

Session 9
Paper "C"

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING
TRAINING OF OPERATORS AND MECHANICS

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DEFINITION

"Training" (Oxford Dictionary) "Put in the way to efficiency by instruction and practice: Changing behaviour".

The Forest industry is continually and rapidly changing and all facets must adapt to meet these changes. Many of the traditional practical skills of people will have to be replaced by more exacting requirements: e.g.

The training of the specialist mechanic,
The skill and co-ordination of the machine operator, and
The discipline and wisdom of the professional businessman.

TRAINING GENERAL

Any person nominated for training asks - "What's in it for me?"

To learn anything useful it is important that:

- a. A person wants to learn
- b. They find the subject interesting
- c. They understand why they should have to learn.

The main rewards gained from any form of training associated with practical skills are:

Status Recognition of increased knowledge and skill
Trade appointments
Pay incentives.

Job Satisfaction Competency at job
Requires little or no supervision.

Safety and Efficiency With tools and equipment
On the job site.

Preparation for the future Job opportunities
Promotion to supervisory appointment
Permanent salary
Job security.

THE TRAINING OF MECHANICS

Existing system for Automotive Engineers

Min. 2 years secondary education. Satisfactory standard in
English and Maths. 8000 or 9000 hour contract.

Contract period	<u>Year One</u>	a. 3 week block course) Compulsory) correspond-) ence assign-) ments or) evening) classes.
	2000 hrs	b. 3 week block course	
		c. 1st qualifying exam	
	<u>Year Two</u>	a. 3 week block course	
	2000+ hrs	b. 2nd qualifying exam	
<u>Year Three</u>	a. Trade Certificate exam (written))	
2000+ hrs			
<u>Year Four</u>	a. Trade Certificate exam (practical))	
2000+ hrs			
<u>Year Five</u>	a. "A" Grade Examination)	

The quality of the tradesman coming through the apprenticeship system is governed by:

1. Basic educational standards
2. Career attitude
3. Mechanical aptitude
4. Employers standards
5. Large or small fleet operations
6. Specialised or general vehicles
7. Quality of supervision
8. Specialisation or all round experience
9. Field vs Shopwork
10. Experience and skill of trainer and/or journeyman

The Government is currently studying a proposal submitted by the minister of labour entitled:

"Apprenticeship for tomorrow"

The paper is about the training of tradespersons and will seriously affect the qualifications, standards and skills relevant to the forest industry. Comments are now being sought from all interested parties in response to these proposals, some of which are: -

- a. Greater emphasis should be placed on broad-based training in the earlier stages of apprenticeship, leaving the narrower, more specialised skills, to be acquired later.
- b. The development and use of apprentice training manuals.
- c. Increased number of women, Maoris and Pacific Islanders in apprenticeships.
- d. Adult apprenticeships should be positively encouraged.
- e. Closer relationships between apprenticeship committees and industry training boards.
- f. Apprentices should receive training in instructional techniques in the later part of their training.

It is to be hoped that individuals and organisations represented at this seminar have taken the opportunity to comment on the full proposals.

BREAKDOWN OF EQUIPMENT

Everyone expects a machine to breakdown eventually - nothing mechanical will work forever, without some form of maintenance. But breakdowns like accidents don't normally just happen, they are caused, mainly by: -

- a. Poor or bad operating and misuse and abuse.
- b. Irregular or inadequate servicing
- c. Lack of attention to adjustments
- d. Failure to effect minor repairs immediately they are needed.
- e. Lack of regular and efficient technical inspections.

In almost every case of equipment breakdown it could have been prevented by adequate supervision and efficient inspection. Supervisors, both management and field, must learn to recognise bad operating and maintenance practices.

TRAINING NEEDS - MECHANICS

The minimum period between refresher or re-training programmes for forestry equipment mechanics is 2 years. The competitive sales edge between equipment suppliers is normally dependant on the technical and productive efficiency of new machines introduced every 2 to 3 years.

How many mechanics do you know or do you employ that have attended refresher or re-training sessions since they gained trade qualifications. I'll bet it's only those in large fleet repair organisations or major dealerships.

Typical of subjects that mechanics need refresher training in, is:-

- Modern Hydraulic systems
- Hydro-static transmissions
- Modern diagnostic equipment
- LPG/CNG systems
- Progressive oil analysis
- Air conditioning systems, etc. etc.

THE TRAINING OF OPERATORS

The most often heard quote from owners and managers when queried about operator training is:- "We can't afford to train". In this modern age you cannot afford "Not to train".

Unfortunately the benefits of operator training are seldom seen overnight and any management that expects its operating and maintenance costs to drop drastically will be sorely disappointed.

If the training needs are efficiently researched, if the training areas are clearly defined, if the programmes are well planned and conducted and the results followed through; The following benefits will accrue:

- a. Increased production
- b. Less machine downtime
- c. Improved safety
- d. Better operator and machine application
- e. Improved personnel relations and other fringe benefits
- f. Lower operating and owning costs.

TRAINING SURVEY

I would like to mention an allied industry who had its training officers conduct a written and oral survey on training, to a cross-section of its members.

44 organisations were personally contacted. Over 1000 operators/drivers were employed by firms.

Only 4 firms had someone responsible for training. Another 8 firms would appoint someone responsible for training.

None employed any specialist staff in training duties. A majority saw the need for full or part time trainers. All considered that the person undertaking the training function should receive training in "Training techniques".

Overall the main form of on-the-job training was on-the-job practice (after "sitting-with-nellie").

Although not in order of priority, the main reasons given for not providing any form of systematic training were:

Company too small

Training unnecessary for type of activities undertaken.

No training, since only trained personnel were recruited.

No-one in firm qualified to train was too costly and time-consuming.

Considering the reasons given for the failure to train. The cause in the lack of systematic training appeared to be due to a number of factors:

- a. A lack of knowledge of the manner in which training for the industry can be provided.
- b. A failure to assess and formulate training needs and a lack of planning and intergration into any systematic in-company training programme.
- c. A failure of firms to appoint somebody to be responsible for training within the firm and a lack of persons within the industry who are trained to train others.
- d. A failure to realise that all persons employed in the driver/operator area must receive some training within the industry to make them skillful in their task and a failure to recognise that shortages of skilled persons is caused by a failure to train.
- e. A failure to recognise that even in the short term, benefits, both financial and otherwise, that are to be received from training outweigh any cost involved.

TRAINING NEEDS - OPERATORS

With the proposed forecasts that we have heard in the increase of log volumes, manpower requirements and equipment required up to and including the year 2000 in the whole area of logging and transporation. "Where are we getting the labour force and how are we going to train them?"

Well, first off, "The future starts now" and any proposals for making tomorrow's operations successful are just as valid for the operations of today.

Here are some ideas that I would like to throw into the centre of the ring for consideration and discussion: -

THE UNEMPLOYED

A vast untapped potential reservoir of forest industry workers both male and female. Set up groups at defence establishments or annual camp locations.. Supervised by 55 - 65 year old experienced loggers, bushmen, operators, drivers etc. Give basic training in conjunction with Labour Department, Training Boards, local bodies, local industries. Set up contract teams so that they can "earn while they learn" with no pressure of production requirements. As skills develop, feed into the industry as required. Probably a year to 18 months period of training.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Get to the secondary schools Now at 3rd form level and introduce the forest industry as a career option. Plan 4th and 5th form syllabuses to include up to 30% content of forest industry subjects. Silviculture - afforestation - logging operating - milling - processing - marketing - accounting - management. Extend periods of work experience. Show the options open to female workers in the industry. The attached chart shows a possible pattern for the industry using Secondary Schools - Community Colleges - Technical Institutes and universities.

THE RELOCATED WORKER

With the modern technological advances and upgrading and streamlining of industries the fear of redundancy is ever present in some areas. Surely with pre-planning some of the very skilled and able workers could be retrained for the forest industry. I believe that the employers associations, unions, the Labour Department and present forest industries could well combine to prepare the proposed redundant worker for a position in our industry which would allow job satisfaction and career planning.

THE TRAINER

All industries have, or will have, a serious shortage of training personnel in the coming decades. An experienced foreman or supervisor is not necessarily a good trainer. More supervisors must be trained and practiced in the basic skills

of on-job instruction, plus selected staff at any level should be noted as having instructor potential. This must be developed by the employer utilizing Community Colleges, TWI and personnel and staff training organisations.

The fact that man does not behave like a machine (Thank goodness), does present one problem - he has to be motivated. To work well he needs to know what he is doing and why and must be reasonably happy with his situation.

Forest industry education must be intergrated into the general education system and the training needs and numbers required set at all levels.

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