PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND THE
PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEE*

October, 1956. 14 pp. $1.00.

Data submitted by 89 executives cover recruiting, training, salary schedules, turnover rates, personnel practices, and special problems presented by professional employees.

Critchfield, Charles L. “Directing the work of engineers and scientists.”

Principles followed in directing research in the Convair Division, General Dynamics Corporation stress the importance of maintaining professional standards, freedom from rigid schedules, appropriate recognition both inside and outside the organization, and integration of the different approaches of the scientist and the engineer to research problems.


The professional employee is distinct from management and has distinct needs: (1) he needs to make a contribution to the enterprise and to know what it is; (2) he must have promotional opportunities and these should preferably not be to administrative jobs; (3) he must have financial incentives for improved performance; (4) he must be treated as a professional and not be supervised; and (5) he needs professional recognition both inside and outside the firm.


Although directed to representatives of the steel industry, the points made in this paper are of equal interest to any industry with an ex-

*Items from this list should be ordered directly from the publisher. Addresses are given in connection with each reference.
panding need for technical personnel. The author holds that a solution to the problem of a short supply of highly educated manpower depends on "substitution of other human resources for highly trained professional personnel wherever possible; use of incentives appropriate for development of the highest possible potential of the professional staff, and development of more sophisticated management."


This report is based on intensive study of practices affecting research groups in industrial, governmental, and university research laboratories. Surveys extent of group research, number and kinds of research personnel employed, composition of research teams, and extent of interdisciplinary research. Emphasis is on the role of communications in group problem solving. Personnel practices, especially those concerned with financial and non-financial incentives, are reported briefly.


The chapters indicated are devoted to personnel management in the research laboratory. They cover such topics as personnel characteristics and qualifications of research workers, recruiting and selection, orientation, salary policy, personnel policies, personnel problems, and means of furthering the development of the individual.


A compilation of papers presented by representatives of industry and the universities at an Institute conference.


Presents in summary form the results of psychological studies of the intelligence, personality, and job attitudes of scientists. From these data the conclusion is drawn that scientists differ little, if at all, from other people and that, therefore, management would do well to stop regarding them as eccentrics and to start applying sound personnel policies to them.

Problems discussed at this round table sponsored by the National Industrial Conference Board include determination of professional salary rates, maintenance of equitable salary structures in a tight labor market, and points to be considered in establishing an incentive bonus plan for supervisors and technicians.


Results of attitude surveys conducted by the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Chicago indicate that engineers and natural scientists employed in industry "tend to be chronically frustrated and dissatisfied. Factors in the morale of professional employees revolve primarily around a fundamental conflict ... between [their] expectations and values ... and the opportunities which they have to realize their ambitions and interests as professionals in the industrial setting."


The criteria recommended are divided into two sections, one applying to the employers and the other to engineers themselves. Criteria for employers cover all aspects of the employment relationship from recruitment through termination.


Believes that engineers and other professional employees should be treated as members of the management organization and as members of a profession. The program outlined includes fair compensation, information and consultation regarding company production and research requirements, appropriate methods of bringing grievances to the attention of top management, time and facilities for maintaining professional status, and emphasis on ideas which contribute to the long-run worth of the business.


An important step toward easing the shortage of engineers would be to increase the productivity of those already employed in industry. This article discusses organizational problems which interfere with releasing the creative potential of technical personnel, particularly the differing roles of the administrative and the operating engineer. The author advocates the equalization of the status and financial rewards of these two types of careers and the adoption of a philosophy which recognizes that "the real product of the organization is the
skill and potential creativity of the operating engineer," while the chief value of the administrative engineer rests in "his ability to release that creativity" rather than to direct and control.


A 1950-1951 study for the Bureau of Labor Statistics based on interviews with 407 Ph.D.'s in physics, biology, and chemistry. The chief reasons given for voluntarily leaving a job, for preferring one offered position to another, or for remaining on a job despite other offers were interest of the work, earnings and opportunities for advancement provided by it, and working conditions on the job.


Questions the practice of making promotion to upper salary brackets dependent upon taking an executive position in the case of the creative type of engineer. The author suggests several possible solutions to the problem of how to develop the abilities of individuals with aptitudes for developmental or for administrative work, including separate promotional ladders.


Report of a survey of personnel procedures and personnel problems in twelve firms of varying size and industrial type. Subjects covered in interviews with research directors include selection, induction, rating, promotion, and training. Concludes that "The challenge of research is one of the greatest faced by personnel administration."


Because of manpower shortages and growing needs, the salaries of scientists and engineers need to be brought in line with those of other key management personnel. Since scientific personnel are likely to be skeptical of the ability of personnel staffs to work out acceptable salary structures for them, the author suggests that the task be assigned to a group of senior scientists in the organization. This participation in solving their own problems should increase the acceptability of the solution to the group.