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James L. Centner

Vice President, Finance & Administration The Hess & Eisenhardt Company

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FACT OR FICTION?

James L. Centner

Vice President, Finance & Administration
 The Hess & Eisenhardt Company
 Cincinnati, Ohio 45242

Far away, located in previously uncharted waters, there exists an imaginary island conceived in Maslovian reveries. It is a sheltered place, inhabited by one thousand self-actualizing people, who dominate a culture produced under constant study. This study produces some rather deep questions, albeit very real questions, such as, how good a society does human nature permit? Or conversely, how good a human nature does society permit?

The island phantasm just mentioned is named Eupsychia, and it is different from Utopia or Dystopia in that a "eupsychian" culture could imply only real possibility and improbability, rather than certainty, prophesy, inevitability, perfectability, and so forth. So, . . . "Eupsychian" as used in the title of this address is simply a word coined by Maslow to connote a striving for constant improvement - in this case, in management.

Why should he bother? Well, he rather testily stated "I am quite aware of the possibility that all mankind may be wiped out. But it is also possible that it won't be wiped out. Thinking about the future, and even trying to bring it about is, therefore, still a good idea. In an age of rapid automation, it is even a necessary task."

With that introduction to remove the mystery of the title, let's now turn to what should be one of our favorite subjects - management. The catchy title was designed to tickle your interest, at least to the point that you are ready to consider just where we have been in management, and whither we are heading. If you are here simply to learn the vocabulary of the day, that in itself is a worthy objective. In the last thirty years, management as a body of knowledge, an art, a science, or an interdisciplinary has been categorized as being in "an eternal triangle". Some might even describe it as a distinct trilogy in the classical meaning, i.e. a series of disconnected tragedies. It begins the moment work expands to the point that one man can not do it alone, and from then on weaves a rather tortuous and laborious route to one of the three most prevalent approaches in the field of human direction and control.

The literature in the three fields is extensive and widely available, and I shall not presume to even attempt to review this for you. To set in focus the papers to follow, let's at least review and identify:

1. THE PROCESS SCHOOL, which dates to the father of American scientific management, Frederick Winslow

Taylor, after whom the old Taylor Society was named, and which was the forerunner of the Society for Advancement of Management, chartered in 1912. It has its roots in an industrial engineering environment, in which it is presumed that man is mechanistically oriented, and economically motivated. It systematizes work, designs specific and efficient working conditions, dotes on time and motion study, hopes to provide incentive systems all directed at maximum output per man hour. Out of it grew methods-time measurement, and the great work of the Gilbreths and Maynard.

2. THE ORGANIZATION THEORY SCHOOL, which emphasizes the organization of jobs in the proper manner, and holds that proper job structure will be efficient, and will provide favorable job attitudes. Discussion and emphasis here centers on functional versus line and staff organization, span of control theory, triangle of authority, division of responsibility, organization charts, and proper decentralization of responsibility and authority. This is the school tutored by such great contributors as Ralph Currier Davis, Lyndon Urwick, Harold Koontz, George Terry, John Mee and of course Peter Drucker.

3. THE BEHAVIORAL SCHOOL projected itself onto the scene long before many surface observers give it credit for except it was called by a less fashionable name. In infancy, it was the "industrial psychology school", and began at the turn of the century, long before the Hawthorne experiments, generally pointed to as the "real" emergence of the behavioralist. There is simply no question that a human relations theory was emerging before Elton Mayo began his experiments for Western Electric in Chicago between 1927 and 1932. But as Gellerman has pointed out, even if Mayo was not the innovator, he was a remarkably successful evangelist. And he put the focus directly on arbitrary or impersonal management.

As in all fields, later research by other psychologists supported Mayo in his conclusion that man has an inherent desire to belong to a protective group in which the individual could comfortably submerge himself, and disagreed widely with some of his generalizations and dubious assumptions. He really concentrated on shooting down the process school's historic organization of work, which to him seemed to betray an underlying notion that workers were, on the whole, a rather scurvy lot. Again Saul Gellerman points out that Mayo called this assumption the "rabble hypothesis" and spent most of his mature years attacking it as false, inefficient, and destructive. 2

From this, the school moved into the widely-quoted research and literature of today, with such great contributors as Likert, Vroom, Herzberg, Whyte, Argyris, McGregor, McClelland, Gellerman, and of course, Maslow. Time and space do not permit wide review of the theories and conclusions of all of these, but a few general observations might be made.

You are all familiar with Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of self-actualization, and that you move from being safety-need gratified to belongingness-need satisfied, then love-need gratified, through respect-need, and finally to self-esteem. I confess to a managerial snicker to this passage from Maslow (as a manager, not a psychologist) "After talking recently with various students and professors who "wanted to work with me" on self-actualization, I discovered that I was very suspicious of most of them and rather discouraging, tending to expect little from them. This is a consequence of long experience with multitudes of starry-eyed dilettantes - big talkers, great planners, tremendously enthusiastic - who come to nothing as soon as a little hard work is required. So I have been speaking to these individuals in a pretty blunt and tough and non-encouraging way. I have spoken about dilettantes for instance (as contrasted with workers and doers), and indicated my contempt for them. I have mentioned how often I have tested people with these fancy aspirations simply by giving them a rather dull but important and worthwhile job to do. Nineteen out of twenty fail the test." This is what managers have been doing for years, with no broad knowledge of applied psychology, in management development programs.

Now along comes Fred Herzberg to shatter another stack of myths, and to talk about KITA and his hygiene-motivation theory, summing up like this "The argument for job enrichment can be summed up quite simply: If you have someone on a job, use him. If you can't use him on the job, get rid of him, either via automation or by selecting someone with lesser ability. If you can't use him and you can't get rid of him, you will have a motivation problem."

As a business manager, and as a key-noter, I am inclined to optimism, and to conclude that all schools of management have something to offer, if only we are anxious to learn. To deny the impact of management psychology - or better, the use of demonstrable results of psychological research in management - would be to deny the dynamism around us. No human institution is unaffected by the forces of social and cultural change that make up the history of our times. Management has been strongly influenced by the social, cultural and intellectual forces of its milieu; one of the chief reasons is that it has bothered to make a critical study of its schools and practices. The refreshing thing about a critical review of the literature of the field and management's current preoccupation with it is that overriding all other considerations is an attempt to make work more meaningful. If through this research and preoccupation, feelings of self-fulfillment in work can be experienced by many more people, then it will have been eminently worthwhile.

Now let us turn from this sparse and scant review, to consider one of the essential ingredients in whatever theoretical

school of management you find yourself in - leadership. You and I should be vitally concerned about it, whether from the view of one who leads, or one who is led. There is much evidence in the literature of management to indicate that the need to be led is as great as it ever was, and, as Gellerman puts it "The human relations enthusiast must somehow reconcile his theories with the facts that not only does industry as a whole continue to be run on an authoritarian basis but it even seems to be thriving on it." And Leavitt notes, as Gellerman did and Herzberg does, that "human relations advocates have swept the field so thoroughly that they have very nearly fallen into the same trap - overgeneralizing - in which they caught the "scientific manager". Herzberg is even more direct: "The failure of human relations training to produce motivation led to the conclusion that the supervisor or manager himself was not psychologically true to himself in his practice of inter-personal decency. So an advanced form of human relations KITA, sensitivity training, was unfolded." I'll not pursue this sensitivity training opportunity, other than to express, with Herzberg, a certain amount of skepticism.

It seems to me that leadership is the dominant ingredient of a successful enterprise or activity, and it is the nadir that produces the open communications, mutual trust and mutual support so vital for a management team.

If I asked all of you to review performance of leaders you have known, you'd be surprised how much uniformity you would find in arriving at three tongue-in-cheek categories of the GROSSLY INADEQUATE, THE AVERAGE, and THE VERY FEW. Peter Drucker rather succinctly remarked that the one great commodity we have in the United States in super-abundance is incompetence. Incompetent leadership stifles and destroys, no matter what system or school of management is involved.

There are some definite, identifiable characteristics possessed in common by leaders:

1. High level of psychic energy.
2. Intuitive judgment.
3. Genuine self-reliance.

A study by Bailey⁸ listed them as:

1. Successful management of stress situations.
2. Self-expendable attitude.
3. Capacity to concentrate - to "Plunge in" for the sake of challenge.
4. A model influence.

It was in this study that the "to whom do you first look for approbation after you have solved a difficult task?" question was answered with a resounding "me" from most respondents.

Another recent study by Ready⁹ gives us:

1. Self-awareness

2. Social sensitivity
3. Behavioral flexibility
4. Moral integrity

All of these seem to me to be rather directly correlated, and while not one even presumes to indicate how these characteristics are acquired - they believe they are familial or environmental in character - they all conclude that leaders possess them in some degree.

What then can you do? For one thing you can decide via insight whether you are really satisfied with the image you think you project. Then you can look to these seven steps to maturation as an executive:

1. Stay active, interested and involved. Do not permit your learning curve to flatten out at age 25.
2. Hold aloof from the malingers, the chronically disaffected, the clique around the water cooler.
3. Enjoy what you're doing. Learn to immerse yourself in the project for the sake of the challenge.
4. Participate in the extra-curricular. Include professional societies, reading, civic affairs.
5. Seek out responsibility.
6. Set realistic goals for yourself and work toward them.
7. SET the EXAMPLE.

There is a story about a grasshopper who was advised by an ant to change himself into a cockroach to avoid having to collect provisions for the winter. This sounded like a grand idea. On the third hop away, the grasshopper realized he had forgotten one essential element of information, so he hopped back and asked the ant how to go about changing himself into the cockroach. To which this rather eupsychian ant replied: "Oh, I am the conceptualist, I create ideas. You'll have to work out the details."

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