

FROM THE EDITOR

PROGRESS BY MEANS OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

THE key to successful scientific management can be stated in the four words:-

PLAN, ORGANISE, LEAD and CONTROL.

A series of articles is currently appearing in this journal which cover certain aspects of these four management functions. The first article on the Planning function of a manager, by our President, Mr. G. J. Botha, appeared in the May, 1970, issue and the second article on Leadership, appeared in the August, 1970, issue. This issue carries an article on the function of Organising and the January, 1971, issue will have the final article on the Control function.

A manager should be a man of many parts. He should know the principles and practices of buying, selling and marketing, of production, of finance and accountancy, of personnel management and of administration. He should develop and apply his personal talents of drive and leadership and be acceptable as a person socially and in his business relationships. In fact, he should be a superman to cope satisfactorily with such "super" responsibilities.

PLANNING

To assist the manager in this onerous task various techniques have been formulated, so that even an ordinary human being may perform reasonably well in a managerial post. The technique of planning teaches one to define the target to be achieved, and to determine the programme and time schedule to achieve that target.

The stated objectives of a company may include an aggressive marketing approach, leading to maximum growth. In this connection, the corporate plan should always provide for improving the company's relative share of the market. The alternative to striving for growth is to accept stagnation.

A corporate plan should therefore also make provision for adequate funds to be invested in education and applied research. It has often been stated that the majority of the products which will dominate the market in 20 years time, do not yet exist. Twenty years ago, nobody could envisage the general acceptance of wall-to-wall carpeting, of air conditioned office buildings, of computerised accounting systems or of tape controlled manufacturing operations. But these products and processes were developed by research teams. Therefore, if a company wants to lead in its particular sector of the market, it must apply funds to develop new products and processes, to capture the market of the future.

I have dealt rather extensively with some aspects of planning, to indicate the importance that this function should be carried out by top management for all activities of a company, and to the requisite depth, so that middle management will have a clear directive of the objectives of the company.

ORGANISING

The next task of top management is to determine the type of organisation which is best suited to achieve these objectives.

This may be a functional structure, where each function is performed by a centralised, specialist unit, or a decentralised structure, where the company is divided into a number of independent units on the basis of products or geographic regions. Organisation also includes the technique of delegating responsibilities and authority. A manager must plan which work and/or decisions he himself must handle and which he may delegate. But he can only delegate to the extent to which he can control the results. Line and staff relationships are also part of the organisational plan.

LEADING

A manager must lead his people, and create the climate to enable middle management to lead and motivate people to achieve the targets set for them and to be keen to render the service required of them. The techniques of leadership include those of decision making, communication, motivation, personnel selection and personnel development.

CONTROLLING

A manager must control the results achieved by means of the measurement and evaluation of performance, and the comparison thereof with the standards set in the corporate plan and in the various subordinate departmental plans. He must take corrective steps to bring deviations into line.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The techniques of coping with the arduous task of management have been developed in sufficient detail to enable each manager to apply them to his particular needs.

Those who feel that they still lack in proficiency in certain respects may consider taking one of the courses indicated below:

1. POST GRADUATE:

A Master's or Doctor's degree in Management at one of our universities. The University of South Africa offers correspondence courses.

2. POST-MATRIC:

The National Diploma in Business Management at the Colleges for Advanced Technical

Education at Pretoria, the Witwatersrand, Cape Town, Durban or the Vaal Triangle. The Witwatersrand College offers a correspondence course.

3. AFTER STD. 8:

Private correspondence courses for the examinations of the South African Institute of Management.

4. IN INDUSTRY:

Seminars and lectures, as arranged by the National Development and Management Foundation of South Africa and management courses as presented by the consultants in this field.

5. FOR PRACTICING MANAGERS:

Membership of a professional management organisation provides the opportunity of keeping contact with the developments in management techniques through its journal and the lectures or conferences which are arranged from time to time. And by contributing an article to the journal one is often forced to do more research work and to formulate ideas clearly and logically to one's own benefit.

I would like to encourage every Manager or prospective Manager to further qualify himself in the art and techniques of scientific management.


