bulletin then provides the measure as to whether the objectives have been achieved and therefore the policy followed.

Moreover, in order to achieve this objective the activities of the staff must be oriented towards gathering local news stories. If they do not, then the bulletin will not have the necessary local content, the objectives will not be achieved and the policy is not followed. Such a system of objectives linked to measures of performance can then also be used to measure, and then reward, individual performance. In this example, a reporter could be judged (in part at least) by the number of local stories he is able to produce. We now have a measure of poor, and good performance, on one aspect of the reporter's job.

Management by Objectives also helps us to identify training needs. If one of the measures of performance is the amount of local content in the bulletin (to continue with the illustration above) then the training of reporters must also include intensive study of Botswana in particular.

Some organisations, including Government Departments, do try and 'manage by objectives'. For example, the Department of Water Affairs has translated the Government's household water policy in rural areas to a measurable objective - potable water within 400 metres of each household, and, within financial constraints plans development of water reticulation systems around this objective.

Bigger companies in the private sector also plan by objectives, but the majority of employers fail to set specific targets, either for themselves or for their employees. The small contractor, for example may be in business to achieve certain goals. However, he does not know how much money he requires to achieve these goals, and therefore does not establish accounting procedures to show him whether he is achieving his objective. All of a sudden he is bankrupt, when planning in accordance with measurable objectives could have warned him that unless he changed his business in some way, he was heading for serious trouble.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of management by objectives is that it focuses attention on the objectives of the organisation so that activities and energies of employees are oriented and focussed on the primary purpose for establishing that organisation in the first place. Moreover, it provides us with measures of performance against which we can evaluate the productivity of individual employers.

Job analysis and Job Descriptions are also essential tools for identifying employee productivity. They are really the basic management tools for they provide the foundation for job recruitment and selection, training, payment, advancement, appraisal, and numerous other management tasks. Many companies, however, still do not have even outline job descriptions. Moreover, we have found many instances of employees just not knowing what their job responsibilities are. We have come across companies that recruit staff without a clear understanding of what they want the new employee to do.

Many Government departments, even with job descriptions, ask for more staff without a clear idea of how they are going to be utilised. A major issue raised by newly-employed graduates is that they often spend weeks, if not months doing nothing because the employing department has not worked out what they will do. This leads to frustration, low morale, and low productivity.

Staff are recruited not only without any clear idea of what they are required for, but also whether the volume of work justifies additional staff. 'Shortage of staff' particular in government, readily becomes the 'cause' of all problems and the solution is 'more' staff. One Government Department we came across was having serious problems getting its correspondence typed and had requested more typists, to bring the number of typists up to five in the typing pool plus a personal secretary.

A detailed examination of the volume of work and projected volume over the next 12 months showed that the Department's typing pool was already over-staffed, and rather than requiring an additional typist they could have operated quite effectively with one less. The work was easily measured from past records of typing carried out and timing the typists working steadily throughout the day.

This Department now had a measure of performance against which to judge the efficiency, and therefore productivity of their typists. Moreover, when the volume of work rose, they could easily demonstrate and prove their need for additional staff.

Job analysis and work measurement are, together with work study which we examine in the next section, essential tools for planning and organising work, and in particular manpower planning. Without knowing what people do, and how much of it they can do in a given period, it becomes impossible to train, or plan for future manpower needs.

There are many examples of projects in particular which are held up because particular items are delayed, missing, or forgotten. The new Archives Building is a good example. Buildings are constructed, and then immediately altered because, for example, the air-conditioners do not fit. These are examples of bad planning.

A major mining company, on the other hand manages its annual shut-down and renovation of the smelter, without hardly any such problems, even though it involves the whole workforce, outside contractors and material and equipment from all over the world. How? It is mainly through a planning technique called PERT (Programme Evaluation and Review Technique). This technique, together with similar systems such as CPA (Critical Path Analysis) or Gant Charts (bar flow charts) involves working backwards from the planned objective, and charting all the steps required together with timings to achieve these objectives. Such systems are essential tools of building contractors. The recent Census used a comparable system.

However, their use is very limited, and knowledge of the planning techniques involved is not widely known. Their use, as the Census showed, can ensure comprehensive planning and co-ordination, and this cuts out waste and duplicated efforts, all of which contribute to the productivity of employees.

SECTION 5

Organisation and Working Methods

Two local furniture manufacturers produce similar chairs using very similar machinery, comparable wage rates, and sizes of work force. One company's production of chairs, however, is consistently higher than the other. Why? The answer was found in the working method. The company with the higher production applied the glue in the legs by dipping the legs two at a time into a shallow tray of adhesive. The other company used a paint brush which took longer. Workers in the company also had problems in balancing the legs on the base of the chair while nailing them. The first company had made a simple jig from waste material which held the legs while they were being nailed.

Throughout the production of chairs, and indeed other products, the more productive company had established methods and procedures designed to cut down time and wasted effort, but without heavy investment in capital machinery or major re-organisation. Benches, for example, were arranged in a logical sequence so that the worker had all his materials handy, whereas in the other company employees were constantly moving from one part of the workshop to another.

This is just one very simple example of how better organisation and planned working methods can pay dividends in increased production, and demonstrates that methods of working are critical factors in raising employee productivity.

Devising between working methods, and organisational structure, and efficient utilisation of staff, form the basis of Organisation and Methods (O & M) which is the systematic study of work aimed at finding a better way of doing the job.

We have found, however, that while employers and managers frequently complain of inefficiency they rarely examine the working methods and procedures to establish whether these are conducive to high productivity. More often than not, they will blame the workers.

One local garage, for example, complained that their parts staff were very slow in getting parts from the storage racks. Examining the task, it was found that the parts most frequently used had been stored in the most inaccessible place. Moreover, minor accidents and damage was occurring when lifting parts from high storage racks. The time taken overall to obtain parts was halved by re-organising the store; and accidents were reduced by fixing a rail to the top shelf with a slot into which the top of a ladder, with casters on the bottom, was fitted and which would run the whole length of the shelf safely, and securely, leaving the employee free to use both hands to lift down parts.

The objective of this section is to illustrate how studying working methods really can offer very significant opportunities to improve productivity, and, coupled with work measurement, can lead to a better utilisation of manpower, and cut out wasted time and effort.

Changing hours of work can also have a significant impact on productivity. Take Government working hours, for example. When Government changes to the winter timetable, from 7:30 to 8 a.m., Government employees are now trying to get work at the same time as most 'white' collar private sector employees. We have calculated that this change adds at least ten minutes, on average, on the journey from Broadhurst to Gaborone for all

employees, leading to increased late-coming. Moreover, petrol is wasted by cars held up in traffic jams, there seems to be an increase in accidents and employees who drive arrive at work in a bad temper. The same thing happens at lunch-time and at the end of the day. Moreover, because many shops close at 5 p.m. Government employees are forced to do their shopping during working hours, because the shops also close at lunch-time. Staggered working hours could very easily help to avoid these absences and delays; so could staggered pay days.

Government practice of paying employees on the same day also leads to wasted time while employees go to the bank. There are approximately 9,000 Central Government employees, excluding industrial class. On pay day it can easily take two hours at the bank. This is 216,000 man hours a year of wasted time. If pay days were staggered this wasted time could be considerably reduced.

In more remote areas, Civil Servants often travel to a main centre to receive their pay. This can mean, in some cases, a two day journey both ways. Thus four out of every 22 working days can be lost. Arrangements could be made for payment through postal agencies or police stations.

It has become customary for industrial class employees, particularly in parastatal organisations, to be paid before lunch on pay-day, and customarily they are given the afternoon off. This has the effect of giving them an additional six additional paid holidays a year!

These are just simple examples of how hours of work and time of payment affect productivity. We turn now to examples of how procedures affect productivity. At the Post Office, for example, a customer has to queue to obtain particular forms then leave the queue, fill in the form and re-join the queue. The majority of customers know what forms they need, so why cannot these be placed in racks in the postal hall?

At ante-natal clinics in hospitals, patients are examined, sent to the laboratory for a blood test, and then returned to the clinic. The tests are basic, simple and quick to perform. Why can't they be carried out at the clinic by a technician seconded from the laboratory and thus cut out such excessive moving from one place to another.

Cutting unnecessary movement was one way of improving the efficiency of kitchen staff at a hotel. The staff used to go to the store-room to fetch food for preparation. Often this meant repeated journeys. This was changed so that the storeman brought the food when required leaving the kitchen staff free to get on with their job of cooking - not transporting food.

We have stressed the need for more careful planning, by integrating planning with objective setting. This applied equally to the methods of working. For example, a Government Department had shelving made to store certain items which were in constant use. The shelving was of a standard size but the items were of different sizes. This meant that for some items the shelves were too narrow, and for others too wide. More careful planning could have saved the wasted shelf space and the shelving could have been designed around the items to be stored.

There have been numerous complaints about postal delays. An examination of the methods of sorting parcels, for example, revealed that time could be saved, and a whole step in the procedure cut out, by simply fixing hooks unto a wall and hanging the postal bags on these hooks instead of trying to fill them on the floor.

A textile company in Gaborone was able to increase its production of scarves by changing the procedure for cutting up the material prior to sewing. Under the old system the material which came in rolls was cut into squares, and the machinists each sewed the four sides. Under the new method, the roll was split down the middle producing two long rolls. The two sides were then machined, and only then was the material cut into squares, and the other sides machined. In this example, no more staff were required, no more machines, or equipment.

Sometimes, however, relatively small expenditure on equipment can pay off in productivity. For example, the productivity of a typist in a Government Department was considerably improved purely by giving her a new table that did not wobble! The present design of typist desks in use by Government is not conducive to efficient working because they are too small. A slightly bigger, albeit more expensive design, could raise levels of productivity.

A study of meter reading in a parastatal organisation showed that overtime was accounting for more than 20% of basic pay for the meter readers. This was costing the corporation close on P2,000 per annum. By providing the meter readers with inexpensive scooters rather than bicycles, the savings in overtime would have paid for the

cost, maintenance and depreciation of the scooters, and ensured that meters were read and bills sent out on time, because the meter readers could also be used for sorting out bills. This is an example of how relatively inexpensive capital equipment can increase levels of productivity.

We should emphasise here that finding better working methods and better utilisation of staff, while leading to greater productivity, may not lead to increased employment. There is, therefore, a potential conflict between productivity and employment. However, in a growing economy, a higher level of productivity should lead to a surplus which can be invested in more jobs. Employment strategy should be based on high productivity, rather than low productivity because the costs of low productivity will negate the benefits from increased employment.

In the next section, we examine wage payment systems as incentives to higher levels of productivity. Here, however, we would like to point out that the working environment can also provide incentives, to higher productivity, or serve to reduce morale. For example, hand written notices and directions pasted on the wall by supervisors or managers do not provide a conducive environment in which to work. Neat, printed, clear notices are much more stimulating. If the working environment does not reflect efficiency then the employees are unlikely to feel particularly efficient.

Greater levels of productivity can be achieved through simple techniques for raising employees morale by changes in the working environment. The colour of the paint on internal walls, for example, could be more cheerful. Using line drawings and coloured markings on hospital corridors to direct the public would not only improve morale, but would also cut down on time spent asking for directions.

Providing smart uniforms not only identifies the employee with the employer, but also raises a sense of responsibility and 'esprit de corps'. Contrast, for example, customer relations in the post office compared with the banks. Gaborone Town Council is another example where morale, group identity, and efficiency have all been increased by providing staff with uniforms.

We hope we have illustrated the tremendous scope that exists in improving productivity by critically examining current organisation and methods working, with the objective of finding better methods and procedures, and creating a working environment which stimulates rather than depresses employees.

SECTION 6

Motivation and Wage/Salary Systems

There are many factors which affect a worker's motivation, and these factors change as workers needs and goals change. However, financial incentives, particularly in a poor, but developing economy, are the predominant motivating force. The majority of employees are most likely to respond to the prospects of financial rewards because this is what they require to satisfy basic needs such as food, clothing and housing. These basic needs require satisfaction before such psychological needs as power, recognition or achievement.

A worker will only respond to financial incentives - or any other motivating factor - in the form of higher production, if he perceives a connection, a direct positive link, between performance and reward. The objective of this Section is to examine current reward systems, to see whether they do in fact link reward to production. For if the worker does not see this link, does not connect higher production with higher rewards, he has no incentive to work harder.

The predominant wage and salary payment system used in Botswana is based on time. Employees are rated on the basis of an hour, a day, a week, a month or a year. Moreover, it would appear that promotion (which is perceived as a financial reward) is also based on time, in that seniority is in practice (though not in theory) the main criteria for advancement.

It could be argued, therefore, that in calculating pay with reference to time, and promoting according to seniority, we are rewarding attendance at work rather than performance. This impression seems to be confirmed by the fact that in Government and the private and parastatal sectors, absenteeism and late coming are the types of behaviour which attract disciplinary action, while inefficiency, poor performance or neglect, rarely incur any action at all.

In Government another indicator that 'time' and attendance is being rewarded rather than performance comes from the Vacancy Report form. Although policy on promotion emphasises merit and ability, the form requires the Head of Department to specifically justify why the most senior officer eligible has not been recommended. This clearly puts pressure on the Head of Department to recommend that senior officer regardless of merit. Moreover, as Professor Lipton, pointed out, rigid application of schemes of service is no incentive to hard work and productivity if the officer knows that he will have to serve a specified period of time in a scale before he becomes even eligible for promotion.

When payment is related purely to time, without reference to performance or out-put, the existence of overtime provisions encourages slow working and therefore low productivity. This is particularly true of Government's Industrial Class for whom over-time rates are much more attractive than in the private or even parastatal sectors. Firstly, the Industrial Class employee works a shorter working week than a comparable employee in the private sector (7 3/4 hours per day vs 8½ - 9 hours per day) and is therefore on overtime rates while a private sector comparable worker is still on standard time rates.

Secondly, the week-end overtime rate for Saturday working is double-time compared with time-and-a-half in the private sector. This encourages week-end working by slacking off during the week.

It is clearly a basic management principle that payment should be related in some way at least to performance. This means, of course, that standards must exist against which performance can be measured. As we have noted in Section 4 and 5 such standards, by and large, are sadly lacking. Moreover, it is sometimes difficult (though by no means impossible), or inappropriate to set standards that are clearly measurable. This is particularly so for administrative and managerial jobs. However, for such jobs we could establish standards relating to achievement of objectives and use these measures when appraising employees for withholding of rewards (loss of increment, for example) or selection for promotion, as we shall examine in Section 8.

This section looks at the sort of jobs where actual pay can be directly related to actual performance, and different wage and salary payment systems that can be used to ensure that employees perceive the relationship between higher productivity and higher pay. By its very nature time rating systems can not achieve this. We are going to examine payment-by-result systems (PBR), and in particular, piece work, task work, measured-day work, and bonus systems.

Piece work

As the name implies, piece work is a system of payment related to each piece of work the employee produces. The benefits of such a system are that the more the worker

produces, the more he earns, and therefore there is a direct relationship between earnings and production.

There is very little evidence of piece work in Botswana, although we have come across successful, and unsuccessful, schemes in agriculture, for such tasks as cutting fence posts and weeding. We came across one farmer who was paying employees 10t per fence post cut, trimmed and delivered to his farm. However, despite the fact that he was paying according to production he was getting very little production, and soon abandoned the system and went back to paying a flat monthly rate.

Another farmer, however, using the same principle - payment-by-result-was operating a very successful scheme for both weeding and fence post hole digging. It is interesting to note the differences in the design of the system. Firstly, this farmer had negotiated the rate for a row of weeding with his employees (and for digging a hole) which both he and his workers considered was 'fair'. Secondly, before implementing the scheme, the farmer had taken the trouble to establish, again with his workers how long it would take to weed one row, and dig one hole. Thus, there must be a measure of time as well as performance.

However, the most critical difference between the schemes was that the second farmer's payment system was progressive. Not only did the worker get paid by the row and the number of holes dug, but the rate progressively increased. This is because he recognised that the worker has to expend more energy on weeding the 10th row, for example, than the 1st row, and more energy on the 20th row than the 10th row and so on.

Moreover, the farmer also informed his employees that if they worked well, he would do his best to provide continuity of employment.

This example illustrates the critical factors associated with any payment by results system. It should recognise that the more an employee produces the more energy he expends on each piece and this should be reflected in progressively higher piece rates. Secondly, the employee should not perceive that the harder he works the sooner he is going to be out of a job.

These two critical factors were identified as the key to 'task' work payment systems in construction companies payment systems we have looked at in the past.

Task work

Payment by task refers to linking reward to a specific task, usually a number of linked activities. For example, under piece rates a brick-layer would be paid according to the number of bricks he lays. Under task work he would be paid for a certain section of wall completed and given a time in which to complete it.

One major construction company introduced such a system for brick-layers, painters and plasterers. Jobs were broken down into tasks and the more tasks completed in a day the more pay the worker received. However, the system soon collapsed because after completing a minimum number of tasks the workers would go home. The employer put this down to the fact that Batswana workers have a 'low' earning satisfaction threshold, and as soon as they attain this threshold they would rather have the time off.

A deeper examination of the scheme, however, would have revealed that there were some basic flaws in its operation. Firstly, the rate was set arbitrarily, and for the bricklayers in particular their ability to do the task in the time specified depended on the complexity of the construction. Moreover, materials were not always readily available and they spent a high proportion of their time waiting for blocks. Secondly, the scheme was not progressive and the same rate applied throughout the day regardless of the number of tasks completed. (The company did try a variation by setting tasks by the week. Here the worker would be paid a weekly wages even if he finished the task in three days. If he completed two tasks within the week he would in effect have obtained two weeks pay. This system was also abandoned).

Thirdly, the company had a policy of laying workers off as soon as the contract was completed. Obviously, the harder the tradesmen worked the sooner they were unemployed. A little more effort on the part of the employer would also have revealed that at the time many of his tradesmen were engaged on private work and were earning more money on private jobs than doing an additional task!

Another construction company on the other hand is still using task work as the basis of payment. Their scheme, however, is based on negotiated rates, progressive payments and they try by all means not to lay off workers between contracts. Moreover, the foremen tradesmen are linked to a monthly bonus based on the number of tasks completed by the tradesmen. In the other scheme foremen were on a flat monthly rate and therefore had no incentive to encourage their tradesmen to work harder. The second company has a reputation for consistently beating completion deadlines.

Measured Day work

Another variation of payment by results is known as measured day work. Here, the employer, in negotiation with employees established what they both consider is a 'fair days' work. This can be defined as "the rate of out-put which qualified workers will naturally achieve without over-exertion as an average over the working day or shift provided they adhere to the specified method...are motivated to apply themselves to their work." The motivation comes from the negotiated rate of pay.

Using measured day work the employer has a standard, accepted by employees, against which to measure the performance of individual workers. Those workers who consistently fall below the average can be warned that unless they improve they run the risk of being laid off, while those who consistently work at a high pace can be rewarded with a higher rate.

We have not come across any company using systematic measured day work, although there may well be such systems in operation. It is, however, an extremely useful system and links in with the arguments put forward in Section 4 on objective setting for employees. Moreover, it can be used across a whole range of tasks including many clerical duties such as filing, insurance claim forms, and certain book-keeping functions. The unit of measurement need not necessarily be a day, it could be a week or a month.

Bonus schemes

One construction company we know has been operating a very successful bonus scheme for a number of years now. This is based on finishing contracts before the completion date in the contract. The savings in labour costs by completing the job early are distributed between the workers on the site, the foreman and the company. Thus everyone involved in the job has a vested interest in its early completion. (The bonus is not paid out until after the faults responsibility period has expired). The contractor also tries to guarantee continuous employment, even if this means paying employees between contracts, as he has found the benefits of retaining a good team of workers out-weigh the cost in wages.

Bonus schemes, however, are very rare in Botswana. Moreover, Government seems to be actively against such systems despite the fact that the stated policy in terms of White Paper No. 2 says that "where-ever possible 'payment by results' schemes should be introduced, incorporating both incentive bonuses and piece-working methods." For example, Government itself for a number of years, tried to abolish the punch card operators bonus in the Computer Bureau. Moreover, BMC's efforts to introduce a bonus system for its daily rated employees on the slaughter hall have been discouraged. This is difficult to understand when BMC is encouraged to pay a bonus to cattle producers but not its own employees.

There is, of course, the possibility of abusing bonus schemes and using them to break the incomes policy. A '13th' month cheque, for example, called a 'bonus' by one major company is clearly unrelated to production. However, it is clear that extra payment for extra work is an incentive to production, and a bonus system linked to out-put is an extremely useful device to encourage higher productivity.

Any payment by result system as an incentive to higher productivity depends, as we have noted, on the ability to measure out-put and this is not always possible. However, it is essential as we repeatedly emphasise that whatever the reward system used it must be related to a standard of performance either in out-put, or in attaining organisational objectives.

We have tried to demonstrate in this section that the predominant reward system in Botswana does not do this, and rewards time and attendance which can be disincentives to production. Why should an employee, whether in Government or the private sector work hard if he is going to receive the same reward as others who may not work so hard?

We would like to comment, very briefly, on the levels of pay, and in particular the lowest levels. In agriculture, for example, the typical employer will argue that he does not pay his workers very much because they produce very little. If one asks the worker why he produces very little his answer will be because he is paid very little. A vicious circle of low pay leading to low productivity leading to low pay and round and round is quickly established.

Moreover, as some Members of Parliament pointed out during the debate of Employment Bill, it is difficult to understand why people with valuable property, such as cattle, pay employees so little to look after them. If one has something valuable, surely it is worth paying a little more to ensure that it is well looked after.

It can be argued that the greater the cost of a commodity, such as labour, the better use will be made of that commodity until it becomes cheaper to replace it with, in the case of labour, a machine. During a survey of wages on freehold farms conducted by the Labour Department in 1978/79 it was clear that there was a clear relationship between profitability, productivity and levels of wages. Those farms which were clearly more profitable, also had higher levels of employee productivity and higher levels of wages, using exactly the same labour intensive means of production.

A final factor we wish to draw attention to is who has the power to reward the worker. It obviously makes the job of the supervisor or manager easier if he has some control over the reward system. He can reward high performance when it takes place thus re-inforcing the link between reward and performance. Typically, however, supervisors and managers, particularly in Government, have little or no control over rewards, with entry points, increments and promotions all being centrally determined. In some private sector firms we have come across, however the section manager has the power to authorise, within guidelines and financial limits, increases in pay, or double increments.

One financial institution, for example, has a system of double increments where loss of increment for poor performers is balanced by double increments to good performers - under the control of the section manager.

Thus not only should rewards be linked to performance but the manager and supervisor must have more control over such rewards. Otherwise he is put in a position of motivating with promises of rewards which he subsequently may be unable to fulfil.

SECTION 7

Leadership and Supervisory Styles

In Section 3 we looked at the functions of the manager and we expressed concern that we were not developing managerial attitudes in Botswana. We have argued that perhaps the major reason for this could be a lack of 'trust'. How does this affect leadership and supervisor styles?

Leadership and supervisor styles can be classified according to whether they are oriented towards achieving the objectives of the employees, or the organisation. The more the supervisor or manager is concerned with the well-being of employees and identifies with them, the more he is said to be a 'democratic' leader. If he is organisationally oriented and identifies with the employer, then he is said to be 'authoritarian'. The 'democratic' leader is the supervisor who will place great emphasis on consultation and the involvement of employees in decision-making. The 'authoritarian' leader will issue instruction and take disciplinary action if they are not carried out.

Clearly, the effective manager should recognise that his style of leadership is dependent upon the type of workers he is dealing with, and the particular situation at any one point in time. Obviously, if an emergency arises, a supervisor does not have the time to consult, and even a democratically inclined leader will have to act autocratically. Similarly an autocratically inclined leader will not achieve his objectives by issuing instructions to his subordinates, if the situation requires innovative and creative solutions. The Manager should however, be consistent in his approach to particular employees in similar situations.

What is the predominant style in Botswana, and how does this affect productivity? Tentative, though by no means conclusive evidence, from on-going research at IDM suggests that the predominant style is what one management writer has referred to as the 'Swinging Pendulum Style'. This is the manager who fluctuates between extremes. One minute he is very 'democratic' and solicits ideas and advice; the next minute he is over-authoritarian and autocratic. These swings are not related to particular employees he is dealing with, or even the situation.

Examples of such a style would be the manager who calls a staff meeting to solve a problem, but becomes angry when his subordinates do not accept his ideas. Or, the manager who seeks ideas from his subordinates because he does not know what to do himself. The subordinates interpret this as weakness on the part of the manager.

In the private sector, we have come across incidents where the lack of consistency has led to disciplinary problems and a loss of respect for people in supervisory positions. One of the main expectations a worker has of his supervisor is consistency, and where the supervisor is inconsistent this affects morale, and therefore productivity.

We have noted also that there is a tendency to use extremes in leadership - either too 'democratic' or too 'authoritarian'. Research has shown that workers' morale is highest under the democratic style; workers are much happier, but this does not necessarily mean they are more productive. Production is higher under an authoritarian style, but low morale can lead to absenteeism, high labour turnover, and an increase in grievances and disputes, all of which ultimately affect production.

We would suggest that this use of extreme styles is a result of the 'identity' crisis we have commented upon in Section 3. A manager who does not identify with management, or feels mistrusted by management will be more inclined to align himself with his staff rather than the employing organisation. This will result in over-consultation as a means through which to identify with subordinates and, as we note in the next section, a reluctance to take disciplinary action. At the other extreme, a manager who wishes to identify with the employing organisation but does not feel trusted, may over-react and becomes too authoritarian to prove to his employer that he is on 'their' side.

Another major factor affecting leadership styles results partly from practice of promotion on the basis of seniority rather than merit, together with the failure to provide adequate management training. Just as the manager who is insecure in his own identity over-reacts, the manager who is insecure in his own ability will also over-react. Either he will 'over' consult - perhaps by holding many indecisive meetings with his staff at which he gives no guidance - or, he will hide his insecurity by becoming autocratic.

This insecurity also affects the amount of delegation of responsibility downwards. If a manager is insecure in his job, either because of his ability or the perceived lack of trust on the part of his supervisor, he is either going to compensate by over-delegation of duties, or under-delegation.

A failure to provide appropriate leadership has very significant affects on productivity. We once dealt with a dismissal in a private sector company where a supervisor's employment had been terminated by his employer and he appealed on the basis that his employer had failed to prove that he was 'inefficient'. On investigation, we found that productivity in his particular section was the highest in the company, and his workers were consistently achieving higher levels of out-put than other sections. (This was a road construction company where out-put was easily measurable). On the face of it, therefore, the dismissal seemed unfair.

On further investigation, however, it was found that labour turnover in his section, and time being spent by more senior staff on handling grievances was much higher than in other sections. Moreover, there were more accidents, and damage to tools and equipment. This was a result of the supervisor pushing his employees too hard, failing to listen to advice when his staff came across bad ground, and not allowing skilled workers to use their discretion even when very small problems arose. The costs of dealing with low morale and damage were far greater than the benefits from high levels of production.

In another case, when a supervisor in a parastatal had been demoted, his subordinates appealed on his behalf, arguing that he was one of the best people they had ever worked for. However, the management was able to demonstrate that while he was very popular with his staff, he was just not getting the job done in time.

While the evidence on leadership styles is hardly conclusive it does point to the need to give more supervisory training and before employees are placed in supervisory positions they should be equipped with the necessary leadership skills and awareness of how style affects production.

So far we have commented upon Batswana leadership styles, but we have also identified specific styles among expatriates which also contribute to low levels of productivity. There is a tendency among expatriates to be either too authoritarian or to provide no leadership at all. The authoritarian expatriate manager predominates in manual occupations - perhaps reflecting place of recruitment - while the manager who fails to manage at all predominates in administrative and professional occupations. Both styles lead to low productivity. We have already shown how a too authoritarian style leads to high costs in terms of labour turnover, absenteeism, disputes and grievances. In case of expatriates this has also led to violence and in some cases court appearances.

A failure to provide any leadership at all also leads to low productivity. Many expatriate managers and supervisors are concerned with getting the job done. They feel that if they work hard Batswana will emulate this behaviour (despite the wide disparity in rewards for the same performance).

However the primary function of the manager or supervisor at the lower level is to ensure that his staff carry out their duties. He does this through establishing work methods, training, organising the work, allocating duties, monitoring: carrying out the duties of a manager we spoke about in Section 3.

All too often, however, the expatriate manager does the work of subordinates himself. Sometimes this is because he does not trust them to do it; or he can do it quicker; or there are communication problems. There are many reasons. The fact remains, however, that such behaviour reflects poor management and under-utilisation of staff, even though as a unit it may result in the required productivity.

Recently during one consultancy in a major company we came across an expatriate accounts manager who was regularly working a 12 - 14 hour day while his staff were virtually doing nothing. We found that they had, in fact, been given very little to do. Moreover, when they did anything he never gave them any feed-back on how well it was done, and did not teach them any additional skills. They were under-employed, bored and frustrated so that on the odd occasion when he could not cope with the volume of work they did not feel motivated to work at all.

We will emphasise in our concluding section that management training is vital to effective utilisation of resources, physical and human. And it is in the utilisation of human resources that leadership styles are critical in releasing employees' potential for high levels of productivity.

SECTION 8

Disciplinary Systems and Procedures

Leadership styles will obviously affect the willingness of a manager or supervisor to take disciplinary action. The supervisor who identifies too much with his staff will be reluctant to take disciplinary action lest he is rejected by his group. The authoritarian leader, over-emphasising coercive discipline, will motivate his staff to produce the minimum amount of work necessary to avoid punishment. He will not motivate his workers to produce higher levels of out-put.

Moreover, some managers, and in particular many expatriate managers, may fear to take necessary disciplinary action, because they may be 'reported' to the Department of Labour, or even the Police. We have come across such cases in the private sector. While we feel such incidents are wildly exaggerated, notably within the expatriate community itself, perhaps some labour officers are too willing to automatically side with workers against managers, particularly if they are expatriates.

There is a widespread feeling that discipline, again particularly in Government, is deteriorating because workers are increasingly challenging the authority of their supervisors and managers. A frequent complaint heard is that of the citizen manager who complains that an expatriate doing his job never had disciplinary problems and his position was respected while as soon as the post is localised subordinates lose respect for the position and challenge the citizen's authority and question his actions.

Once a post is localised there is a tendency for subordinates to 'back-bite', question instructions, and under-mine the citizen supervisor's confidence by going round him to complain to more senior people or influential people outside the employing organisation all together. Unfortunately, there may be an inclination on the part of subordinates to judge, or pre-judge, their supervisors and managers, not on the basis of their ability but on the basis of who he is, how old he is, where he comes from, and so on. Respect for position and the legitimate authority that goes with the position becomes lost and obedience becomes linked to personalities.

The willingness of very senior staff to listen to complaints about middle level managers, and the willingness of powerful, or influential persons to take up cases also undermines the manager's ability to control his staff. For example, General Orders in Government explicitly prohibit civil servants from taking grievances to Members of Parliament. Public Service Regulations provide adequate appeals procedures to the Public Service Commission. And yet Members of Parliament frequently take up grievances in Parliament in the form of Parliamentary Questions.

Once a post is localised the Motswana manager should be able to count on the wholehearted support of his staff, at least until he has proved his ability. However, distrusted by his senior officer or manager, and undermined by his staff, it is not surprising therefore that there is an alarming increase in the number of middle to senior level managers particularly in Government who are suffering from psychologically related health problems such as high blood pressure; or, are turning to excessive drinking.

We strongly feel that employees require to be educated on the need to respect position, rather than the person holding it, and interference from outside in disciplinary matters (where there is an adequate appeals procedure) should be vigorously discouraged. If this does not take place, then there will be a continual deterioration of discipline.

Sometimes, however, the disciplinary systems and procedures themselves make a significant contribution to a breakdown in discipline. We have noted in Section 6 that it is essential that a supervisor or manager should have control over the distribution of rewards. The greater his freedom to reward his staff, the more able he is to control them and influence their behaviour. We have noted, however, that control over distribution of awards tends to be highly centralised. The same situation applies to discipline.

In many employing establishments, and in particular in Government, disciplinary powers are highly centralised. This makes it very difficult for the supervisor to link poor performance or behaviour with disciplinary action and he has to rely on threats which he may not be able to carry out. Until 18 months ago, for example, a Permanent Secretary was unable to actually take disciplinary action against even the most junior member of his staff, other than institute an enquiry.

Moreover, the long and involved procedure meant that penalties imposed became divorced from the offence. In one notable case, an officer was disciplined two years after his offence. Obviously this officer now resents the penalty as it is no longer linked in his mind with his wrong-doing.

Amendments to the Public Service Regulations delegating disciplinary powers downwards should facilitate disciplinary action - but only if supervisors are willing to take action and this will depend upon a change in attitude on the part of both the employees and management.

Two essential features of an effective disciplinary procedure are, therefore, that power to discipline should be delegated low enough so it can be used by a supervisor or manager to control his staff, rather than have to threaten them. And, secondly, action needs to be taken promptly to ensure that penalty and offence are firmly linked together.

In the private sector, a particularly disturbing feature of many disciplinary procedures is the role of the Personnel Officer and Personnel Department. Discipline is a line management function, and not a personnel function. Until recent changes in Government, disciplining employees was a staff function (and still is for more serious offences). If the line manager can push unpleasant action onto the desk of the personnel officer, or if he is prevented from controlling his staff, it will affect his ability to manage. The argument that line managers are inconsistent, unfair and do not follow procedures is no reason to take this essential disciplinary function away from the line manager.

An illustration of other essential features of an effective disciplinary procedure comes from a case involving an employee of a major company in Botswana. He was guilty of violating a company rule and was dismissed. Under the procedure in force at that time, the supervisor was not only the 'prosecutor', but was also the principal witness, the 'judge' and source of appeal.

Certain principles of civil and criminal justice apply equally to disciplinary cases in employment. Two of these are that the burden of proof rests with the employer, and that the accused should have an opportunity to appeal. In the above case, which is not untypical, both these principles were violated.

Another principle from civil and criminal justice is that an accused must be given a clear statement of the charges made against him; he must be given an opportunity to hear the evidence supporting the charge; and to defend himself. We have come across a number of disciplinary procedures which violate this principle. In one notable case, for example, a supervisory employee was dismissed for insubordination. Investigations revealed that he had not been given an opportunity to defend himself and question witnesses, nor bring his own witnesses. (In this particular case the employee was guilty of the offence, but this does not detract from the fact that the procedures were not fair.)

It is not our intention here to catalogue all the features of good disciplinary procedures, but purely to highlight some essential factors which are critical. And perhaps the most critical factor of all is that a company, once it reaches a particular size, should have clearly laid down procedures which supervisors and employees are aware of, and which are consistently and uniformly applied.

Disciplinary action can be used to correct poor performance as a last resort. However, to be used in relation to inefficiency, there must be established standards of performance. As we have noted, these are rarely clear,

and we have come across numerous cases where an employer has tried to take action against an employee for inefficiency but he has been unable to prove, or demonstrate such inefficiency.

The establishment of custom and practice also makes it difficult to take disciplinary action. If a manager permits his employees to behave in a certain manner, this very quickly becomes custom and practice, and disciplinary action can not be used to correct behaviour which was previously condoned.

A very good example of this is trying to discipline drivers who refuse to do other work when not driving; or, stopping people going to the bank, or having a mid-morning tea break. Behaviour permitted by the supervisor becomes part of the implied conditions of employment and can not be corrected through disciplinary action. Similarly disciplinary action for inefficiency can not be taken unless the employee concerned is aware of the required standards of performance.

SECTION 9

Training, Employee Development and Appraisal

Improving the skills and ability of employees through training offers one of the most significant means of raising levels of productivity. The Commission has noted the lack of training facilities in Botswana, particularly in the technical fields. Moreover, it has also been made aware of the debate on responsibility for training within Government, and between Government and the private sector. These are very clearly issues which must be resolved if the best possible use is to be made of scarce resources.

The Minister of Finance, as Minister of Home Affairs, together with other Ministers have also commented on the apparent reluctance of some companies to invest in human resources through training while they are willing to invest huge amounts in physical resources and developments.

We do not intend to go over these issues as they have been fully debated. The objective of this section is to look at the predominant training philosophy in Botswana, and how this is affecting productivity in the long term. We will also touch on integration of training with employee development and appraisal.

Firstly, training philosophy, and the impact this is having on productivity through localisation. We would like to examine two contrasting approaches to training practiced by the two major companies. One company's approach has been to equip employees with all the necessary skills required to replace an expatriate. Sometimes the qualifications demanded appear to be over-stated, but by and large employees have been trained in all the skills they will need to cover the range of tasks of a particular post.

Moreover, emphasis has also been placed on a broad theoretical base to enable employees to not only understand their particular jobs after training is complete, but also develop further skills, and respond easily to changes in technology, and higher level training.

Wherever possible, the company tries to train more people than their actual specific requirements for localisation and expansion, and is also very careful in selecting trainees.

In following this philosophy the company is fortunate in having the necessary financial resources. The other major company, on the other hand, with very restricted resources, follows a different philosophy. It is interested in training employees for specific tasks. Moreover, because of its inability to attract employees of a sufficiently high educational standard, to make training easier it has tended to split up jobs, through job devolution, and organisational re-structuring. Employees are equipped with sufficient skills to enable them to do specific tasks and no more. Training is carried out according to actual requirements, with little training in depth.

Thus the first company, when training auto-mechanics, for example, emphasises an apprenticeship, combining practical on the job instruction and experience with significant amounts of classroom, theoretical training. The second company (until very recently, at least) emphasised practical on the job instruction in the specific task required of the employee, and introduced six levels of auto-mechanic, by breaking down the job requirements of the auto-mechanic into different tasks and levels of complexity.

These contrasting practices, in this case determined by financial resources, reflect conflicting views on training in developing countries. The first company reflects the view that the job requirements are very similar wherever they are carried out, and therefore one of their auto-mechanics must be able to complete with any other mechanic and work over a range of vehicles. The second company reflects the view that in a developing country high level skills are not required and much of the higher level skills are never utilised. Technology is simpler and therefore a lower level, but more practical task oriented training is necessary.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two approaches? Training to a higher standard (in the skill, rather than production sense) is expensive, it takes longer, some skills are not always utilised and people are therefore sometimes being over-paid. Moreover, fewer people are trained and employed. However, it does mean that the employee can be used on a range of tasks, can cope more easily with changes in technology or equipment, for which he requires little re-training. It encourages innovation through understanding and the employee can advance more easily within his profession, and therefore facilitate higher level localisation.

Task training accompanied by job devolution is cheaper, quicker, employs more people, and employees are paid for what they do rather than to what they know how to do. It does, however, have major disadvantages. Employees are not inter-changeable across equipment; they require more supervision which distorts organisation structure and creates too many levels of supervision; they are not

responsive to changes in technology and require extensive re-training; because of the lack of theoretical knowledge such training is sometimes impossible. It raises expectations of more and more training accompanied by promotion. And, it makes high level localisation difficult.

In terms of localisation, training at the first company has been far more effective, while the second company is now running into difficulties. Moreover, because they are not training in depth, and are training for localisation on a one for one basis, they may be running into other problems.

Government's localisation policy is very clear. Localisation should not take place for the sake of localisation if this is accompanied by a drop in standards (in both quantity and quality senses). Training on a one to one basis unknowingly may lead to this drop in standards even though the citizen who localises a post may be even more competent than the expatriate he replaced.

Whereas the expatriate had the most able citizen to support him, once the post is localized, if there has been no training in depth to replace the citizen, then the local has no support. This is becoming apparent not only in the private sector but also in Government. Where standards seem to drop on localisation, a failure to train in depth, and through succession planning equip employees lower down the organisation, may be a contributory factor.

In the two cases quoted above the second company's financial position has forced it to adopt the task oriented style. However, many other companies, and indeed Government itself has alternatives. We believe however, the predominant training philosophy adopted is that of a lower level, task oriented approach. The emphasis

on brigades, for example, the selection of lower level syllabi (the City and Guilds 820 series is such an example, as is the selection by one major investment company of the Association of Accounting Technicians course for accountants and book-keepers) and perhaps most important of all the selection of brighter students and employees for overseas training in parallel skills to those offered locally, is, we suggest, evidence of the lower level approach - we would go as far as to say second best approach.

The quality of any educational institute depends ultimately not on its staff or facilities, but on its students. By depriving local institutions of the brighter students the institutions will not develop, and the standard of training will deteriorate. If this happens then productivity will not increase.

We have spent considerable time on this question of training philosophy because we believe it is critically important to the future training in the country. Botswana, particularly with mining, transportation and communications, and indeed throughout the economy is already deeply entrenched in relatively high level technical systems of production. Whatever is said about intermediate, or appropriate technology, the scope for its introduction into the formal economic sector is limited. We must, therefore adopt a training philosophy which reflects our training needs.

Whatever training philosophy is followed, identification of training needs, and then a systematic approach to selection of candidates and courses, is required. Very few private sector companies, or government departments approach training in such a systematic way. Government is critical of the private sector for failing to produce training programmes and manpower development targets.

However Government itself, apart from the on-going Review of Localisation and Training, hardly sets a good example.

However, without an integrated approach to training and manpower development, much of the training that is carried out may be wasted and, moreover, may serve to frustrate rather than motivate employees. The wrong people frequently get sent on courses - IDM is a good example, where many of the participants selected by Government are at a too low a level in terms of their positions to benefit from the training. IDM was established to provide middle and senior level management training. Participants, however, come from lower levels, mainly from GA4/3, despite the recommendation of the 1978 Salaries Review Commission that officers should receive management training prior to promotion to GA1. The private sector, appears to have little confidence in local institutions, for although many companies complain about their managers, few sponsor employees on management courses, or utilise the Polytechnic or BIAC.

Even if an employee is sent on a course which is potentially useful, all too frequently the skills he has learnt are not utilised when he returns because either he is transferred, or he is not given responsibilities which enable him to put into practice his new skills. The enthusiasm generated by the training is lost and the employee becomes frustrated.

These are some of the factors leading to under-utilisation of staff resulting from a failure to integrate training with employee development. Current systems of employee appraisal also lead to a failure to identify training needs.

The Government system of Confidential Reports is rarely used for identifying training needs. Moreover, the whole purpose of the system of appraisal is defeated because it is confidential. Appraisal schemes are supposed to provide comprehensive feed-back to the employee on his performance and likely progression. They involve a thorough examination by the employee and his supervisor of the employee's strengths and weaknesses, leading to rewards for strengths in the form of advancement, further training, added responsibilities, an increment, and so on. Plus, they provide a regular opportunity for the supervisor to reward through praise. Weaknesses should lead to planned remedial action, and only in extreme cases punishment in the form of withholding of increment.

The current government system achieves none of these objectives apart from the punishment of withholding of increments (and this, we imagine is done statistically!!)

Some companies take employee appraisal very seriously and use regular appraisals to measure performance against objectives, plan further training or remedial action. Most companies, however, seem hardly to appraise their employees at all and provide no feed-back. A fairly senior employee in a parastatal, for example, when he was not promoted as he expected, was told he had not been performing well over the past few years. No one, however, had ever carried out an appraisal, in his presence and pointed out his short-comings.

We conclude this section by once more emphasizing that the current training philosophy will not only fail to meet the country's manpower needs, but will also lead to a drop in productivity. Moreover, employees with lower level, task related skills require much greater supervision, and their work needs careful coordination and forward planning. This means more supervisors and managers - categories of manpower which are increasingly short supply, and which is receiving very little attention or emphasis. Thus an increasingly number of poorly trained people will be led by an increasing number of untrained managers.

SECTION 10

Conclusions and Recommendations

The review of management practices and productivity began by emphasising that low levels of employee productivity are fundamentally a management problem and that the primary cause and answer to the problem rests with management. This is not to say that some employees may not be inclined towards low levels of out-put, and management failings are an explanation for poor work, not an excuse or apology. Thus, while continued efforts should be made at the political level, this Report has tried to focus attention on what practical steps management can take to raise productivity, instead of just blaming employees.

Our examination of management practices leads us to the conclusion that there is a lack of understanding of the role and function of the manager and managerial skill and techniques, arising out of a failure to provide adequate management training. Moreover, we argued in Section 3 that there is a disturbing absence of middle level managerial identity. This results partly from a perceived lack of trust on the side of the employers in their managers, particularly in the private sector, and, with particular reference to Government, highly centralised authority structures. Both these factors contribute to an 'identity crisis' among managers, and discourage managerial action to promote productivity.

Another significant weakness identified in Section 4, is the failure to adopt an objective - performance based approach to managing. Insufficient attention is paid to determining clear organisational objectives in response to policy guidelines, and developing measures and standards

of performance. Consequently planning is often misdirected and ineffective and employees activities may not always be oriented towards achieving organisational goals. Moreover, employees do not have performance targets to aim towards, and which can be used to evaluate individual performance.

We have illustrated, in Section 5, how better working methods can make very significant contributions to raising out-put without investment in more capital equipment. Very little effort, however, particularly in Government, is put into devising better working methods and procedures, and few managers are aware of organisation and methods, and work study techniques needed to critically and systematically examine methods and procedures.

Clear objectives, measurable performance standards and the best possible working methods are the frame-work on which to build high levels of productivity. Employees, however, must still be motivated to achieve the required performance, and this can be achieved through linking reward to performance. However, the main payment system in Botswana rewards time rather than results, and there is little incentive to work harder. Moreover, promotion (which is a form of financial reward) is, in practice also based on time (seniority) and thus once again performance and reward are not linked.

The 'identity crisis' facing middle managers is explored in Section 7, where we have tried to show that this lack of clear identity leads to extreme and inconsistent styles of leadership. We have also expressed concern over an increasing lack of respect for managers where such factors as age, and personal characteristics seem to supercede respect for the manager's position.

This is also a factor effecting discipline, but we argue that highly centralised disciplinary systems and lengthy procedures also make a major contribution to a breakdown in discipline. At the beginning of this report we expressed concern over the perceived lack of trust in managers. Highly centralised disciplinary systems are an example of this apparent lack of trust, and seemed to be designed to ensure the manager does not make a wrong decision rather than to aid him in controlling his staff.

Our final section examined the contribution training can make to productivity, and while not intending to detract from current training efforts, we have expressed serious concern for the prevailing training philosophy. This seems us to be based on an assumption that being a developing country Botswana does not need particularly broad based training programmes in the technical and vocational fields. The emphasis is on basic skills and task related skills. We argue against this approach and point out the dangers continuing such a philosophy has on productivity, localisation, and meeting manpower needs. The practice of sending brighter students and employees overseas is also questioned because of its negative impact on local training institutions.

Our overall conclusions, therefore, are that current management practice do little to promote and facilitate higher levels of employee productivity, and may in fact be disincentives to productivity. We should stress that this has been a very general overview of management practice, and conclusions are based on comparatively few observations of an anecdotal nature, and perhaps academic

argument. Our intention has been to highlight areas of concern, and tentatively make suggestions as to how the problem of improving productivity may be tackled, and to make people aware of the role of management, and management action to raise productivity.

Recommendations

The Manpower Productivity sub-committee of NEMIC should be actively involved in promoting productivity by;

- gathering and disseminating information on productivity
- sponsoring research on productivity problems
- establishing national measures of employee productivity
- monitoring Government - private sector relations affecting productivity

The Botswana Employers Federation should play a much more active role in management training by:-

- holding or sponsoring seminars on management techniques
- producing booklets and pamphlets on methods of raising productivity
- offering small employers in particular advice and assistance on ways of improving productivity
- encourage productivity bargaining with trade unions

The Botswana Employers Federation should sponsor and co-ordinate the collection of information on production rates with the view to establishing a standard rate hand-book for Botswana across as many tasks as possible.

The Department of Labour should produce information on productivity and train its staff to give advice on methods of raising productivity, and give increasing attention to management problems.

Business advisory agencies such as BEDU and PFP should provide technical assistance in general management and in particular productivity related management skills.

A nation-wide publicity campaign, organised jointly by the Department of Labour, the Botswana Employers Federation and the Botswana Federation of Trade Unions, should be mounted to make people productivity conscious. (Some suggestions: inter-ministerial typing contest: trench digging competition between parastatal and private sector companies; receptionist of the year).

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Productivity in the Civil Service, under the chairmanship of the Directorate of Personnel should be re-constituted as a standing committee, to review procedures and systems, and in particular examine:-

- a. working hours and the advantages and disadvantages of winter and summer timetables
- b. staggered pay days
- c. further decentralisation of disciplinary powers and streamlining of appeals procedures including BCSA representation in disciplinary cases
- d. other control system such as accounting procedures with the aim of delegating routine decisions

- e. current system of confidential reports with a view to a change to objective - performance linked evaluation
- f. promotion to senior positions, and the advisability of introducing open competition with advertising of posts and interview panels (already advocated by the Civil Servants association)
- g. delegating greater authority to Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department over selection and promotion of lower level employees within approved establishments
- h. permitting Permanent Secretaries to award mid-year increments to reward particularly good performance and the introduction of a system of double increments
- i. increased use of efficiency bars and examination within scales
- j. introduction, where feasible of payment by results wage payment systems for industrial class
- k. giving District Commissioners disciplinary powers over Central Government employees in rural areas

The Directorate of Personnel should, as a matter of urgency, establish an Organisation and Methods Unit to advise Ministries on work study and work measurement. Standard rates of performance should be established where possible.

Heads of Department should be trained on how to introduce management by objectives, linked to performance targets, systems of management. Manpower planning, the manpower budget and allocation of staff should be based on measurable volume of work, and a Department should have to prove its requirements for more staff based on performance and volume of out-put of existing staff.

Immediate attention should be paid to management training, and all employers should be encouraged to incorporate such training in their manpower development programmes. In Government, the recommendation of the 1978 Salaries Review Commission on management training prior to promotion to GA1 (and comparable levels on other scales), should be implemented.

Greater use should be made of management courses offered by local institutions, and efforts made to select more senior employees for such courses.

The process of delegating authority, and finance, for in-service training should be continued and Ministries and Departments should ensure that in selecting employees for training this should be done in accordance with staff development programmes.

The Institute of Development Management should be requested to sponsor seminars on productivity and run more short courses on productivity related management techniques. IDM should also be funded to do research on productivity, and greater use made of its consulting services.

Steps should be taken to guard against the danger inherent in depriving local institutions of the best students and course participants by only using overseas institutions as a last resort.

The current training philosophy should be reviewed particularly in vocational and technical training to ensure a better mix of task and broader based training is established. In this respect the introduction of formal apprenticeship training is essential. The debate on responsibilities for training should be resolved as soon as possible.

Employers should develop payment by results systems, in particular task work and measured day work, and production linked bonus schemes.

The Wages Policy Committee should encourage productivity payment systems even if this means levels of pay may be higher than comparable government levels.

Employers should develop productivity related intra company schemes such as the CTO Safe Driving Awards, (though more generous) and a major hotels' Employee of the Month Scheme.

The Botswana Federation of Trade Unions should advise its affiliates of the benefits and techniques of productivity bargaining and payment by results systems.

The Botswana Civil Servants Association should consider establishing a special section for middle level managers (say GA2 and upwards).



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