CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION IN INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION*


States that “The right to be heard implies the right to make suggestions, to receive explanations, to voice complaints and grievances and . . . to appeal in case of differences.” These chapters discuss means of implementing these rights and of getting management information to foremen.


A summary of interviewing methods which have proved useful in resolving or forestalling difficulties in employer-employee relationships through management’s improved understanding of employee attitudes and problems.


Defining “consultative supervision” as a “method of leadership in which supervisors or executives discuss in advance with employees or the representatives of employees plans or policies which will materially affect employee interest,” this article discusses the essential elements of such a program.


Report of a study made in the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance, Social Security Board, of the accuracy with which in-

*Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
structions communicated through conferences and written mem-
ora are interpreted and applied by employees.

and Brothers. 1945. 276 pp. $3.00. Especially Chapter VIII, "The
channels of influence." pp. 148-158.

Much of this book dealing with the day-to-day functioning of an
executive is relevant to problems of communication. Chapter VIII
discusses briefly upward and downward channels of communication.

Evans, J. J. Jr. *Interchanging ideas between management and em-
46. 1941. pp. 8-19. 50 cents.

A history of an employee relations program in the Armstrong Cork
Company.

*Factory Management and Maintenance* (330 West 42nd St., New York
35 cents.

A description of the techniques used in Thompson Products, Inc.
It is stated that "The media Thompson uses . . . are used by many.
. . . But its use of them is unique. It insists that employees have the
story first."

Farquhar, Henry H. "A technique for enlisting employee cooperation in
the improvement of administration." *Personnel,* May, 1946. pp. 422-
429. $1.00.

A study of factors which discourage an employee's best efforts, and
a description of techniques considered essential to the development
of effective cooperation. These techniques include keeping employees
informed of company plans and providing opportunities for employ-
ees to express ideas and criticisms.

Gardner, Burleigh B. *Human relations in industry.* Chicago 4. Richard
D. Irwin, Inc. (332 South Michigan Ave.). 1945. 307 pp. $3.75.

A study of social structure in the factory, emphasizing the importance
of the status of the individual within the structure and its effect
upon the integration of the whole. The problem of two-way com-
munication within the organization is considered as a tool of leader-
ship and as a means of achieving cooperation at all levels.

Heron, Alexander. *Sharing information with employees.* Stanford Uni-
versity, Calif. Stanford University Press. 1942. 204 pp. $2.50.

Analyzes and describes the kinds of information and types of media
found useful in creating better understanding between management
and employees. Emphasizes, in conclusion, the importance of the
"understanding unit" in the line organization. The author believes
that "if the 'understanding unit' has been recognized and fostered, every legitimate medium for sharing information with employees will create new opportunities for the building of understanding . . . if line supervision has not been adopted and prepared as the master medium for sharing information, all the house organs and personal letters in the world, all the other implements for sharing information, will fail to create understanding."


Practical advice on the form of reports, announcements, and letters to employees, and brief consideration of other channels of communication between management and workers.


A brief summary of the various methods of measuring employee attitudes and a more thorough consideration of how to account for the general favorable or unfavorable tone of the attitudes. The author concludes that "the specific morale situation can be genuinely understood only if it is seen against the whole background of modern industrial developments and current social disorganization."


Especially important for its analysis of the reactions of the governed and their governors in situations of emotional stress and for its statement of principles for the guidance of administrators called on to correct stresses. Emphasizes the importance of communication but points out that there is need, in addition, for "an administration with a scientific philosophy . . . [with] stated principles of operation thoroughly familiar to all its members and generally available for others to see."


Chapters IV and V describe the interviewing program and the preceding research projects at the Western Electric Company, and refer briefly to the value of interviews in improving management's understanding of employee sentiments. Chapter VI reports one unionist's criticism of the counseling program as being inadequate to bridge the
gap between the employee and the supervisor. He states that "With only rare exceptions, the writer has observed the breakdown of management's communication system in every industrial plant with which he has anything to do."


Accepting the principle that "Good communications are essential to coordination," the author discusses some of the methods which have proved useful in channeling information upward and downward in an organization.


A brief description of methods used to insure employee understanding of company policies at the Erie Works of the General Electric Company. The methods described are (1) informative meeting plan, (2) foremen-employee contacts, and (3) policy questionnaire.


Report of the experience of the Westinghouse Electric Corporation in attempting to measure the effectiveness of lines of communication "over which policy and response to policy must travel."


Discusses the implications of the Western Electric Company's program at the Hawthorne Works for the development of equilibrium between management's demand for efficiency and the worker's need for personal satisfaction and social acceptance. Stresses the point that "only when the people at the top of the organization understand better the feelings and sentiments of the people at the bottom can they communicate to the bottom what to top management is important, in a manner which will obtain the understanding and acceptance of those at the bottom."