

WASTED HOURS

"Job Methods" Training Pays Dividend By Exposing Lost Motion In Daily Routine

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Job Instructor Jack Burton Directs Lost Motion Study

An investment of 120 hours—ten hours for each of twelve persons—in job methods training, a supplement to job instructor training, "Training Within Industry," brought more than commensurate returns.

The job instructor training course which had been given at the hospital several months previously had proved a valuable aid to the two groups of department supervisors who had participated in this course of "How to Instruct." Job methods training consists of five two-hour sessions with a group of twelve, and is given in the hospital at a time convenient to the hospital and those who attend the classes. It has as its objective job improvements—a task which is part of every supervisor's job.

It is not a difficult course. The techniques of breaking down a job, developing a new method, working it out with others, and of writing up the proposed new method in order to sell it to the administrator are learned with surprising ease; and still more surprising, a minimum amount of effort.

The group selected to take the course consisted of the medical records librarian, chief admitting officer, assistant admitting officer, chief dietitian, x-ray technician, laboratory technician, four nursing supervisors, supervisor of nursing service, and assistant administrator.

The classes were scheduled from 7 to 9 p.m.

The course was short but it called for consider-

able action. Each member was required to tell, and if possible to demonstrate, the present method of doing a job together with suggested improvements. Immediate interest was aroused, and it was sustained by encouraging comments and discussions from all members of the class.

One of the rules of the job methods training is that in making improvements a person is restricted to the use of available materials and personnel.

While the methods worked out by nursing service involved some improvements in techniques and the one proposed by the chief admitting officer suggested a new type of admission slip, the keynote of method improvements centered around the problem of traffic and consequent savings in manpower and elevator service.

In order to be more specific, we wish to illustrate by presenting one project: Intercommunication between the front office and the psychopathic department office.

It had been observed that the clerks made many trips through the hospital during the day and that when questioned seemed to have legitimate reasons for such travel. In order to breakdown these jobs, we asked the clerks to fill out questionnaires enumerating the trips made to other departments, the time required for each trip and the reason for making it.

In normal times, the installation of pneumatic tubes would be the best answer to this problem, but the rule applying to restricted materials had

to be kept in mind. Therefore, two of the offices involved in this traffic situation were studied and it was found that by eliminating, combining, and rearranging jobs the number of trips could be reduced from 29 to 10, resulting in the saving of approximately 190 minutes a day or about a half day's work. This is only an illustration of what will result when analysis is made of all the replies to questionnaires.

The comparison of some of the present methods and the proposed methods are interesting. Clerk No. 1 made seven time-consuming trips during the day under the present methods but under the proposed methods no trips were necessary—she did not have to leave her desk. The trips of Clerk No. 2 were cut from two trips to one, while Clerk No. 3 was following the "Most satisfactory procedure at the present time." Careful consideration was given to the trips made by each clerk and changes were not proposed for the sake of making changes.

In addition to the daily saving of time it was found that traffic in the corridors of the hospital could be reduced, the elevator load could be lessened, the office personnel could be spared nineteen interruptions and the medical records department could be saved four and one-sixth hours monthly—the time required in pulling from the files approximately fifty charts—by making the following changes:

Check all charts immediately upon discharge of the patient.

Transfer storage of supplies to the cupboard in the front office.

Send emergency requisitions for office supplies to supply room with mail clerk upon delivery of mail.

Combine the following deliveries with other trips of the mail clerk:

Checks to psychopathic department office

Occasional bill to patient's room

Consultations to doctors upon request

Charts to psychopathic department office

Outgoing mail to mail desk

Have cashier deliver all reports to the credit department.

Combine delivery of deposit from psychopathic office with delivery of admission and discharge lists, and also accounts receivable record.

The course accomplished its purpose by showing us a method of making jobs easier, rather than by making people work harder or faster. It taught us how to make plans for working more effectively and led to the conclusion that there are even greater possibilities for hospitals in job methods training.

Special Training of New Personnel Helps to Solve Shortage

LESLIE P. HARDY and W. B. FORSTER

A DIETITIAN, who is not much different from thousands of department heads in hospitals throughout America, was recently heard to complain, "Never have I been so discouraged over personnel; the situation appears to be hopeless. All the things we've worked for years to build up seem to be doomed."

It is true that the employee situation has complicated many administrative problems during recent months. But it is not hopeless. Something can be done. And the fact that higher wages is not the only answer is proved by the fact that hospitals still have some employees left.

One thing that can be done is to start a concerted personnel training program. Such a program combats present day difficulties in several ways.

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It serves to "break in" an employee in a shorter time, thus making the effects of rapid turnover less disturbing. The presence of one low-efficiency worker in a group cuts down on the quality of work done by the entire group. If the learning period is reduced from seven or more days to two or three, by doing away with the "let him sink or swim" methods, the efficiency of the entire group is raised.

Turnover is always higher in the early employment period. The reasons for this are many, but among them are embarrassment and hazing at the hands of older workers, lack of interest in the job, and lack of a sense of accomplishment. Correct training can help to combat turnover by working toward the elimination of these causes.

But turnover need not, in all cases, be a handicap. Every department has some procedures which are