

## 2. METHODS OF TRAINING BOOK PERSONNEL

In the previous section various methods of training are suggested as applicable to particular personnel at different levels. The following points are offered as further guide-lines.

### In-service (on-job) training

93. It is the responsibility of every Manager or Head of Department to ensure that all staff under his or her direction have not only adequate supervision and guidance, but also demonstrations and expositions of the particular technical skills or knowledge required. This is not simply for the sake of proficiency, and the minimising of wasted time and money. It is also to enable staff, if they are capable of taking greater responsibility, to exercise it and thus increase their job-satisfaction and prospects of continued advancement.

94. In-service training is not learning by watching someone else, who may have done the job for years in their own way; for this is how errors are perpetuated or even magnified. It is active direction in the purpose of the job and discussion on the best way to do it; the job's place in the total operation of the organisation: the definition of the scope and limits of it: and the lines of communication with superiors and with other departments.

95. Effective in-service training is that which is also bolstered by regular staff assessments; by the release of staff where possible and applicable for outside courses and the encouragement to take correspondence courses; and in larger organisations by periodic discussions or presentations to staff at all levels of aspects of the work of the whole organisation and of activities related to it.

### Induction training

96. All branches of organisations concerned with the publication and distribution of books require the services of junior staff whose initial skills may be confined to typing, book-keeping, etc. Such personnel should immediately on joining be introduced to the work and purpose of the organisation as a whole, of their particular department and of their own place in it: the people with whom they or their immediate superiors have regular communications: the necessary procedures and any technical "jargon" they may come across or need to use. Further and more detailed instruction should be undertaken as a matter of course.

### Courses and Workshops

97. These can and do take many different forms. Recent examples in which developing countries of the Commonwealth have participated include -

- (a) Series of 3-day courses for teachers in Sierra Leone and also Nigeria on school librarianship directed by an expert from the U.K. (organised by the British Council).
- (b) "Editing of Books", a six-day course in Kuala Lumpur with 31 participants and 15 lecturers (Malaysian Book Publishers Association and the Language and Literature

Agency of Malaysia).

- (c) East African Book Publishers Seminar, Nairobi, 11 days. Three tutors from U.K. (Overseas Development Administration).
- (d) Four seven-day courses at the University of Ibadan, two for sales assistants, two for senior assistants and junior managers, on Bookselling, attended in all by 144 participants. Two organisers from U.K. (British Council and Book Development Council).
- (e) Eight-week Training Course on Book Production in Asia at the Tokyo Book Development Centre attended by twenty participants from 16 countries including Ceylon, India, Malaysia, Singapore (Japanese National Commission for Unesco).
- (f) Six-week Unesco Workshop on Publishing Management in Nairobi. Two directors, one from Unesco and one local expert.
- (g) Four-week Unesco Training Course and Workshop on Children's Books and Book Design and Illustration, sponsored in Colombo by the Sri Lanka National Commission for Unesco. Two directors supplied by Unesco; one an expert in book design and illustration from U.K; the other the Senior Education Officer of the Commonwealth Secretariat who has special responsibilities in the field of the development of national book industries and the training of personnel.

98. From the reports and experience of these and other courses and workshops several points emerge.

- (a) Each participant must be made fully aware beforehand of the purpose of the course, the reasons why he is attending, and what he or his employers hope to gain from it. (If this observation appears blatantly obvious, it has nevertheless been proved time and again to be a valid recommendation!)
- (b) Unless individual tuition to small groups is feasible, all participants must as near as possible have the same background knowledge and experience in their fields.
- (c) The course programme and tuition must be geared to the particular needs, circumstances and knowledge of the participants, and to the regional or national situation. It is particularly important when experts are being provided from developed countries that all relevant details about the participants and about local circumstances should be supplied before the programme is finalised. Too often valuable time

has been wasted by the need to change, revise or even prepare the programme on the spot - or by tutors unwittingly discussing topics at a level which is outside the understanding or immediate experience of the participants.

- (d) Whatever the subject of the course, some practical work or exercises need to be devised as near as possible to the day-to-day problems which the participants are likely to meet on their return to their jobs. At its simplest, but nevertheless vital, form this might be the drafting of letters, internal memoranda, etc., to meet particular situations or to communicate essential information.
- (e) The directors of the courses referred to in paragraph 97 above (f and g) extended this philosophy. For the purposes of the course on Publishing Management, the participants formed a fictitious publishing company, with all the relevant documentation and constitution, financial provision, Board of Directors, Board Meetings, planning sessions, etc. As an aid to the training programme, the Unesco Sri Lanka Workshop actually became a publishing organisation, and within the duration of the course published a 48-page anthology of work for children, planned, written, designed and illustrated by the participants themselves, and in three different languages. Three different type-setting and printing processes were used at three printers, and many of the participants were able to see their own work being processed and printed.

### Pre-service training

99. Pre-service qualifications and education in design and illustration, librarianship and printing have been discussed above (see paras. 36, 46, 71, 88, 90). A three-year Diploma Course in Book Publishing has been instituted at Oxford Polytechnic in the U.K., and degree course has been instituted at Delhi University (see Appendix 4). Experience of all such courses, and of the year's course in Writing, Production and Distribution of Textbooks for overseas students, under the auspices of the Department of Education in Tropical Areas, University of London Institute of Education, shows that a vital part of pre-service training (and in the case of publishing and related crafts, the vital part) is the release of students for practical on-job training during their course of study. But this can only be really effective if the organisation to which a student is allocated is sympathetic to and understanding of that particular student's needs, and this "course within a course" should be prepared and discussed beforehand with each organisation by those responsible for the main course.

### Study-tours

100. It has been suggested that the reluctance on the part of some developing countries to take full advantage of the facilities available in developed countries for the training of book personnel has less to do with expense and priorities, than with the difficulty of defining the individual's

requirements. And it is one of the purposes of this document to attempt to resolve this difficulty.

101. When study-tours are being arranged, there is often insufficient information given by the government initiating the visit as to the standing, knowledge and experience of the student and of the purpose for which he is being sent. While this is often the basic cause of an unsatisfactory programme, it is equally true that too little professional expertise is sometimes exercised in the planning, particularly in the case of specialist fields like editing or book production. This can result in the student's needs not being fully satisfied, and in the duplication of aspects of the instruction which he receives.

102. Governments who are prepared to offer study-tours for book personnel need to have available when needed someone who is fully conversant with the particular field in which instruction is required, who will not only plan or advise on the programme but can also supervise it from start to finish, keeping in touch with the student and his progress.

#### Consultant missions

103. Undoubtedly the greatest influence in book development is that which can be and has been exercised by the provision of a consultant in a particular field of experience for a period which may be anything from six weeks to a year or longer.

104. Depending on the length of time for which he is available, an consultant can -

- (a) Make a general survey and assessment of existing facilities and their effectiveness, to be used both by the national government as a basis for future planning, and by the sponsoring government or organisation for follow-up missions or further aid.
- (b) Spend what time is needed or available in a particular organisation or organisations in order to advise on management, techniques and the training of personnel.
- (c) Conduct, where relevant, intensive training courses in various parts of the country.

105. The realisation of the effectiveness of this kind of operation is such that the day of the "professional expert" might be said to be dawning. Apart from obvious exceptions, of which the Bookseller Officer of the Book Development Council (U.K.) is a shining example, it might be a pity if that day were to become too much of a reality. It is not simply that it is advantageous if the consultant is currently practising the craft he comes to teach and is fully conversant with its newest developments and their application. It is also that his release on a short-term assignment to a region where the circumstances may be totally different from those he is meeting in his normal day-to-day work is likely to prove both challenging and refreshing: to the benefit of his own job on his return, and to his own staff, who have the opportunity to learn by taking on the extra responsibility necessitated by his absence.

106. Provided the consultant is prepared and able to understand difficulties which he may never himself have faced and is adept at grasping the most suitable solution to a particular problem; then it is his own expertise in his craft and the ability to expound it, rather than necessarily any first-hand experience of the conditions, that are the most essential factors. But once again full briefing is vital on the part of the sponsoring organisation as to the purpose and actual programme of the mission. Often time, effort and strength are expended on background research on arrival which could equally well have been done at home: or, to which so many of those with mission-experience will testify, there is the all-too-frequent anxiety as to whether there is a bed/air-conditioning at the next port of call, or even whether one is expected at all!

#### Priorities

107. Recent experience has shown, and aid-giving organisations are now generally agreed, that training workshops "on the spot" on a national or regional basis, are generally the most economic and effective method of training personnel in the basic skills necessary for the establishment of a viable local book industry. Among the priorities nominated by the participants in the Delhi Seminar were workshops in the following subjects, roughly in order of importance depending on local situations -

- a) Publishing management
- b) Editing\*
- c) Production techniques for publishing personnel
- d) Book design and illustration
- e) The production and distribution of textbooks
- f) The publication of children's books
- g) Distribution and marketing techniques
- h) Bookselling
- i) The functions of the teacher-librarian
- j) The techniques of translation and the production of multilingual editions

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\*See also Appendix 5