A SURVEY OF PROGRAMS FOR DEVELOPING
STORE MANAGERS FOR RETAIL SHOE
CHAIN ORGANIZATIONS

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
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For the Degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

By

W. B. Slater, Jr., B. S.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the development of executive training for management positions is receiving increasing attention in business and industry. Managing a business is more involved today than it was a generation ago; the increasing complexity of the economy, labor problems, government regulations, and the present scale of operation have all operated to create problems which necessitate special training.

This study is a research in the practices of business organizations operating in decentralized fashion in training their managers for their positions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the practices of a selected number of chain shoe store organizations in training management personnel for their retail shoe outlets. The data secured from these sources will also be compared with the opinions of several authorities in the field of management to determine the extent to which the practices in actual use agree with those recommended.
Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to a survey of practices used in training managers of retail shoe outlets for national chain store organizations. Literature utilized in the survey was limited to the field of management with particular emphasis on the training of management personnel.

Source of Data

Data for the study were secured from both primary and secondary sources. Data on actual practices used in the selection and training of management personnel in retail shoe outlets were secured from a questionnaire sent to the heads of the national shoe chain organizations. Other data were taken from the recent literature in the field of business management.

Definition of Terms

The term, manager, is defined in this study as the executive in a retail shoe outlet of a national shoe store chain organization.

National shoe store chain organization refers to a company owning and operating one or more shoe stores.

Retail shoe store outlet refers to individual retail stores owned and managed by an organization.

Training period refers to the time involved from the selection of the trainee until his training is finished.
On-the-job training is teaching the manager-trainee under actual job conditions while he is performing.

Sales conferences are guided discussions with the manager-trainees on problems directly concerning the particular field in which they will work.

Position-rotation-plan is a type of training device in which the trainees are moved from one key job to another so that an overall knowledge of the store operation may be gained.

Understudy positions is a system wherein each executive is assigned an understudy who is expected to learn the tasks performed by the executive.

Treatment of Data

The introductory chapter includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the limitations of the study, source of data, definition of terms, treatment of data, and related studies.

Procedures used in making the survey are described in Chapter II. These procedures include the methods used in obtaining and selecting the organizations to be contacted, the development of the questionnaire to be mailed the selected participants, and other details of securing the needed information and the returns therefrom.

Data secured from the questionnaires are presented in Chapter III. These data are compared to accepted procedures
as outlined in the literature studied and conclusions made regarding the extent of conformity or non-conformity to these practices on the part of the participating firms.

The findings of the study, the conclusions, and recommendations for further research comprise the subject matter of Chapter IV.

Related Studies

A search in the literature of business management for related studies was carried on in the library of the North Texas State College. No published related study was found, but a report made on Special Business Problems in the Business Administration Department of the College is related to the particular subject matter of the present research.

This report is entitled "A Comparison of the Training Programs for Junior Executives Used by Five Fort Worth, Texas, Department Stores."¹ The purpose of this report was to compare the training programs of five department stores in Fort Worth, Texas, for their junior executives to see if they used similar programs and to what extent the usage practices conformed to practices suggested by authorities in the field. Through means of a questionnaire, the personnel managers in the five department stores were interviewed

concerning their training procedures for junior executives. The data obtained were then measured against that obtained from the selected literature.

Demetruk's study is related to the present study in the basic subject area, executive training, and in obtaining the data for the survey through a questionnaire. It differs in that the present study has a much wider scope, uses a much greater number of participants, and secures data through a mailed questionnaire rather than through the personal interview.

In the succeeding chapter, the procedures used in gathering information for the study are explained in detail.
CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES USED IN GATHERING SURVEY DATA
FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of the present chapter is to give a
detailed description of the procedures used in gathering
information for the study. Attention is directed to the
selection of participants, the preparation and mailing of
the questionnaire, the scope covered by the investigation,
and the number of usable returns received from the survey.

Selection of Participants

A wide range of participants was desired for contact to
obtain data on practices used by national organizations of
chain shoe stores in training managers for their retail shoe
outlets. In order to obtain a list of names of such organi-
zations, letters of inquiry were sent to four national shoe
retailers Associations. Each letter stated the purpose for
which the study was being made and the reasons for securing
the list of names.

Three letters were received in reply to the four let-
ters mailed to the national organizations. Two of the lists
sent contained few names, but the third one included the
names of more than two hundred organizations with retail
shoe outlets ranging in number from 3 to 514.
The second task was the selection of two hundred names from these lists for contact. In order to make the study as representative as possible, names of organizations in all the states of the United States were selected. The lists were then studied to select further the organizations with the largest number of chain shoe store outlets. The most representative type of organization was found to be one with retail outlets numbering between two and ten stores. The ones with a large number of retail outlets were few in comparison.

A personal letter to each of the national organizations selected as participants in the study was then written. Due to shortage of time, it was impossible to type each letter individually, and mimeographed copies were made. The letter headings, however, were individually typed and each letter was personally signed.

Formulation of Questionnaire

The questionnaire which was sent with the letter was then formulated. Literature in the field of business management was used as a base in formulating the questions. The publications of the American Management Association were found to be especially valuable in this respect.

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1 Copy of letter included in Appendix of study.

2 Copy of questionnaire included in Appendix of study.
Development of Executive Talent is a handbook of management development techniques and case studies. In addition to discussion of basic principles, this handbook presents seventeen case studies of the experiences of large firms or organizations in the selection, training, and evaluation of managerial personnel. The eighteenth case presented is a composite of the seventeen, and this case study was very valuable in formulating the questionnaire, especially in methods used in training. Four basic assumptions form the heart of this case study:

I. There is no one simple way of selecting, promoting and improving executive and supervisory personnel. All methods must be coordinated in a well-functioning whole.

II. The ideal approach is to stress the development of executives and supervisors by individual analysis and attention. This may be called individualized training.

III. The methods and tools of individualized training which should be coordinated in a well-functioning entity are:

1. Mental, physical and personality examinations.
2. Job efficiency evaluation--an advanced form of supervisory merit rating--and job analysis.
3. Objective tests of job knowledge and performance.
4. Prognostic interviews.
5. Formal training.
6. Follow-up staff conferences.
7. Centralized records--readily available to the executives and supervisors responsible for promotion and transfer.  

Many valuable suggestions of items to include in the questionnaire were obtained from this study.

4Ibid., pp. 517-518.
Another source of valuable information in developing the questionnaire is *Training Employers and Managers*, a book written by Planty, McCord, and Efferson, all men engaged in directing or counseling relations with large industrial firms. In the words of the introduction to the book, the authors "have written a book full of actual 'know-how.'"

Part II of the book is especially valuable in studying and evaluating training programs. This deals with the organization and administration of training and is planned primarily to assist those who are responsible for setting up training departments, selecting and training a staff, and planning the operation of the program. The book is practical and provides first-hand information.

Another source utilized was a booklet of the National Industrial Conference Board, *Company Programs of Executive Development*. The aims of a training program are stated as improving a person's ability (1) in human relations, (2) in job competence, (3) in company knowledge, (4) in personal development, and (5) in creative imagination. Nine case studies in company programs of executive development are

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7. Ibid., pp. 4-16.
also given and these present excellent illustrations of how training programs are actually set up and work. The book was valuable in evaluating practices in training of personnel as revealed in the present survey.

Still another source used in formulating the questionnaire and in evaluating returns from the survey is a recent book by Planty and Freeston, Developing Management Ability. This book is a series of 600 questions and answers all dealing directly with some phase of developing or training management ability. The authors state that the answers given are the ones which "have proved highly successful in training and management development in Johnson and Johnson and its affiliated companies," where they serve as Executive Counselor and Personnel Director, respectively.

In the survey of the literature, many other sources were found which have a bearing on the problem in hand. The above sources, however, were chosen for their practical "know-how," the working experience of the authors, and the illustrations taken from case studies of the training programs of large industries.

With this literature as a base, the questionnaire was formulated. An effort was made to develop questions which would be easy to answer, give adequate data on sources of

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9 Ibid., p. v.
manager selection, important qualifications desired in manager personnel, and the training methods used by the shoe chain organizations. Before the questionnaire was mailed out, the writer made a personal visit to the manager of a large shoe chain organization in a nearby city and asked him to evaluate the questionnaire in terms of its "answer-ability." The reaction of the manager was very favorable and the questionnaire, as it had been developed, was then mimeographed for mailing.

Number of Returns

A total of eighty-seven replies were received from the letters sent out. Of these, thirty-seven were returned with the questionnaires unanswered, the most common reason being assigned was that the participant contacted operated on too small a basis to be considered a chain store organization. In a few instances refusal was made to answer questions on the grounds that it was an individual rather than the school making the study. Cooperation, however, was good on the part of fifty of the participants queried and this number of usable questionnaires were available for the study.

The succeeding chapter gives the results obtained from the tabulated data taken from the questionnaires and the comparison of the actual field practices with those recommended by the selected literature in the field.
CHAPTER III

PRACTICES USED BY A GROUP OF SELECTED CHAIN SHOE ORGANIZATIONS IN TRAINING MANAGERS FOR RETAIL OUTLETS

The purpose of the present chapter is to present and analyze the data on practices of a number of selected chain shoe organizations in training managers for their retail shoe outlets. A part of the analysis will be a comparison of the practices in actual use as shown in the survey with recommended practices for training management personnel in selected literature.

Scope of the Data

As stated in the previous chapter, fifty usable replies were received from the questionnaires sent out. In a number of instances, the questionnaires were returned unanswered because the organization contacted did not consider itself a "chain" in the sense that the inquiries were made. In a few instances, the companies contacted were not willing to give out the requested information, but in the majority of instances the cooperation was good.
Number of Retail Outlets of Participating Organizations

The number of retail outlets of the organizations participating in the study are shown in Table I.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Number of Retail Outlets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>77</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in the data in Table I, 15 of the respondents, 30 per cent of the total participants, have retail outlets of 10 or less; 23, or 46 per cent, have retail outlets numbering between 10 and 50; and 12, or 24 per cent, have outlets ranging in numbers from 55 to 514. Six of the respondents had outlets numbering more than 100 stores.

Types of Distribution

Data in Table II show the types of distribution used by the participating national shoe organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Distribution</th>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Per Cent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table II, almost one-half of the respondents distribute on a regional basis. Local and national have the same percentage of distribution.

Sources from Which Managers Are Selected

In the answer to the question regarding sources from which managers are selected, all of the respondents gave the
requested information. The data as given are shown in Table III.

TABLE III

SOURCES FROM WHICH RESPONDENTS SELECT MANAGERS FOR RETAIL OUTLETS AND RANK ACCORDED SOURCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Rank Accorded Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present employees of company</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees of other retail shoe firms</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with executive experience in other types of firms</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training inexperienced personnel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table III, forty-eight of the respondents, or 96 per cent of the total, select employees for manager training positions from those already with the company. Forty-five of the respondents, or 90 per cent, rank this source first in order of preference, while three, or 6 per cent, give the source second choice in preference. Thirty-one, or 62 per cent, of the respondents reported that they used employees of other shoe firms as sources for manager personnel. Only two, or 4 per cent, of the respondents,
however, ranked this source as first in preference, while twenty-eight, or 56 per cent, ranked it second in order of preference. Three respondents, or 6 per cent, ranked this source third in preference. Nine of the respondents, or 18 per cent, reported that they used persons with executive types of experience from other firms. One respondent, however, wrote in "only as a last resort." None of the respondents ranked this practice first or second, but seven, or 14 per cent, ranked it third in preference. Two respondents, or 4 per cent, reported that they used inexperienced personnel as sources for manager personnel, and one of these sources ranked the practice first in preference and the other, second in preference.

When reference is made to literature in the field of management, the practice of using present employees of a company as source for management-training personnel is usually found to be first in the recommendations of authorities. Dooher and Marquis say that "if an organization's promotional sequence chart is developed 'training-wise,' executive material can be found within the organization."¹ They have the following comment:

Competitive organizations, or other departments within our own organization, may present tantalizing prospects for the easy filling of executive vacancies. However, as in many other cases, the easy way is far

from the best. It is true that such general characteristics as keen intellect, ability to grasp new information quickly, creative imagination, perseverance, or an engaging personality are the type of qualities which can be transmitted from one industrial assignment to the other. But the company which must constantly recruit its executives from the ranks of other businesses admits a glaring weakness in its own organizational structure. Furthermore, such practice weakens morale.2

Halsey, in describing the executive training group at the Namm Store, Brooklyn, says that it is made up of "up-and-coming young people within the organization who have been recommended and carefully selected through interviews and tests."3 Sears, Roebuck and Company, large mail order firm, have a policy of "promotion from within."4 This policy, it is stated, is due to a trial-and-error experience developed since the company began retail selling. Managers were selected from mail order departments at first, and later experienced retail executives were brought in from outside the company. Although a number of executives hired from the outside proved successful, it became apparent that the method for a number of reasons was inadequate and the "promotion from within" was decided upon. Planyt, McCord, and Efferson state that "if a company is constantly compelled to fill vacancies by finding men and women outside

2Ibid., pp. 21-22.
its own organization, there is a considerable loss in time and morale."^5

In the light of the foregoing recommendations, the writer concludes that the practices of the national shoe chain organizations in selecting manager personnel for their retail shoe outlets are in accord with modern recommended practices in the literature in the field.

Number of Firms with Training Programs

Question 5 dealt with the presence or absence of a formal training program which specifies a fixed period of time for completion and duration of program where present. In the compilation of the data, it was found that forty-four, 88 per cent, of the respondents reported a definite training program. Only eleven respondents furnished data on the length of the training program and these are shown in Table IV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Length of Training Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 yrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 mos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 wks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indeterminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 yr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although few of the respondents gave any information concerning the training program, forty-four, or 88 per cent, stated that they did have a definite training program. This is in line with recommended practices. Planty, McCord, and Efferson declare that "whether the position to be filled is that of switchboard operator, private secretary, headwaiter, plant engineer, office manager, sales director, or president, there should be someone in training for the job."6

Planty and Freeston have this comment:

We should train employees--and here the term includes managers and executives at all levels and in all branches of our operations--for two reasons: to help them perform better the work which they are doing and to prepare some of them for other and perhaps more responsible positions.7

Stephen Habbe in the "Foreword" to Company Programs of Executive Development says that "no one is born with executive skills" and they are not acquired simply by the passage of time.8 Such skills must be learned and most individuals, regardless of capabilities, need help and direction in learning to become good executives. Typical of the training programs in the nine case studies in Company Programs of Executive Development, and all of them have a developmental program, is the one of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation where

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6Planty, McCord and Efferson, op. cit., p. 11.
7Planty and Freeston, op. cit., p. 7.
8Stephen Habbe, "Foreword," Company Programs of Executive Development, p. 3.
"broad management training is provided." Five goals are listed for the training program: (1) company knowledge, (2) job competence, (3) creative imagination, (4) personal development, and (5) human relations.

The fact that forty-four out of the fifty respondents state that they have a training program for managers indicates that the majority of the national organizations contacted in the study are following accepted recommendations in this area.

Type of Training Programs

Data in Table V show the types of training programs reported by the respondents.

TABLE V
TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAMS REPORTED BY THE FORTY-FOUR RESPONDENTS AND RANK ASSIGNED EACH PRACTICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Training Program</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
<th>Rank Assigned*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Conferences</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-the-job Training</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position-rotation-plan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understudy Positions</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In each type of training program, a number of the respondents merely checked participation without ranking practice.

9 Ibid., p. 29. 10 Ibid.
As shown in Table V, all of the respondents with training programs reported that they used on-the-job training techniques. Thirty-four, 75 per cent of those with training programs, reported that they use understudy positions in their training techniques, and twenty-three, 52 per cent, use sales conferences as a part of the training program. The position rotation plan is used by only seven, 15 per cent, of the respondents. Two respondents, 4 per cent, reported other types of training—-one used a series of tests and the other, semi-annual managers' meetings.

In assigning ranking to the practices, many of the respondents failed to complete this part of the questionnaire. On-the-job training is given first ranking by the majority of those answering with sales conferences next in popularity.

In comparing the training programs of the national shoe chain organizations with those of other industries, reference is made to the survey of Company Programs of Executive Development. This report was made by a committee from the National Industrial Conference Board that set out to make a study of training programs for executives, and is a "detailed, step-by-step account of how a group of well-known companies has gone about developing executive talent."\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 1.
Twenty techniques of training were found and are shown below as they were summarized:

Twenty Techniques of Executive Development

Almost always used:
1. Merit or performance reviews
2. Visits to other companies
3. Attendance at technical meetings and management conferences
4. Distribution of reading lists and management bulletins
5. Group meetings

Often used:
6. Job rotation
7. Advanced management courses at Harvard and elsewhere
8. Consultants
9. Committee assignments
10. Executive inventories
11. Job descriptions

Sometimes used:
12. Special trainee positions
13. Multiple management plans
14. Management cabinets
15. Understudy or assistant-to-positions
16. Community leadership
17. Health and fitness programs
18. Individual counseling
19. Assignment to training or sales department
20. Sponsor plan

Note. Most companies with programs use a multiple approach. That is, they may employ half the techniques listed in this box, or even more.12

Planty and Freeston list six different methods of development or training of manager-personnel:

1. The management audit
2. The guided experience method
3. The conference method
4. Job rotation
5. Multiple management
6. Role playing
7. The case study method
8. Staff meeting for development13

12Ibid., p. 15.
13Planty and Freeston, op. cit., p. xi.
The American Management Association places a high value on "On-the-Job Training" and on "Job Rotation." Of the first, it is said that "the most effective training is that built into daily, on-the-job experience."\textsuperscript{14} Of job rotation it is said that "one ideal way to get varied types of experience is through job rotation."\textsuperscript{15} Another recommended technique for training manager-personnel is through the use of understudy. Still another technique is that of the guided experiences in which planned on-the-job projects are carried on with the guidance and counsel of each executive’s direct superior.\textsuperscript{16}

The practices checked by the respondents in this study indicate that they are in line with accepted practices in other fields of industry—industries, too, with much larger scope and activities than the ones considered in this survey.

Methods Used in Selection of Managers

In Question 7, the respondents were asked to check the methods they most frequently used in selecting persons to be trained for store managers. Data in Table VI show the information as taken from the questionnaires.

\textsuperscript{14}American Management Association, \textit{Practical Methods of Management Development}, p. 19.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 20.
As shown in Table VI, forty-four, or 88 per cent of the respondents reported that their managers were most frequently chosen on the basis of records of past performance. The second most frequently used method was reported to be interviews with higher management personnel, with twenty-six, or 52 per cent, reporting this method. Five of the respondents, 10 per cent, reported the use of tests, and seven, or 15 per cent, reported other types of methods used. Comments written in on this phase of the training program were:

1. We consider an outstanding sales record a prerequisite for a manager.

2. Observation and talks on the selling floor, knowledge of the "profession."

3. Interview, observation of applicant.

4. Observations of their managers and regional managers. Occasionally meetings in small groups.
5. Character and moral standards of individual. 
   Ability and aggressiveness as observed in interview 
   and possibly in observation in other jobs. 
   Ability to manage own personal affairs.

6. A confidential report is secured on prospect's 
   personal history to determine character, etc.\textsuperscript{17}

In the literature of recommended procedures for selec-

tion of managers, the Company Programs of Executive

Development have this comment:

Work record and growth potential are the two 
factors which have most to do with selection for 
executive development, according to the companies 
in this report. Position, age, and training back-
ground are important, too.\textsuperscript{18}

The respondents in the study, it is indicated, were most 
interested in the records of past performance in selecting 
manager-trainees, but other important factors such as 
character, human relations, and personality were not neg-
lected.

In the question regarding minimum age requirements, 
fourty-four of the respondents, 88 per cent, reported that 
their companies had no minimum age requirement; six, 20 per 
cent, reported that they had minimum age requirements as 
follows: eighteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-three, 
twenty-five, and twenty-six, respectively.

\textsuperscript{17}Information taken from written comments in ques-
tionnaires.

\textsuperscript{18}Habbe, op. cit., p. 52.
Thirty-three of the respondents, 66 per cent, reported that they did not use women as managers, while seventeen, 34 per cent, reported the use of women managers.

Methods Used in Evaluating Manager Performance

Question 10 dealt with the methods used in evaluating the performance of retail store managers. The data in Table VII show the information obtained from the answers in the questionnaires.

TABLE VII

METHODS USED IN EVALUATING THE PERFORMANCE OF RETAIL STORE MANAGERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Rank Assigned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales record of stores</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit rating or appraisal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the data in Table VII, forty-three, or 86 per cent of the respondents, reported that the sales record of retail outlets was the method most used in evaluating the performance of retail store managers. Twenty-nine of these respondents rated this practice No. 1, while thirteen gave it a No. 2 rating, and one, a No. 3 rating. Twenty-nine, or
42 per cent of the respondents, reported that a merit rating or appraisal was used as a method of evaluating the performance of their managers. Twelve of the respondents rated this practice No. 1, and seventeen rated it No. 2. Nine respondents listed the following methods of evaluation: office appraisal, one; profits, three; observation, two; ability to think for themselves, one; character, one; and storekeeping ability, one.

Little definite information on rating the performance of managers was found in the literature selected.

Desirable Manager Qualifications

Question 11 dealt with the desirable qualifications for a manager. The data in Table VIII give the information obtained from the respondents.

TABLE VIII

IMPORTANT QUALIFICATIONS DESIRED BY RESPONDENTS FOR MANAGER PERSONNEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>Rank Assigned Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales ability</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>27 7 8 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human relations skills</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9 23 7 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High intelligence</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>4 4 10 4 3 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College education</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1 1 4 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of experience in retail shoe sales work</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>2 5 13 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in the data in Table VIII, forty-six, or 86 per cent of the respondents, reported that the proven sales ability of an individual was an important qualification in selecting him as manager for one of their retail shoe outlets. Twenty-seven of these respondents ranked this qualification No. 1; seven ranked it No. 2; eight, No. 3; and two, No. 4.

Human relations skills was only slightly lower in choice of qualifications. Forty-two of the respondents, 84 per cent, listed this qualification. Nine of the respondents ranked this qualification No. 1; twenty-three ranked it No. 2; seven ranked it No. 3; one, No. 4; and one, No. 5.

High intelligence was listed as a desirable characteristic in the selection of managers by twenty-six respondents, 46.2 per cent. Ranking of No. 1 was assigned this qualification by four of the respondents; four ranked it No. 2; ten, No. 3; four, No. 4; three, No. 5; and one, No. 6.

Nine of the respondents, 18 per cent, reported that a college education was a desirable characteristic for a manager. Only one respondent, however, ranked this qualification No. 1. Another respondent ranked it No. 2; four, No. 3; and three, No. 4.
Twenty-six of the respondents, 46.2 per cent, listed length of experience in retail shoe sales work as a desirable qualification in a manager. Two respondents ranked this qualification No. 1; five ranked it No. 2; thirteen, No. 3; and six, No. 4.

Twenty of the respondents listed other qualifications: nine listed "ability to manage," with seven ranking this qualification No. 1, and two ranking it No. 3; one listed "willingness to learn" and assigned it No. 3 in rank; two listed "work habits," with one ranking this qualification No. 1 and the other, No. 4; one listed "industrious and energetic" and assigned it No. 1 in rank; five listed "character" and all rated this No. 1; and two listed "good merchant" with one ranking this qualification No. 4, and the other ranking it No. 5.

The American Management Association asserts that the "pattern of basic abilities, interests, and personality traits found in successful executives is extremely complex." Certain attributes, however, are so outstanding as requirements that companies invariably search for men with the following qualifications:

1. Ability to think effectively. The individual must be able to:
   (a) Visualize things in perspective.
   (b) Translate business experience into practical judgments.
   (c) React readily and surely to problem situations.
   (d) Come up with fresh, original ways of doing things.
2. Ability to get ideas across clearly and convincingly.
3. Human relations know-how. The individual executive must know how human beings react and how to motivate men to work together.
4. Purposeful energy.¹⁹

One noticeable omission in the foregoing list of qualifications is any mention of a college education. The following statement explains this omission:

The maintenance of morale is likewise frustrated when executives are recruited mainly from technical colleges. Admitted the products of the American universities are usually well-educated, but the aristocracy of a degree alone can never meet the challenge of job realities at the executive or supervisory level. An academic background has an immediate usefulness in accelerating growth through the organization (all other things being equal), but it cannot be a substitute for a seasoned variety of job experiences.²⁰

Company Programs of Executive Development asserts that selection of trainees for managerial positions is "critical to the success of the entire system" but their investigation deals mainly with training methods. Only two qualifications are mentioned, "work record" and "growth potential."²¹

The data on the listed qualifications for manager personnel obtained from the questionnaires indicate that sales ability, human relations skills, and the length of time in retail shoe selling are the chief qualifications sought in

¹⁹American Management Association, The Development of Executive Talent, p. 33.
²⁰Ibid., p. 22.
²¹Habbe, op. cit., pp. 10-12.
selecting manager material. The respondents, in a large majority, agree with the American Management Association regarding the requirement of a college degree; this can be a real help in growth potential but does not outweigh other important qualifications. This finding is considered significant in the study inasmuch as much stress is being placed on college education at the present time.

Average Experience Record

Other questions were more general in nature. The respondents were asked to estimate the average number of years their managers had in retail shoe store experience before promotion to managerial positions. Forty-two of the respondents checked this question. Data in Table IX show the information.

TABLE IX

NUMBER OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE OF MANAGERS BEFORE PROMOTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Organizations</th>
<th>Number of Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in the data in Table IX, the largest number of the respondents reported the number of years of experience as ranging between three and seven years, a total of twenty-seven respondents placing within these ranges. Three reported that their managers had ten years experience, and one, eight years experience. None of the respondents reported one year, but one reported six months.

Two respondents wrote in "ability" and "irregular" in lieu of any certain specified period of time.

Percentage of Turnover in Manager Personnel

Percentages of turnover in managerial personnel were also inquired about. Seven of the respondents did not check this answer. Six wrote in "nil"; two wrote in "nominal"; and eleven wrote in "small." Of the ones listing definite percentages, two listed 15 per cent; four, 10 per cent, one 35 per cent; four, 25 per cent; eight, 5 per cent; one, 7 per cent; one, 2 per cent; and one, 1/4 per cent. The percentages of turnover, it is indicated, varied considerably from one organization to the other.

Suggestions for Improvement of Training Programs

The final question dealt with the opinion of the respondent concerning the training program of his organization. Sixteen of the respondents did not answer the question or gave a negative answer. The suggestions made
are listed as follows: (1) better supervision, eight checks; (2) training manager, one; (3) geographical rotation plans, one; (4) follow-up training, four; (5) more interest, two; (6) better human relations, one; (7) more formal training program, ten; (8) training in merchandising, two; (9) better communications, one; (10) attract better trainees, one; (11) top management emphasis, one; (12) lectures and discussions, one; (13) literature, one. The most asked for training techniques, it is seen, are those for more formal training programs, better supervision, and follow-up training.

Findings

The following findings have been developed from a study of the data presented:

1. The majority of the respondents distribute their products on a regional basis, with local and national areas of distribution being the same.

2. A very high percentage of the respondents indicate that the main source of manager-personnel is from present employees of their company; this is in line with recommended practices in the literature utilized in the survey.

3. Eighty-eight per cent of the respondents report some type of training program for manager-personnel; but only a small percentage checked the length of training program. The literature consulted in the survey was strong in
its recommendations for training programs for top management personnel.

4. One hundred per cent of the respondents reported that on-the-job training was the most common practice used; a large majority also reported the use of understudy positions; and sales conferences were reported by over 50 per cent of the respondents. Other phases of training were position-rotation plans, tests, and semi-annual manager's meetings.

5. Records of past performance were found to be the most used method in selecting persons to be managers for retail store outlets. Interviews with higher management personnel was the second most used method, with other methods having very small percentages of use. These findings were in accord with the literature on the question.

6. Sales records of the stores was reported the most used method in evaluating the performance of retail store managers, with merit ratings or appraisals being second in choice and other methods showing small percentages of selection.

7. Sales ability was reported as the most important qualification desired by the respondents of the study; human relations skills was a close second, and high intelligence and length of experience in the work received significant checks in the selection. College education as an important
qualifications was listed by only nine respondents, and only one of these gave it No. 1 in rank in order of selection.

8. The years of experience reported by the respondents for their managers ranged from ten years to six months, with the majority being between three and seven years.

9. A number of suggestions were made by the respondents for improvement of the training program for managers for retail store outlets.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of the present study was to present and analyze data on practices of a selected number of chain store organizations in training managers for their retail shoe outlets. Data were obtained through a questionnaire answered by fifty representatives of national chain store organizations distributed over the United States.

Practices on which the participants were queried included: range of distribution, sources utilized in selection of managers, the presence or absence of a formal training program, methods used in training managers, methods used in selecting manager-personnel for training, minimum age of managers, methods used in evaluating the performance of retail store managers, important qualifications for managers, average number of years experience of manager personnel, estimated normal turnover, and suggestions for improvement of training program.

The data were compiled and tabulated and percentages figured. The results were then compared with recommendations in the literature on the several questions. Findings were stated. Conclusions were drawn from the findings.
Conclusions

A number of conclusions were developed in the study of the replies of fifty respondents to the various questions pertaining to training of managers for retail shoe outlets. These conclusions may be stated as follows:

1. Marketing of shoes through chain store organizations with retail outlets is a widely used practice in merchandising shoes; six of the respondents in this study had retail outlets of more than 100 stores. This indicates that the industry is decentralized, to some extent, and that there is a real need for training manager personnel in this field.

2. Present employees of the company are the most used source for recruiting manager personnel, and employees of other retail shoe firms have second preference. This indicates that the companies are looking to their own resources in developing and training managers rather than depending on outside sources.

3. Since a high percentage of the respondents reported a training program for managers, it is indicated that the benefits of such training programs are being widely accepted and utilized. The data also indicate that the respondents feel that there is a definite need for such a program, else it would not be included in their sales activities.

4. There was a unanimous use of on-the-job training reported. The data indicate that the national organizations
are finding this method very valuable in training manager personnel and that they have faith in their own organizations.

5. The work that the managers actually accomplish, it appears from the data, is the main basis for the selection of manager-personnel. Interviews are used to a significant per cent but basically an individual's ability to perform on the job is the deciding factor in his selection or non-selection as manager.

6. In evaluating the success or failure of a manager, his sales records are the most important factor considered according to the majority of the respondents. Since the companies are in business primarily to sell and make a profit, such a conclusion appears to be valid. Of course there are other considerations which enter into the final appraisal of a manager's efficiency, but these are not considered decisive unless they are also accompanied by the ability to sell and make a profit.

7. Likewise, sales ability is considered the most important qualification mentioned by the respondents of the study. Emphasis was also given here to the part that human relations skills play in the management of a store, and this factor was mentioned almost as many times as sales ability. High intelligence and length of experience were also considered desirable but as incidental factors in the final selection. One significant aspect in the answers received
is the small stress placed on college education as a necessary equivalent in manager selection. This does not necessarily mean that a college education is not desirable or that it will not be a help to the manager in the development of his store; it indicates, rather, that sales ability and human relations skills are the important factors and that a manager does not necessarily have to possess a college education to succeed.

8. Managers selected, the data indicate, are individuals who have had some experience in the selling field at the retail level.

9. The number of suggestions offered for training programs indicates a very real interest in the question by the people who are engaged in national shoe chain organizations. This reflects an increasing tendency toward the establishment of training programs by industry in general.
APPENDIX

Letter Sent to National Shoe Retailer's Associations

Dear Sir:

I am asking your help in providing information for a study for a Master's Degree in Business Administration at North Texas State College at Denton, Texas. It is entitled "A Survey of Programs for Developing Store Managers in Retail Shoe Chain Organizations" and it will be a survey of two hundred selected chain shoe store organizations.

Could you send me a list of national shoe chain organizations who are members of your organization. I need this list in order to select organizations to contact.

Please be sure that the information will be used in no way except in compiling a list of organizations to be contacted in this survey.

I would appreciate your cooperation very much.

Yours truly

W. B. Slater, Jr.

Letter sent to National Shoe Store Chain Organizations

Dear Sir:

I am asking your help in providing information for a study for a Master's Degree in Business Administration at North Texas State College in Denton, Texas. It is entitled "A Survey of Programs for Developing Store Managers in Retail Shoe Chain Organizations" and it will be a survey of two hundred selected chain stores to determine the procedure and sources used by the organizations in selecting and training managers for their retail stores.

In order to carry out this study, your cooperation is requested in completing the attached questionnaire. A
stamped addressed envelope is included for your convenience in replying. My study must be completed by July 15, hence an immediate reply is respectfully requested.

Please be sure that the information will be used in no way except in compiling a survey of practices in selecting managers in this particular field. Your company will not be referred to in this study.

I would be very grateful for your help.

Respectfully,

W. B. Slater, Jr.

P. S. For your information the completed survey will be available in the North Texas State College Library after September 15.

---

**Questionnaire Sent to National Shoe Store Chain Organizations**

1. Name of firm

2. Number of retail shoe outlets

3. Does your firm distribute nationally, regionally, or locally?

4. From what sources do you select managers? Please check all used and rank in 1, 2, 3 order according to amount used.

   - Present employees of the company
   - Employees of other retail shoe firms
   - Persons with executive experience in other types of firms
   - Others (Please specify)

5. Do you have a formal training program which specifies a fixed period of time for completion? ___Yes ___No

   If so, how long?
6. Which of these methods do you use in training managers? Please check all used. If one method is highly preferred, please state preference and principal reasons in space at right.

___ Sales conferences  
___ On-the-job training  
___ Position-rotation plan  
___ Understudy positions  
___ Others (Please specify) ________________________________

7. What methods are most often relied upon in selecting persons to be trained as store managers? Check just those used frequently.

___ Records of past performances (including merit ratings)  
___ Tests  
___ Interviews with higher management personnel  
___ Others (Please specify) ________________________________

8. Is there a minimum age for store managers? ___ Yes. ___ No. If so, what is it? ________________________________

9. Are women sometimes used as managers? ___ Yes. ___ No.

10. What method or methods do you use in evaluating the performance of your retail store managers? Please check all used and rank in order of importance.

___ Sales records of stores  
___ Merit rating or appraisal  
___ Others (Please specify) ________________________________

11. What do you consider the most important qualifications for a manager? Please add to the list below if desired, then rank in order of importance.

___ Sales ability  
___ Human relations skills  
___ High intelligence  
___ College education
Length of experience in retail shoe sales work

Others (Please specify)

12. Please estimate the average number of years of retail shoe store experience before promotion to manager.

13. Please state or estimate the normal turnover percentage in store managers per year, from all causes.

14. Do you feel that the training program of your managers could be improved. If so, how?

Signature ___________________________ Position in company ___________________________ Date ________________
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Reports


Unpublished Materials