



Summary Report of Human Resources Council Meeting

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Environmental Research Center
Cincinnati, Ohio**

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SUMMARY REPORT
OF
HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL MEETING

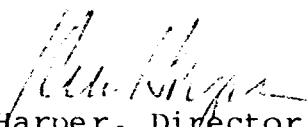
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October 1985

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Human Resources Management

The Cincinnati meeting of the Human Resources Council made it very clear that change is occurring and we are making real progress in a number of areas of human resources management in EPA. In addition to advising and working with the Office of Human Resources Management, one of the most gratifying aspects of the Council is the way in which the members have worked to bring about changes within their own offices.

We are continuing the practice of printing summaries of the presentations and showcases given at the Human Resources Council meetings because we believe the work of the Council is of interest to many employees at EPA. The summary booklet is our means of sharing the ideas and transmitting to others some of the excitement and enthusiasm surrounding the Council. We hope you will find the contents both interesting and useful. If you are considering adapting any of the showcase ideas for use in your Office, you may want to discuss them with the contact person whose name appears at the beginning of each showcase summary.

We are proud of what is happening around EPA and we are confident that the Council will continue to be a positive force.



Kirke Harper, Director
Office of Human Resources
Management



Paul Keough, Chair
Human Resources Council

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ADDRESS BY DR. JOHN H. ZENGER

President, Zenger-Miller, Inc.

Recently, I have been impressed with the human resources achievements of public sector organizations. Unlike the private sector, you have the luxury of looking at things in the long term. Of our public sector clients, I believe EPA has done the most extensive, thoughtful job. Your kind of collaboration is a remarkable accomplishment.

What we're about, and what I think you're about, too, is improving organizations. How can we make people more productive and more satisfied inside organizations? At the same time, how can we make the organization a better place for human beings to live in? We've been talking about participative management for the last 25 years; however, it is my observation that it's only been in the last 4-5 years that we've seen senior line executives really committed to doing something.

For the previous 40 years, management emphasized control. Jobs were designed to be narrow, specialized, and repetitive. We did not reward risk-taking or keep employees well informed; policies were framed in language which came across as adversarial.

In order to discuss the things we can do as human resources professionals and line managers to bring about some dramatic improvement in organizations, we must recognize the fact that workers are different today than they were ten years ago. They are more independent, more dedicated to a profession than loyal to an organization, better educated, more mobile, and more diverse (more women/minorities). They expect to be more involved in decisions, and they want more balance to their lives.

Some of the writings of Tom Peters and others point out that there are groups within organizations that are many times more productive than their counterparts. That happens because when you get groups committed to what they are doing, they can produce at far higher levels. In "From Control to Commitment in the Workplace," (Harvard Business Review, March-April, 1985) Richard Walton says he believes the future involves our moving from an emphasis on control to an emphasis on commitment.

How do you bring about commitment/productivity in the workplace? An employee needs: the freedom to create something and see it through to the end; interest on the part of top management; appreciation from the people around; trust from the boss; a tangible monument to the hard work that's been done; and a sense of camaraderie with the team.

We know what turns people on and what brings about higher levels of productivity, but the challenge seems to be how to get there. We must lift the expectations of our own management about what people can do, lift the expectations of employees about what they can do, and give them the skills and the behaviors to be a lot more effective and productive. They need to be better communicators, so they can talk more forcibly and more intelligently with each other, so they can learn their jobs more rapidly and can find ways to streamline their jobs, be good team members, work effectively with a boss and survive in a large organization where changes occur.

In the last few years, people at the top of organizations have become much more concerned about the culture of the organization, as well as its climate, quality of values and its vision. This is confirmed by actions of top executives, e.g., their increased involvement with people at all levels.

What can we do to help the visions and values permeate the organization?

1. These visions and values need to be well defined. They need to be written down and talked about.
2. Leadership needs to be emphasized. People can manage without really leading, i.e., by exercising control. Our work has shown that people in organizations want to be led, not managed. However, to be successful leaders, managers must get out from behind their desks and set the tone.
3. We can teach people to be leaders. Leadership means that a person creates values through a communication process. Leaders repeat the values that the organization stands for, whereas managers communicate on a "need to know" basis. Leaders develop committed followers. Leaders have high expectations and set a high standard, always want to move to a higher level of performance, and focus attention on crucial issues. Leaders are the link from their group to outside constituencies.
4. Middle managers must start to work toward, rather than resist change. The job of the middle manager is going to change and people in these positions are going to be very frustrated unless we define a real role for them. Their role is fundamentally a role of selecting and developing high quality people. As participative managers, they will become more involved in project teams and task forces which are looking at broader issues.

5. Executives' visions and values will only penetrate through the organization and stay in place if there are reward systems and support systems built in to make that happen.

Historian Arnold Toynbee studied 650 civilizations, looking at the factors responsible for bringing about major cultural change. His conclusion was that he had never seen a society or a culture change in good times because the pride and arrogance of leaders keep change from occurring. Only during times of adversity does major change come about. At that time people will follow new leaders who talk about spiritual qualities.

If things are good today, it doesn't mean they can't be better tomorrow. If we're successful in getting the whole person on the job--heart, hand and mind--and if we have executives with clarity of vision and values, then some wonderful things are going to happen.

ADDRESS BY A. JAMES BARNES, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

University of Cincinnati Faculty Club

Mr. Barnes talked to the group about three main issues: how human resources work fits in with the substantive work of the Agency; the priority of human resources activities in the Agency; and the future of human resources development.

He opened his remarks by saying that the things being done in the human resources area are among the most exciting things going on in the Agency today.

He spoke briefly about the history of EPA and its record of major accomplishments in its short history. The fifteenth anniversary of the establishment of EPA provides a good time to review accomplishments and future directions.

The problems being faced by the Agency today are too complex to approach in the old media-specific way. We need a holistic view of the environment and we need to refocus our approach so that we are managing for environmental results.

The need for high quality people is even greater now than when the agency was started. We have been given the responsibility for dealing with complex problems in which very significant human values are at stake. The issues are immensely complicated and they will require the best efforts of the best people we can develop. These people must also be able to be team players because the issues cannot be solved unilaterally.

Human resources work is not a separate effort outside of the substantive work of the Agency. We must offer our employees the chance to utilize their skills and abilities effectively and to have meaningful careers. This work must be closely linked with the work of the programs. There must be broadscale involvement of the Agency's managers so that the expertise and insights of the most experienced people are applied to the development of our people.

The reassignment of several members of the Senior Executive Service illustrates the need to make human resources changes that reinforce the nature of our substantive program. People were moved into programs where their backgrounds provided skills that are needed now for those programs to move forward. He spoke of the transfers of Henry Longest to Superfund, where Henry's experience in running the delegated construction grants program will give strength to the future development of Superfund; Mike Cook to the Drinking Water program, which reinforces the ties to RCRA and other programs Mike has worked in; and of John Skinner, whose move to R&D will provide that program with a very strong line manager to give a sense of what is needed in the programs.

Mr. Barnes then described the priority he and the Administrator have given to human resources. As one of the Administrator's six management goals, human resources development is one of the major priorities of the Agency. [EPA's managers should devote sufficient time to human resources issues.] The selection, development, training, motivation, and guidance of people is the key function of management.

There is a clear future for human resources development at EPA. In addition to being a top management priority, there is a grass roots element to it that will assure its future. The function has the opportunity to blaze new trails for other areas of the Agency. One example of this is the work that is being done in communicating about human resources activities. This work is showing the rest of the Agency how to use old and new mechanisms to communicate inside the Agency, never an easy task. Another area is technology transfer. The effort to get human resources activities more widely understood by showcasing the work people are now doing has demonstrated that there is a great deal of value in sharing the knowledge we already have. New isn't always best.

Mr. Barnes concluded his remarks by saying that he is genuinely excited by the things he has seen the Human Resources Council and the people in this area doing and starting. He is confident that we will look back on this time in EPA's history and see the human resources work as a significant achievement. EPA will be seen as an organization that made itself a more attractive place to work by taking seriously the career needs of its employees.

ADDRESS BY HOWARD M. MESSNER

Assistant Administrator for
Administration and Resources Management

Howard Messner began his remarks by paying tribute to the man for whom the Cincinnati facility is named, former EPA Official, Andrew W. Breidenbach. Howard recalled that two and a half years ago in Cincinnati he challenged every EPA employee to do something that would contribute to the reinvigoration of what he considers the best Agency in the federal government. The 1983 National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) survey was the starting point for that goal. Employees' participation in that survey and the positive results of a recent follow-up survey by NAPA show that we are moving in the right direction.

Going on to discuss the Human Resources Council, he said the idea behind it is to take the various skills, viewpoints and backgrounds of the best of our employees and let them become the self-generating leadership for this Agency. We have put together a group of people under Paul Keough's and Kathy Callahan's leadership and started on a path of discovery. The goal is to make it possible for each one of our 13,000 employees to live up to his/her work potential and to make their work meaningful. We do not have the answers; however, through participation and intelligent choice good things can happen. The Council is the investment in the future direction of the programs of this Agency.

Howard highlighted three findings from the NAPA resurvey which he believes are significant and which make EPA employees stand out. The findings are: (1) a fourteen percent increase in the number of employees who believe EPA is doing a good job of protecting the environment; (2) a ten percent increase in employee's views that they are proud of the high standards for performance set at EPA; (3) a twelve percent increase in the willingness of employees to do more than is required to get the job done.

As a follow up to this last point Howard referred to a recent nationwide survey, Putting the Work Ethic to Work: A Public Agenda Report on Restoring America's Competitive Vitality by Daniel Yankelovich and John Immerwahr. The report says that workers' ability and desire to do more at their jobs is in the 30% range; in our Agency 70% of employees are willing to do more. He emphasized that we are in very good shape in this institution, and we are at the stage of getting on with the work. The quality of performance is now at a level that can sustain the issues being placed on it. It is also important for us to get out of the way of people who are motivated and allow them to do their work with reasonable guidance.

It is easy in government to blame those above you and point out their flaws, and we sometimes find in our employees a tendency to lay responsibility on others. Some of that is alright. However, too much of it diminishes employees' taking responsibility for themselves and their institution. As the Council acts as a catalyst for new approaches, it should think about some old ideas like performance standards and the way they are enforced. The federal government is not a disciplinarian. If we are going to have standards of quality, Council members have to be the ones to set them, to protect them, guard them, and bring pressure on those who are not performing.

The Human Resources Council is viewed as a positive, creative, constructive group of people. However, it also has another responsibility; it must deal with the behavioral and performance problems in this Agency, a responsibility shared with the Executive Resources Board. There is no greater discipline for a system than self-discipline; there is no greater ethic or standard than one developed and enforced by all the people who populate the institution.

Howard also thinks the greater government community suffers to some degree because it lacks cooperation across agency lines. As this Agency progresses and more and more people discover what is being done here, there will be an opportunity and perhaps a responsibility to share the results with others. We particularly hope we reach those who yearn for and would respond to creative outlets and need some counter-culture of progress to point to as an example of what they can do in their own agency. Howard serves on the President's Council on Management Improvement, which will be holding workshops all over the country to share ideas, in much the same way that the HRC has. He encouraged those who have a chance to talk to employees in other agencies to tell them what is going on at EPA as a means of providing some very positive counter-thrusts for the dourness in other agencies. The enthusiasm at EPA is contagious.

Howard Messner concluded by saying he respects the Council and what it has accomplished, and he appreciates that Lee Thomas and Jim Barnes have taken these early efforts and made them central to their own program.

ADDRESS BY NATHANIEL SCURRY

Director, Office of Civil Rights

Nat Scurry began by defining the role of the Office of Civil Rights(OCR) as having primary responsibility for ensuring that women and minorities are afforded equal opportunity to participate fully at all levels of the Agency's workforce. However, he sees human resources as the responsibility of all managers and supervisors.

Before Nat became Director, OCR maintained an exclusive ownership of programs and activities designed to increase full participation of women and minorities. After Nat became Director OCR moved toward a collegial approach through: 1) top management hands-on involvement in setting broad policies 2) negotiating specific goals with senior managers and 3) making implementation of agreements the responsibility of managers and supervisors. He pointed out that this was a radical departure from the adversarial approach that existed, previously.

OCR's ultimate goal is to integrate Civil Rights objectives into the fabric of all human resource development policies, programs and activities. For the second consecutive year, EPA exceeded its overall affirmative hiring goals:

- ° Fiscal Year 85 Agency goal was 52%; Agency achieved 61%, for a success rate of 121%
- ° Narrowed the gap from 20%-15% between the numbers of women and minorities in the civilian labor force and their representation in the EPA workforce.

Our success explodes the myth that we cannot locate and attract highly qualified women and minorities. Through creative means, such as the Minority Apprenticeship Program in Cincinnati, we can attract and hire top flight women and minority candidates.

Switching from the Good News, Nat said, "The toughest part of the job lies ahead. The task before us as an Agency and as major partners in developing and implementing human resources policies is to resolve to implement all aspects of Affirmative Action." To demonstrate the need for this resolve, he cited the following:

- ° Minorities and women comprise about one-half of our total workforce, yet they occupy 88% of Grades 5-8 and 95% of Grades 1-4.
- ° Minorities and women comprise only 13% of EPA's SES positions, an almost complete reversal. Between the extremes, women and minorities constitute 46% of Grades 9-12, and 24% of Grades 13-15.

- ° Even when one excludes technical and clerical jobs, in professional and administrative categories, the pattern is very similar and begs for continued attention.

Nat intentionally selected the data to make the point that EPA must put together a long-term agenda with specific goals and objectives to substantially change this disparity. He believes it can be changed through a combination of external hiring and internal movement. External hiring alone will not get us there. Last year only 14% of our professional and administrative vacancies were filled from the outside; that pattern will probably continue. Therefore, we must look to internal movement as offering the greatest opportunity. He is particularly concerned about the movement of women/minorities into grades 13-15. Since there is a significant pool of women and minorities in grades 9-12, we might wish to target that population for OHRM initiatives.

Next, Nat focused on creating a supportive environment in which all employees, but particularly women and minorities, can make the greatest contribution to the Agency mission. The areas he addressed were: 1), role models 2), participation in decision-making and 3), attitudes and perceptions.

A look at the Agency leadership shows no minority representation at the top three levels in our regions. It is the same at the three major labs; at headquarters there are no minorities in AA or Deputy AA slots. Minority women must ask themselves if there is any hope of becoming an SES, since there are none in the 200+ SES Corps. Of the 4% minority men, at least one-third are occupying staff support functions--jobs that ambitious chemists, biologists, etc., would probably rather not occupy. White females are about 10% of the SES Corps. Of the 40-50 Division Director or equivalent positions in the regions, less than five are held by women and minorities. At headquarters about 12 such jobs are encumbered by women and minorities.

Going on to challenge the Council Members, he asked, "How many of you are comfortable in communicating with persons of a different race, sex, national origin, or even age? How often do you consult with them and seek their input?" He highlighted a number of positive changes that have begun to occur:

- ° Region III has a training program for Secretarial/Clerical staff, and has EPA's only participant in OPM's Women's Executive Leadership Program
- ° PMD designing Career Enhancement for Staffing Specialists
- ° Region V "Adopt a School" and Faculty Intern Program with historically Black Colleges and Universities.

- ° Increased support for upward mobility programs where a 1% goal has been set by the Administrator
- ° Special Emphasis Programs for Women, Hispanics, and Blacks in every region and major lab
- ° Joint Conference on the Environment with Atlanta University by Region IV, focusing on minorities and women.
- ° EEO complaints down for second consecutive year; settlements are up.

Nat is also concerned about and recommends that as we establish mechanisms to implement policies and initiatives, we ensure the presence of a woman and a minority on every taskforce and advisory committee, expanding existing ones if they do not include a woman or minority. He also suggested that if women, Hispanics and Blacks are not represented on the Council we might want to expand the Council's membership.

Nat Scurry concluded his presentation by making several points. As SESers are rotated and new employees enter the ranks, we need to insure the inclusion and expansion of numbers of minorities and women. We must continue the Agency's Civil Rights policy which has attracted minorities and women to EPA's workforce in professional and administrative positions at unprecedented rates. We should also look at internal movement, especially promotions to grades 13-15. We must avoid placing women and minorities in token positions or in areas where they will fail. Assure yourselves that they can stand scrutiny, that they are qualified to serve and contribute, but, don't require that they "walk on water," when the only critical skill is the ability to swim. His final point was that EPA is a regulatory Agency working in the public interest to administer programs that focus on communities at the state and local levels. Those programs affect minorities and women who live in the heavily populated urban areas and are therefore exposed to special health problems. Shouldn't we provide minorities and women a more responsible role to solve those problems that affect and impact on them? We have an opportunity to do so.

DISCOVER

DISCOVER for organizations is a micro-computer based career development system designed to help employees become aware of and improve their suitability to the organization. They are able to plan their careers in concert with the organization's needs. DISCOVER prepares employees to take on more responsibilities for their own career development. Users gain awareness of self and of career opportunities. They become more motivated, and better able to set and reach goals.

DISCOVER combines sound career development theory with the advantages of today's microcomputer and software technology. Assessments, career information, and planning activities are all offered on the computer.

DISCOVER has five modules:

1. Understanding Career Development and Change

The first half of this module helps users evaluate their levels of job satisfaction. This is done with interactive exercises at the computer. The first exercise provides employees with a Career Development Quotient, and the second provides a satisfaction/dissatisfaction profile for the past 24 months. Each exercise is interpreted by the system, and a summary is presented.

The second half of the module presents a 21-item questionnaire. This helps employees identify the career stages they may be facing. These stages include moving from a technical to a management position, planning for retirement, and feeling plateaued.

2. Assessing Yourself

This module offers users three separate activities that are relevant to assessing oneself. The first is a 60-item interest inventory that is completed and interpreted at the computer. This inventory relates the employee's interests to working with data, ideas, people, and things.

In the second activity, users state three significant accomplishments, and the computer assists them in identifying the skills used to achieve each of them. Completion of these activities provides the employee with a list of position titles related to interests or skills or both. If the system has the localization option, specific position titles within the organization are provided.

In the third activity, 17 work-related values are defined, and the user is asked to rate each on its level of importance in work. DISCOVER provides a summary of the user's stated values and helps the employee relate these to the level of satisfaction attained in past jobs.

3. Gathering Information

Planning for career changes involves the acquisition of accurate and timely information about the organization. This module helps the user to develop a personal Information Needs Profile. On the basis of this profile, the system directs the user to appropriate information within the module. One section teaches employees how to do an organizational study, using both formal and information data sources. Another section compares the individual's assessment of an ideal work environment with the perceived present work environment.

4. Making Decisions

This module addresses goal setting and decisionmaking. Six distinct types of career changes are described--moving up, moving down, moving across, enriching, moving out, and exploring. The employee is asked to select the kind(s) of change which may be appropriate. Instruction is provided about decisionmaking and goal setting, and an exercise to identify personal decision-making style is offered. The user writes one or more specific goals related to type(s) of change selected. Finally, the individual chooses the goal of highest priority. This is done using a decision matrix, which utilizes the self-information acquired in Module 2, ASSESSING YOURSELF.

5. Taking Action

The user is now ready to take action toward the selected goal by analyzing the factors for and against it. DISCOVER assists the employee in finding ways to minimize obstacles and optimize strengths in pursuit of the priority goal. A specific time-oriented action plan is developed. Optional assistance is provided with skills or information needed to accomplish next steps, such as instruction in job-seeking skills and locating places for further education or training. In localized versions, specific information may be given about tuition reimbursement plans, company training programs, and local educational opportunities.

DISCOVER can be modified to portray an organization's specific employment data and needs. The system can print information from any screen display, allowing the user to keep a reference copy of key information. It will provide summary reports, allowing offices to monitor the extent and patterns of the system's use.

REGION III ENVIRONMENTAL SKILLS UPGRADE PROGRAM

Region III has designed a skills upgrade program that is intended to solve recruitment problems and assist in achieving affirmative action goals while stimulating the development of employees who wish to advance into technical work. Historically, professional recruitment has been increasingly difficult, with engineer and scientist candidates declining job offers and technical employees leaving because their work is more administrative or legalistic than they would like. Upward mobility has been useful in moving women and minority group members into higher graded positions, but upward mobility positions are becoming more difficult to establish.

The target candidates of the program are the same as those for traditional upward mobility jobs - employees who are dead-ended at lower-graded positions, who tend to be women and/or minority group members. The program's intent is to provide these employees with developmental opportunities that will allow them to progress toward the professional occupations, the immediate target position being that of Environmental Protection Specialist.

This specialization was chosen because its qualifications requirements are less stringent than those of professional or scientific series. It has no positive education requirement, and is flexible in terms of substitution of education for experience.

Region III has worked out an agreement with Temple University which provides for college coursework that is relevant to environmentalist work. The curriculum planned consists of a core of sciences, environmental studies, technical writing and computer technology. Temple has agreed to give a six-session course in how to study and to give placement tests and individual counselling to participants. They will also develop specialized courses based on the recommendations of a steering committee of program specialists. Courses (both core and specialized) will be offered on-site after work hours; those that are relevant to environmental protection work will be funded by the agency. Participants may take courses leading to a certificate in Environmental Studies awarded jointly by Temple and EPA. They may supplement these with courses which fulfill requirements for an Associate's Degree or Bachelor's Degree.

The educational work will be supplemented by rotational assignments and details that will allow for practical application of classroom theory and a realistic job preview of EPS work. Entry into the program will not be competitive; instead, any interested employee may join. Commitment to the program will be signified by a participant's successful completion of two courses.

Essentially, this allows employees to take the courses offered without forcing their participation in the program, while eliminating the need to deny anyone's participation.

Benefits envisioned for the region include, at the very least, a better-educated workforce. Potentially, the program will provide a solid, well-qualified applicant pool for an increasingly useful position. Availability of qualified EPS candidates will allow better position management, lower the average grade, lessen the reliance on professional recruitment, reduce turnover, and improve internal movement and upward mobility.

These, of course, also function as benefits for the employees of Region III. In addition, the program provides convenient developmental opportunities for interested employees. Although it does not guarantee advancement, the program allows employees to develop their potential in preparation to advance, while at the same time giving them credit toward a possible college degree.

Presented by: Floyd Winsett Region 10 National Field Rep.
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HRM ACCOMPLISHMENT-A TEAM EFFORT

The sixty-two seminars I have conducted in the past eight months represent a team effort by a number of the people at this conference. This three-tiered program includes:

For senior managers: "Toward Excellence" A program that serves as a catalyst for senior managers committed to turning the idea of excellence into a reality in their organization.

For supervisors: "Supervision" A program to provide first and second line supervisors with the basic skills needed to perform effectively day to day.

For all employees: "Effective People Skills" A program that develops individual understanding of how their own behavior impacts others, develops skill in identifying the needs of others, and how to develop positive interaction skills and cooperation.

I would like to share with you the ingredients that went into this HRM accomplishment.

CLIMATE: Many of us here have been pushing human resource issues, mostly uphill, for the past ten or twelve years in EPA. Our efforts have met with varying degrees of minor success. The past 18 months or so it has been more like riding the wagon downhill or running to keep up with the interest and concerns management have with our work force. The big difference, and one I feel OHRM is responsible for, is a major positive change in the climate toward human resources. It is this positive climate that makes it possible for what I've been doing, and I think for most of the efforts that have been "showcased" this past year.

COMMITMENT: It is this positive climate that has led to a management awareness and commitment to support new HRM issues and programs. For example: Ernesta Barnes, RA for Region 10, not only provided encouragement when I requested to teach Effective People Skills full time, but also provided 100% of the ceiling and salary for 1984 and 50% for 1985; Don Ehreth, Deputy AA for ORD, gave his full support to implement a three level program in HRM for ORD, Toward Excellence for Senior Management, Supervision for all ORD supervisors and Effective People Skills for all levels of employees in ORD. Also, 50% of the ceiling and salary was provided by ORD for 1985 and 1986. Office directors, lab directors and other headquarters and regional managers not only requested training for their people but also attended the seminars themselves and funded travel and material costs.

COORDINATION: Personnel Officers Art Sandoval, Mike Watkins and Hector Suarez have coordinated these seminars and have trained their own staff to conduct the Supervision program. RTP is also conducting the Toward Excellence program for some of its managers.

RESOURCES: No program can get off the ground without someone willing to take the risk to say "I think this is a good program" and provide funds to purchase it. Don Sadler is responsible for the purchase of the Effective People Skills and Toward Excellence modules . He and his staff provided additional support that made many of my efforts possible.

DELIVERY: With the kind of team effort outlined above, this part is easy, a far cry from just a few years ago. These ingredients make for "ongoing" HRM accomplishments.

ANDREW W. BRIEDENBACH ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER
MINORITY RESEARCH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Since the summer of 1980, the AWBERC has participated in a Minority Research Apprenticeship Program with considerable success. This past summer, 35 Black, Hispanic, and Asian students from Cincinnati area high schools and colleges participated in an 8 week workstudy program, gaining work experience and exposure to scientific careers. The students support and supplement ongoing research projects within the laboratories and offices of the Center. EPA scientists and engineers volunteered to be mentors and to work one-to-one with the students.

The students compete to be accepted in the program. Approximately 120 students representing 27 high schools applied for the 1985 Program. A series of aptitude tests, interest surveys, and interviews are used to screen and evaluate the students. Students chosen are highly motivated, extremely talented, and have a very high aptitude for the sciences. Within weeks the students have mastered the basic skills and almost without exception have become contributing members of the work force.

The program grew out of a White House initiative designed to stimulate broader interest in science and engineering within the minority community and to increase the number and proficiency of minority students entering technical occupations. High priority is given to assignment of each student to a mentor who agrees to serve not only as a Supervisor but also as a role model and advisor.

The Program is administered through a cooperative agreement between EPA and the University of Cincinnati's College of Engineering and the Office of Minority Programs and Services. Through the cooperative agreement, the University organizes and implements a student selection process, pays the necessary salaries, develops and implements an enrichment program and provides an evaluation of the overall program.

Despite severe budget cut-backs and constraints, the Cincinnati laboratories and programs have continued to support the program - it being the only one maintained for the six years since its inception. During this period 262 apprentice positions have been made available. Funds are prorated between the participating laboratories. The total cost of the 1985 program is \$83,210. New students are paid at a rate of \$100.00 per week. Experienced students receive minimum wage.

WORKING

The Region I commitment to a supervisory-management training program focused our attention on the management skills of the work place at large. For several years we have recognized the need to provide management training and career development opportunities for our senior level professionals. The non-supervisory GS 12's and 13's are the target group that will compete for most of the new regional supervisory positions. The decision to provide management training for all of our senior professionals required us to train one third of the existing work force (165 employees).

We have successfully used the Zenger-Miller SUPERVISION Program for all of our incumbent supervisors and managers since September 1984. The selection of a subsequent Zenger-Miller training program WORKING provided us with the opportunity to establish training continuity and reinforce the skills learned in the SUPERVISION Program.

WORKING is a value driven skills program designed to improve the individual's ability to resolve issues with others, deal with changes, participate in group meetings, be a team player, take on a new assignment, keep the boss informed, provide positive responses to negative situations, etc. The program is designed to be offered in the work place and the sessions are facilitated by our own employees. In Region I twelve of our supervisors and managers are conducting the monthly sessions of the WORKING program. The role of the facilitator provides our supervisors with the opportunity to learn new skills, interface with senior employees from all the regional programs and reinforce the skills they are learning in the SUPERVISION program. The program offers our senior employees the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to communicate and participate effectively. We are confident that these skills will increase their job satisfaction in their present positions as well as prepare them for higher levels of responsibility in the future. The program is voluntary and we have almost 100% of our target audience attending the monthly sessions.

WORKING, like SUPERVISION, is an attempt to apply practical skills that will help employees to learn how to get the best work from others as well as how to service other people who rely on them for their work. The emphasis in both of these programs is "to learn that cooperation, communication and contribution, not manipulation and gamesmanship get faster and longer lasting results."

REGION V ADOPT-A-SCHOOL PROGRAM UPDATE
SCHOOL YEAR 1985-86

In May, 1984 EPA Region V initiated an Adopt-a-School partnership with Washington High School in Chicago. The objective of the partnership is to support instruction in academic skills and enrich the educational program at the school by utilizing the talent, idea power, and unique human resources of EPA volunteer staff.

During school year 1984-85 a number of interesting projects took place including the following:

- A team of EPA biologists spent a week with Washington High School students examining potential environmental impacts of the proposed 1992 World's Fair.
- EPA office staff were encouraged to save their aluminum cans to be donated to Washington High School Can Recycling Program. The funds received from the recycling program are used for summer and senior students scholarship program.
- Several EPA engineers assisted students in developing school science fair projects. One student's science project advanced to the School District's finals.
- An Environmental Engineer in the Air Management Division taught aeronautics and meteorology to honor physic classes consisting of juniors and seniors.
- Another adopt-a-school project involved explaining to students the damage caused by automobile fuel switching and emission-control tampering. By explaining the damage caused by fuel-switching and tampering, EPA hopes to help lower the incidence of these activities in the Chicago area.

Planned activities for school year 1985-86 include:

- Assist students in developing science fair projects to compete in the Chicago Area Annual Science Fair Program.
- EPA staff will participate in Washington High School's Career Day Program.

- EPA staff will be conducting tutoring for students who are at pre-algebra level as well as tutoring students in Earth Science and General Science classes.
- EPA Regional Attorneys will provide classroom instruction to Business Education classes. Subject matter will cover how environmental laws affect business operations.
- EPA Public Affairs staff have volunteered to assist Washington High School students in developing a school newspaper.
- Washington High School has acquired personal computers and is in the process of developing a computer science curriculum. EPA volunteers with computer expertise will be assisting the school in developing the computer science curriculum.
- EPA volunteers will assist in expanding the school's Social Studies curriculum. The EPA Master Plan for Improving Water Quality in the Grand Calumet River/Indiana Harbor Canal will be used as a tool and serve as a foundation for a unit on multi-media environmental concerns.

FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM - REGION I

The purpose of the Federal Women's Program is to ensure equality of employment and advancement opportunities for women. It is integrally related to Human Resources and Personnel Management, as well as to the Civil Rights Programs of the Agency.

The Federal Women's Program achieves a triple purpose: it brings women together around common concerns and creates strong inter-program networking; it broadens awareness and understanding of attitudinal bias and institutional inhibitions which face women within the EPA; and it lays a conceptual framework for sharing of power, for genuine organizational and structural changes--ultimately for full participation of women, with men, in the workforce.

The Program has initiated a Needs Assessment Program which will serve as a model for the Agency; it is co-funded by the Office of Human Resources Management, the Office of Civil Rights, and Region I. This one-year program will be carried out in two phases: phase one will include regional and headquarters interviews, from which a questionnaire will be developed, reviewed and distributed. In September the results of this survey will be presented in a number of briefings. Phase two will include programs such as workshops, forums for discussion, as well as training and will take place over a six month period. The forums will address key areas of the interviews, the questionnaires and the responses. The Needs Assessment Program will conclude with a written evaluation of program effectiveness and recommendations for further program development.

The Federal Women's Program is a diverse program addressing a variety of careers within EPA. As such, it includes the Secretarial Advisory Council (S.A.C.) as well as the Women in Science and Engineering (W.I.S.E.) Program. It includes people from all walks of life at EPA and fosters networking and communication across programs and throughout the hierarchy of the organization. Thus, the Program strives to foster interpersonal communication and well-being, as well as professional development and opportunity.

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OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

In November 1984, the Office of the Comptroller (OC) established a Human Resources Task Force chaired by John Sandy, Deputy Director of the Financial Management Division. The Task Force included staff from a variety of grade levels and positions in all three OC Divisions (Budget, Finance, and Resource Management). The genesis of the Task Force was an OC management retreat during which concerns were expressed regarding the development of our staff into an effective "team." Specifically, it was determined that there was no uniform way of integrating new staff into the office, no clear policy in support of career development, and no centralized method of identifying training needs.

The Task Force had several purposes: (1) to encourage training and career development activities in the Office of the Comptroller; (2) to establish a simple and clear process for identifying the training and career development needs of all OC employees; (3) to educate supervisors and employees on training procedures and opportunities; (4) to increase mobility among the three OC Divisions and among different job categories; and (5) to provide an opportunity for staff of the three Divisions to "network" and produce a useful cross-Divisional product.

The Task Force met frequently throughout the fall of 1984 and the first half of 1985. After initial brainstorming meetings to identify the problems and potential solutions, specific tasks were divided up among members of the Task Force with the intent of producing four specific products:

- (1) Development of a Manual which would state OC policy on training and career development, and provide employees and supervisors with specific guidance on training.
- (2) Development of a Comptroller Intern Program designed to bring in new blood, provide mobility for OC employees, and develop future managers who would have the benefit of experience in all three OC Divisions.
- (3) Identification of networking opportunities among the Divisions and creation of an OC newsletter to provide news and announcements about the activities of OC employees.
- (4) Management of a contract to conduct team-building sessions for OC managers, analysts and secretaries.

By mid-1985, all four products had been developed. Their major features are as follows:

Career Development Manual - A brief, concise document was issued setting forth an OC policy on career development. The

Manual includes a one-page form which all employees are to complete each May -- intentionally separate from the annual Performance Evaluation process. This "Personal Career Development Plan" will list training and other desired developmental activities. Plans are for these forms to be collected centrally in OC to provide management with a broad view of training needs and enable group training to be arranged to conserve resources.

The Manual also contains several Appendices to help employees develop their Plans. Appendix A lists generically the major job positions in OC (such as Budget Analyst, Voucher Examiner, and Branch Chief), the types of skills required in those positions, and the types of training that will help employees acquire or improve those skills. Appendix B provides a description of the types of career development activities employees should consider, including "non-standard" activities such as rotational assignments, projects with other branches, participation in Task Forces, and meetings and seminars outside of EPA. Appendix C lists specific courses and sources of training by subject area such as management, computer skills, and secretarial skills. Appendix D describes the process for requesting and approving training.

Upon completion of the Manual, members of the Task Force conducted a briefing for all OC supervisors on the activities of the Task Force and the purpose and requirements of the Manual.

Comptroller Intern Program - Working with staff of the Office of Human Resources Management and Office of Personnel, the Task Force developed a proposed Intern Program. General procedures and Position Descriptions appropriate for internships in the three OC Divisions have been drafted and reviewed by Personnel, and are expected to be announced in the fall of 1985. The program is designed to bring in candidates from within or outside OC at the GS-5, 7 or 9 level, provide them with a variety of rotational assignments and training courses for several years, and ultimately place them in a permanent position in one of the OC Divisions.

OC Newsletter and Networking - Several issues of an informal newsletter have been issued to date. Reaction has been very positive and employees in all three Divisions have contributed. Also, OC staff have arranged a number of "meet your colleagues" brown bag lunches, as well as subject-oriented lunches which have been informative and well attended.

Teambuilding Sessions - Throughout 1984 and 1985, a contractor conducted sessions in which a large number of OC staff participated. These included a session on communications between staff and managers, another on communications between secretaries and supervisors, and a planning session for managers to identify cross-Divisional projects and priorities for 1986.

SES AND EXECUTIVE RESOURCES:
A PROGRESS REPORT, OCTOBER 18, 1985

The SES and Executive Resources staff, headed by David R. Alexander, is one of the two units in the Office of Human Resources Management. To assure high quality managerial resources for the Agency now and in the future, "SESERU" develops policies and programs affecting the Agency's supervisors, managers, and executives. The staff also provides the full range of personnel services to members of the Senior Executive Service.

In 1985, one of SESERU's most notable accomplishments was the conceptualization and initiation of FAME -- a Framework for Achieving Managerial Excellence. This program, which will take three years or more to fully implement, focuses on three key processes to drive the quality of the Agency's managerial workforce: recruitment and selection, training and development, and performance and rewards. SESERU and the 50-60 Agency managers assisting in the development of FAME will be integrating a set of criteria including managerial skills, personal effectiveness characteristics, and a mix of a varied career experiences into the three processes.

The FAME program is well underway. Over 50 managers and personnel experts have agreed to work on the FAME project, and met in September to get started. Senior officials have been briefed and are in full support of FAME; in fact it is one of the Administrator's top human resource priorities. Already the FAME criteria are being used as requirements for SES positions and in the performance appraisal process. Plans are to incorporate the criteria into all supervisory and managerial job requirements, vacancy announcements, applicant ratings and performance agreements. The criteria were used to develop a mandatory course for new supervisors, and are shaping similar courses for new and incumbent managers and executives. This will continue through the development of a full environmental management curriculum. Managerial excellence -- defined by the FAME criteria -- are being used as the basis for rewards for the Agency's supervisors, managers, and executives.

SESERU has accomplished many other things during 1985:

- (1) Issued two important policies -- SES Pay and SES Sabbaticals;
- (2) Continued strengthening the Presidential Management Intern Program;

- (3) Continued the SES Forums -- a series of lunchtime seminars featuring stimulating speakers;
- (4) Began development of the SES Information Bank, an automated system for matching senior executives and jobs;
- (5) Supported the Performance Review Board in its efforts to improve the SES performance appraisal and bonus/rewards processes;
- (6) Began revisions to the SES Candidate Development Program;
- (7) Cut the backlog of SES recruitment actions in half;
- (8) Brokered reassignments for underutilized executives thus reducing that group from 45 to 4;
- (9) Contacted all current and former SES members entitled to backpay (resulting from a recent government-wide court order) to speed the OPM refund process; and
- (10) Conducted a study of how the Agency is allocating SES positions.

SESERU recognizes the importance of communications and broad-based support for institutionalizing these programs. Through its weekly mailings and "SES Grams," SESERU has tried to keep members of the SES informed. Wide distribution of a FAME concept paper and a special Management Memo devoted to FAME have started familiarizing EPA managers with FAME. Finally, the FAME Advisory Committee and Task Force, the Executive Resources Board, and the Performance Review Board have been avenues of two-way communications and support.

Presented by: Mary Lou Melley Team Members: Kenn Cones & Geoff Lewis FTS 382-3311
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WORKFORCE PLANNING FOR FY 1986

The Workforce Management Unit has as its focus the set of all employees in EPA. We are working to improve three aspects of the employees: the employee and his or her own career - in career management; the employee and his or her job - in workforce planning; and the motivation of the employee as a member of the EPA community - organizational development/effectiveness.

The Workforce Planning Team has been working on the fit between the employee and his or her job. How does a person fit the job? Is the choice of a job left entirely to chance? Is it like taking a number and seeing what luck will bring you?. The team has defined the workforce planning goal as having the right person in the right job at the right time.

The overall objectives of workforce planning are two-fold: for the Agency - the optimal management of human resources; for the employees - to be skilled and highly motivated.

In the workforce planning process, there are four major steps. One of the hardest steps is for managers to describe what the short and long term future holds, what will be the tasks to perform and what skills will be needed to perform those tasks; in other words, what kind of workforce will be needed. The next step is to describe the skills of the employees on board. The third step is the analysis of the differences between what the Agency needs and what it has. And finally, a plan to provide for the future skills by "reskilling" the workforce, by hiring strategies and by staffing plans.

After a number of months of research and interviewing, the Workforce Planning Team produced in August 1985 a Draft Strategy for Workforce Planning in EPA. It contains a review of related workforce initiatives in EPA, a data profile of Agency employees, a summary of trends for the next few years, and specific Agency workforce planning activities such as the effort in Region IV last year. It also contains the results of interviews with twenty Federal agencies and a review of private sector human resource documents.

From the information gathered, the team has defined the following four alternatives for Agency workforce planning:

Issue management involves study and resolution of problems on a case-by-case basis, with the analysis being a personnel operations function.

Manpower planning provides workload and productivity indicators for all activities and relates FTEs to these indicators.

Local workforce planning encompasses the standard approach and is initiated by a particular problem needing resolution. There is a high degree of commitment from those managers involved, and it results in individual employees being reskilled, to ensure they have the skills to meet the needs of the organization for the next few years. An example would be the Region IV effort.

Comprehensive human resource management combines much valid information about the employees, their skills and experiences and career goals, with valid information about jobs, about positions, and occupations, including the knowledge, skills and abilities required for those jobs. This results in a better match of people to jobs, better career management, stronger accountability in the management of resources, easier succession planning, and a very good tool for strategic planning of the workforce.

For workforce planning to succeed, there must be an expressed need for it, strong management commitment for it, substantial and valid information on people and jobs, and staff dedicated to using the system for better management of human resources. Ideally, workforce planning should be part of the Agency's human resource planning process, adding faces to the FTEs in the budget process.

In FY 1986, the workforce planning team will be taking the next steps to see how workforce planning can be implemented at EPA.

We have written a task order and project approach for a workforce planning pilot for the Superfund program. It will help them determine what kind of activities and skills they will be needing in the next three to five years, what their current workforce looks like, and what hiring and training strategies they should have to prepare for the future.

We are working with the Office of Water Regulations and Standards at Headquarters to help them prepare the Regional workforce for more complex wasteload allocation tasks.

In addition there are other projects in the planning stage which are designed to initiate employee interest and communication about his/her desires of obtaining a job or a temporary assignment and having easy access to information about job opportunities.

From these projects we hope to arrive at a workforce planning methodology that will work in EPA, additional employee information and training and staffing plans for the participating programs. After evaluating these projects, we will be able to more clearly define Agency workforce planning.

Presented by: Kenneth L. Wright Team Members: Sandy Bingham & Carolyn Scott FTS 382-3311

CAREER MANAGEMENT TEAM

OHRM's Career Management Team developed several initiatives during fiscal year 1985. Many of these initiatives were shared with attendees at the Hunt Valley Human Resources Planning Conference in November 1985. The team's initiatives dealt with conducting methodologically sound research in Human Resources to identify data appropriate for use in a Career Management Program.

The project, SCIENTIFIC and TECHNICAL JOB ANALYSIS STUDY, has progressed through the data collection phase. This included the review of a representative sample of 450 position descriptions, identification of over 340 tasks performed by employees in the Environmental, Physical Science, and Chemistry occupations. A series of subject matter expert panels were held in six locations including Headquarters, and the Regions, to review the initial task list and cull from it a listing of the most frequently performed generic tasks for these occupations. This was followed by the development and pilot testing of a task inventory survey which was mailed to the 1700 employees in these occupations. Survey responses are being loaded into a computer and analyzed to determine if the responses are representative of these occupations, organizations and grade levels.

Once this data is determined to be representative, several reports will be generated to aid OHRM in the development of appropriate guidance to aid employees in these occupations in their career development. This information will be shared with the Scientific and Technical Careers Advisory Committee and other interested employee groups prior to launching a prototype Career Development Activity for these employees.

A second phase of this study deals with a review of the state of CAREER DEVELOPMENT with emphasis on the public sector. A draft paper on this subject is being reviewed by OHRM to determine sufficiency of the document and applicability and linkage to the job task data. We expect this will result in a practical and useful process for career planning at EPA, beginning with Scientific and Technical occupations. We also hope this data will prove useful to OHRM in clearly defining dual career paths for these employees as well.

The third part of this study will result in the demonstration of the JOB TRAK SYSTEM, a computerized job matching system. The contractor is developing a coding plan to code SF 171s (government applications/employee qualification statements) into the Job Trak system. Tasks from the job analysis study will also be coded into the system along with job descriptions. The computer will then

produce a list of employees who are qualified for the particular position. As this comes into operation, OHRM will be able to demonstrate a computerized job matching system and examine its utility to EPA for staffing positions.

The Career Management Team has also been involved in other initiatives this fiscal year and the following briefly summarizes them. The design and conduct of the HUNT VALLEY HUMAN RESOURCES PLANNING CONFERENCE was the responsibility of the Career Management Team. At that conference OHRM provided the basis for establishment of the Human Resources Council. We reviewed OHRM responsibilities of serving as a catalyst for Agency Human Resource activities. We also discussed our commitment to this effort, examined the ideal work environment and constructed a charter for the Council.

Beyond this and the job analysis study, a member of the career management team served on a major prototype study titled the ANN ARBOR RETENTION STUDY. OHRM introduced the Survey of Organizations (SOO) for use in this study. An internal task group has been appointed to deal with the broad umbrella issues faced by the organization and the Office Director has committed himself to moving Ann Arbor to a better balance of people with concern for output.

Other initiatives include the revised TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT, the EPA INSTITUTE, the DISCOVER self instructional career development program, PROTOTYPE ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS including pilots in OPPE (Managing for Inspired Performance) and ODW (Managing Relationships at Work). Finally the Career Management Team has been responsible for setting up the SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL CAREERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE, the SUPPORT CAREERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE and serving as liaison to these committees. One major effort upon which the Scientific and Technical Careers Advisory Committee is advising OHRM is the job analysis study and the policy on membership in professional societies.

During FY'86 the Career Management Team will work to complete the first phase of the Job Analysis Study and related projects and evaluate them for application to other occupations. We will complete work on the Discover program, and implement the EPA Institute. We will also begin work on implementation of an Agency specific career management program using the data from the job analysis study as background for developing this workshop. With these initiatives, we hope to address the major issue identified in the National Academy of Public Administration study, EPA's need to give more attention to employee concerns about Career Development.

Presented by: John Alter Team Member: Elaine Newman FTS 382-3311
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ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Organizational Development Team completes the Workforce Management Unit's approach by focusing on employees as members of the EPA community. We presented these goals at the 1984 Hunt Valley Planning Conference: to be a catalyst for change in EPA and to promote a vision of EPA as a community in which we value people as our principal resource. To accomplish these goals our near-term strategy was to do the following:

- ° to develop and disseminate these human resource goals from top management throughout the Agency to every employee;
- ° to facilitate the exchange of information by establishing an effective communications network;
- ° to publish a variety of materials on human resource initiatives; and
- ° to advise organizations on team-building, improving their internal communications, quality and productivity.

Accomplishments

At the HUNT VALLEY PLANNING CONFERENCE, we encouraged and assisted the Council in developing a set of goals and a sense of direction for its future activities. We conducted sessions aimed at confirming the individual members' commitment to creating the kind of Agency in which we all want to work. To make sure we approach these tasks in a practical way, we discussed the scope of potential Council actions and the possible resource and time constraints members might face in their home offices. An effective part of the Hunt Valley meeting was the voluntary showcase presentations given by several members on innovative human resources initiatives that worked well in their organizations.

In May, the Council met at the MERIDIAN HOUSE in Washington to go over their progress as a group and to explore further their relationship with OHRM. The participants began to recognize the uniqueness and significance of the Council as a force for change in EPA. The group elected officers, assumed responsibility for its own management, and proposed a committee structure to address key areas of work. Another round of showcase presentations gave recognition to successful programs and stimulated dialog among members.

The OD Team managed the NAPA FOLLOW-UP STUDY of EPA in 1985. Specifically, we helped redesign the questionnaire for the second employee values/attitudes survey, preserving the majority of the 1983 questions for comparative analysis and adding new questions related to OHRM strategies and programs. We served as a sounding board for NAPA in interpreting the survey findings and producing a quality report to the Administrator. We began to publicize the

findings by developing and distributing a briefing which shares the "good news" in the NAPA report and indicates the areas they found still needed emphasis and continued effort.

We recognized in the EXPERT WITNESS SEMINAR an extremely successful effort with potential for Agencywide benefit, and we acted as a catalyst to bring together the Training Office, the Office of General Counsel, and interested Agency clients to begin to expand and institutionalize the Seminar. We provided seed funding to initiate courses on a pilot basis and helped with Agencywide marketing.

The Team was active in the COMMUNICATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROGRAMS AGENCYWIDE, including the circulation of the Vision Paper presented by the Deputy Administrator, publication of Summary Reports of the Hunt Valley and Meridian House Council Meetings, EPA Times and Management Memo articles, and distribution of audio-visual productions on human resources issues. We have promoted the use of electronic mail and other new technologies in support of our human resources communications network.

We also provided DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO EPA ORGANIZATIONS by informing and advising individual managers seeking help with organizational development. We were able to assist with the planning and design of initiatives such as employee surveys, interviews, retreats, and other tools for improvement, and provided information on consultants or contractor assistance.

Plans for the Coming Year

The Organizational Development Team will continue to work closely with the HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL in an oversight, support and assistance role, focusing on the activities of the new Committees (Communications, Policy Review, and Training) and publicizing Council activities.

We will continue to publicize and promote dialog about the 1985 NAPA FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF EPA. We plan to distribute the NAPA Summary Report to every EPA employee, and we will expand our analysis of the 1985 employee survey data to incorporate the findings into OHRM's program plans for the coming year.

ASSISTANCE TO EPA ORGANIZATIONS will continue to be a part of our work, within our resource and time constraints. This year we will compile data on organizational interventions (team-building, communications workshops, planning and goal-setting retreats, etc.) Agencywide to develop an understanding of managers' needs and the consulting and contract services they have found helpful. This will form the basis of a related effort to develop a "user's guide" to aid managers in undertaking organizational improvement efforts.

COMMUNICATIONS is our overriding priority -- we will work hard to get the message out to managers, supervisors and employees throughout EPA about OHRM strategies and programs.

PART I: TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY

The Training Needs Survey for FY'86 was sponsored by the Office of Human Resources Management with cooperation from the Personnel Management Division and the Human Resources Council. The approach used this year to assess Agency-wide training needs was different from procedures that have been used in the past. We were interested in gaining a better understanding of organizational trends in the Agency that would predict not only short range training needs but the longer range career development needs of our workforce.

Human Resources Council Members were asked to conduct group or individual interviews among the senior managers (Office Directors and Division Directors) in their respective organizations. A questionnaire, developed by OHRM/PMD, was to be distributed in advance to interviewees to facilitate the process. Interviewees were asked to do long range thinking about issues that could impact their organizations such as major staff changes, new technologies, mission changes, etc. Then they were to think about knowledge, skills and abilities that need to be developed among current and/or new employees. Each respondent reported their top 4 training priorities which resulted in seven major training needs across the Agency. They are: Computer Technology; Supervisory and Management Techniques; Personnel Management; Time Management; Risk Assessment/Toxicology; Stress Management and Effective Writing.

The Survey found that organizations throughout EPA are considering several options beyond formal classroom training to meet training and development needs of their employees. Some of these options include on-the-job training, details and rotations between offices (e.g. Headquarters to region, region to region, etc.) and Intergovernmental Personnel Assignments. Responding organizations reported the Annual Performance Appraisal process and Individual Development Plans (IDP's) as Career Development practices in use in some offices. Others reported they were not using any Career Development procedures.

The objectives of the Training Needs Survey for FY'86 were to:

- ° provide a framework for managers to do longer range planning to meet training and development needs of their employees;
- ° provide OHRM/PMD with an information base to guide the administration of the Professional Training Fund and for

designing a Career Management System for the Agency; and

- ° provide an information base for the EPA Training Institute to target course offerings.

A final report is scheduled for distribution in November '85 to Human Resources Council Members and Personnel offices.

Part II: The EPA Training Institute

The EPA Training Institute is a project which will expand training opportunities for employees utilizing in-house talent and expertise. This concept has been in practice in various parts of the Agency for some time; however, the idea of an Institute is to centrally coordinate employee-instructed training to stretch training funds while supporting job enhancement and career development for our employees.

OHRM will conduct an inventory of all in-house training activity throughout the Agency during the month of November. This project will support the Institute in its role as Clearinghouse-Broker for identifying aggregate training needs and for organizations requesting information on options for meeting training and development needs of their employees.

A Director and Steering Committee are to be appointed in the near future to develop policy and operating guidance for the Institute. The priority training needs reported in the Agency-wide Training Needs Survey will influence the types of courses the Institute will sponsor. A limited number of courses will be presented during the first year with the initial offerings scheduled for Spring of 1986.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACHIEVING MANAGERIAL EXCELLENCE
IMPLEMENTATION CONFERENCE

Easton, Maryland - September 23-25, 1985

Approximately forty individuals attended, representing the Office of Human Resources Management, the Personnel Management Division, regional, field and Headquarters program offices, in addition to a consultant/facilitator and an Office of Personnel Management representative. The purpose of the Conference was to establish a task force for the implementation of FAME. Activities at the Conference were divided into three major categories:

- °What EPA's program for achieving managerial excellence should achieve;
- °What is needed to get from the present to this future and what are the impediments; and
- °What are the action plans required for instituting a management excellence program.

These issues were addressed in small groups which reported their findings to the task force members. Key elements of group consensus on what EPA's managerial excellence program should achieve included: emphasis on management as a profession, consensus within EPA on definition of management excellence, change within EPA to a more positive culture, a reward and rating system which reflects these elements, ensuring agencywide participation, understanding and ownership of FAME, need and willingness for systems and managers to be self-correcting, review make hard assessments of who we are, where we are.

At the action plan stage, individuals selected the groups which they wanted to participate in. Five major groups were formed; the key program aspects which they will address are outlined below.

The Communications Subcommittee will:

On a short term basis, highlight the FAME in as many appropriate meetings publications as possible; get feedback from Agency managers and other special interest groups, e.g., Women-in-Science and Engineering, the Scientific and Technical Careers Advisory Committee, Federally Employed Women, et al. Longer term issues will be a marketing strategy, better definition of target audience, integrating FAME concepts with other agency policies, such as, classification, SPMS, Operating Guidance, the Performance Management System, etc.

The Training/Curriculum and Course Development subcommittee will:

Identify and consolidate agencywide needs assessments; identify current EPA course offerings for executives, managers and supervisors (E,M,S); identify offerings of other agencies, the private sector; relate course offerings to the Managerial Excellence Framework (MEF) competencies or characteristics; develop a catalog of courses; develop a "participative" developmental program, e.g., IPAs, details, sabbaticals (other than SES), rotational assignments; address policy issues related to this; develop a training policy after reviewing current EPA and OPM policies, deciding where change is needed, who it should cover; consider management training policies of other agencies, the private sector; identify decision points; make recommendations.

The Performance/Rewards subcommittee will:

Develop a Performance Management System (PMS) that measures and communicates performance goals consistent with FAME expectations; evaluate how the MEF might be used by EPA in its PMS: sample existing standards of E,M,S; collect data on how other agencies handle managerial evaluations; consider establishing generic portions of E,M,S performance agreements; consider the possibility and means of employee input to E,M,S appraisals; develop strategies and incentives for rewarding managerial excellence; collect data on non-financial incentives in other agencies; review current thinking and practice on incentive awards; explore alternative financial incentives to those currently in place.

The Recruitment and Selection subcommittee will:

Establish a pilot talent bank for SES positions and personnel; evaluate and develop standard language for use in position descriptions, vacancy announcements, rating plans; define specific indicators for MEF competencies and effectiveness characteristics; define aspects of the selection process, i.e., applicant assessment, appraisal forms, interview topics; consider modifications to the Agency Merit Promotion Plan; consider issuing a recruitment/selection policy; define and examine trend data to evaluate validity and effectiveness of MEF.

The Program Evaluation subcommittee will:

Define realistic program success measures; assure adequate justification for and communication of program as it develops; establish an on-going evaluation of FAME, identifying corrective actions and revising program design as needed.

SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL CAREERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Vision and mission statements for the Scientific/Technical Careers Advisory Committee were just two of the significant accomplishments to come out of the September meeting of the Committee. Under the skilled direction of Jack Rosenblum from the Atlanta Consulting Group who served as process consultant, the Committee became a team, identifying its vision and mission and proposing a series of objectives on which to work. The objectives are being refined; nonetheless, individual Committee members have made commitments to work on those initiatives believed necessary to achieve the Committee's goals and to make the vision a reality.

The Committee has two standing subcommittees: 1) Training (chaired by Mavis Bravo) and 2) Disincentives (chaired by Rosemarie Russo.) This latter subcommittee serves to identify, and recommend ways to obviate, those policies and situations that cause the "science drain." The science drain is defined as the spending of time by Agency scientific staff on non-scientific, usually administrative, tasks.

The Committee also has a number of Ad Hoc subcommittees. There are subcommittees to: 1) develop a policy statement of Agency support of individuals' certification in specific disciplines, e.g. engineering and toxicology; 2) evaluate the feasibility/desirability of requiring a separate Critical Job Element/Performance Standard for Professional/Career Development in individuals' Performance Agreements; 3) monitor the Job Task Analysis for chemists and physical scientists; 4) categorize and prioritize the Committee's Strategic Objectives; and 5) determine the desirability/feasibility of Agency ombudsperson(s) for career development.

The Committee recently completed a significant task--the revision of the draft policy statement on Participation in Societies and Associations. This policy statement, to be signed by the Administrator, describes both the Agency's and employees' roles in outside organizations whose activities are pertinent to the mission of EPA. The draft statement will be circulated widely throughout the Agency for review and comment. The key elements of this policy statement include proposals that:

- 1) Each Office (budget unit) set aside sufficient travel and/or training funds to permit no less than a specific percentage of its employees to attend society and association meetings each year.

- 2) Excused absence be granted to employees willing to pay their own way to at least one meeting per year.
- ° Employees be encouraged to chair sessions and present papers at society or association meetings.
 - ° Employees be encouraged to submit original and review articles and reports to peer-reviewed journals; supervisors are encouraged to support and promote such endeavors.
 - ° Employees be responsible for paying their own membership fees and dues unless the Agency finds that membership is a job requirement for the individual or that institutional membership is advantageous to the Agency, in which cases the Agency will pay.
 - ° Employees be encouraged to assume leadership roles in job-related professional societies and associations. Employees appointed or elected to leadership roles shall be allowed reasonable time and resources to carry out their responsibilities.

HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL MEETING PARTICIPANTS
CINCINNATI, OHIO, OCTOBER 16-18, 1986

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