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ABSTRACT

In response both to a growing national grumbling about the need for educational accountability and to a felt need to better define and focus on district priorities, the Madison Public Schools adopted a mangement by objectives (MBO) program in 1970. It is on the basis of three years' experience with this program that this book has been written. The publication begins by describing the "change dilemma" that many educators find themselves in. It then examines those observations and assumptions underlying supervision and evaluation in an organization and provides the rationale for the MBO process. Next, it describes the "management contract" that serves as the primary vehicle for operationalizing the MBO process. The publication discusses the prerequisite questions that must be examined by those who would implement an MBO program in their school system, recommends some orientation procedures, and presents ideas for writing contracts. The process of monitoring and evaluating the contract results is described, and problems that implementors should anticipate once an MBO program is installed are discussed. The book concludes with answers to 18 commonly asked questions about implementing an MBO program in a school system. An extensive bibliography is included. (Author/DN)

Applying MBO to School Systems:

A Case Study

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Preface

The little red school house "ain't" what it used to be - as a matter of fact, most institutions and organizations "ain't" what they used to be. Churches, courts, universities, social agencies, small businesses and giant corporations are under increasing stress from vocal constituencies to change their ways or to at least become more efficient in what they are doing.

For example, numerous articles have identified schisms and disagreements in what were once monolithic church organizations. Civil liberties attorneys as well as corporation lawyers are demanding that courts consider more expeditious machinery to prevent litigation from being held up for several years. Vocal groups describe a welfare "mess" and demand changes. Environmentalists attack the smokestacks and exhaust fumes of the giant corporations and seek legislation to curb these once-accepted dangers. Radical students and conservative taxpayers team up for one rare instance to declare that education isn't worth the price tag. For sure, the public is not always certain what it is that it wants, nor is there any assurance that if the changes sought were granted, that satisfaction would result. Nonetheless, the demands for change remain, and if authors like Alvin Toffler *(Future Shock)* and Marshall McLuhan *(Understanding Media)* are to be believed, this demand for change will not be abated in the near future.

Nor is the demand for change confined only to those constituencies external to the organization. Managers and professionals within organizations also see needs to strike out in new directions. Perhaps this is in response to the public clamor, or because each decade produces a higher degree of technical knowledge among professionals, or maybe the growing affluence of the country supports a more creative boldness than was possible in previous years.

Involvement in change can be an exhilarating experience. However, such involvement can also be frustrating: (1) The wrong things are changed. (2) Change is precipitated too fast or only allowed to move at a snail's pace. (3) People dedicate years to developing procedures or programs only to have their efforts changed for reasons they don't understand. (4) The organization becomes so involved in the change motif that it has increasing difficulty in sorting out and maintaining a focus on proper organizational priorities. Addressing the concerns implied in No. 4 is one of the functions of this book.

The Madison Public School System is not unlike hundreds of larger and thousands of smaller school systems across the country. In response to the growing national grumbling about a need for educational accountability plus a felt need to better define and focus on district priorities, the Madison Public Schools adopted a management by objectives program in 1970. For some "school watchers" the adoption of MBO by the school system seemed to be a rather dangerous departure from the more casual practices of the past. Others viewed it as a "gimmick" not dissimilar to many other new approaches introduced to education - approaches which often fade away or are sufficiently compromised to be rendered harmless. Still others saw in MBO a means for solving all of education's problems in a scientific and businesslike manner. Fortunately, though, most viewed MBO as neither panacea nor dangerous departure, but rather as a reasonable means of establishing priorities and for directing the supervisory and evaluation resources of the district toward those priorities. The final verdict as to which of the observations is most appropriate is probably still several years off.

In 1970 relatively few school systems had adopted MBO or had given much consideration to applying such a procedure to their operations. At the end of three years, though, much movement had taken place. In February of 1973 *Education U.S.A.* observed that "Fifty school systems and 10 state education agencies have already adopted the concept, and scores of administrators are looking at it."[1] The increasing number of articles in educational journals and the development of seminars on the subject by professional educator organizations lend support to the observation.

Education U.S.A. also noted that "The most comprehensive MBO program is reputed to be the one run by the Madison Public Schools, which have developed 'management contracts' with each administrator."[2] It is on the basis of three years' experience with such a program that this book has been written. If in truth ". . . scores of administrators are looking at it . . .", some contribution from those who have logged experience with the process could be helpful. Unfortunately, little has been written by practitioners up to this point.

Chapter I briefly describes the "change dilemma" that many educators find themselves in today - a dilemma that supports the need by school systems (and other organizations) to find some means to focus on priorities. Chapter II examines those observations and assumptions underlying supervision and evaluation in an organization and provides the rationale for the MBO process. Field testing data concerning the observations and assumptions described in this chapter are found in Appendix A.

Chapter III describes the "management contract" which serves as the primary vehicle for operationalizing the MBO process. Chapter IV discusses the prerequisite questions that must be examined by those who would implement an MBO program in their school system and also recommends some orientation procedures. Chapter V provides extensive description

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[1]See all numbered footnotes at end of book.

along with recommendations for writing the contract. Monitoring and evaluating the contract results are described in Chapter VI. Chapter VII discusses several problems that implementors should anticipate once an MBO program is implemented. The final chapter, VIII, lists and answers 18 questions most commonly asked about implementing an MBO program in a school system. []

1

"The Faster I Run the Behinder I Get"

About a decade ago the musical comedy, "Stop the World, I Want to Get Off" was produced. The story line was, in part, a social commentary on the frantic pace of contemporary society — a pace that is sometimes directionless. Only a few years later *Future Shock*[1] was published and became an immediate popular success. Author Alvin Toffler's major theme warned that the rapid acceleration of change in our society was leading to social disorientation or "future shock." ' More simply stated, people find it increasingly difficult to cope with the constant changes in this technological era. Whether comedy or documented analysis, the message in both cases is similar — unless people get some kind of "handle" to hold on to, the velocity of change may paralyze them or suck them up into a whirlwind of directionless motion.

Probably no one faces this conundrum more regularly than does the educator. Few in education would ever have anticipated how dramatically the environment would change over the past couple of decades. The simplicity of "the little red school house" has reality today only in Walt Disney movies. Some claim it was the Russian Sputnik that moved the educational enterprise out of a rather sheltered cloister and into the rough and tumble of the mainstream. Others claim the impetus for change is a residual of the civil rights movement, the consumer movement, the taxpayer revolt or maybe the natural result of an increasingly mobile and affluent society. Whatever the reasons, few would deny that most school systems across the country are bending and in some cases convulsing under change or the demands for change.

It seems productive to one of the themes developed in this book — that there are some "handles" that can give direction — to briefly survey some of the ingredients that have either precipitated or contributed to the changing environment of education. Such a survey

may not be all-inclusive nor do the problems identified apply with equal intensity to all school districts. Other books have examined the individual problems in much more detail. The intent here is simply to summarize some of the major problems and changes that seem to perplex most educators and often create instability or uncertainty to their efforts.

Certainly one of the more pronounced ingredients in precipitating educational change was the student activist movement of the late 1960's. "Irrelevant" was the battle cry and while most people found the antics of the militants to be appalling, their cause was not without impact. Educators found themselves under survival pressure to reassess their programs in order to either refute the charges or to administer some changes.

Nor did they find much solace at that time inside the establishment. J. Lloyd Trump,[2] Dwight Allen,[3] and B. Frank Brown[4] were also advocating substantial changes in the school organization. Nearer the fringes of the establishment, the critical books of Kozol, [5] Holt[6] and Silberman[7] became best sellers. Much of the early activism had strong philosophical and political overtones. But just when most educators were coming to grips with "relevance," Herbert Marcuse and SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), the momentum of the movement shifted into a more respectable arena, the courts. Both activist and moderate critics discovered the courts were not necessarily hostile when "due process" or "equal protection of the laws" were under consideration. Following the Tinker case[8] a host of litigation saw changes take place in dress codes, hair length, and underground newspapers. More recently the Gault decision[9] and the eighteen-year-old majority have compounded the problems educators must wrestle with.

The courts have been active (and sometimes conflicting) on other fronts as well. Class action suits have been filed on behalf of special education students against those school districts who have not provided adequate programs.[10] Integration, busing, aid to parochial schools and standardized testing have been debated in a variety of public forums and in some cases scrutinized by the courts.

While the courts have been active, so have the legislatures. An increasing number of states have passed legislation allowing public employees to form collective bargaining units.[11] Collective bargaining is still unfamiliar territory for many educators. Few have any training in the processes. Boards of Education and administrators who ten years ago defiantly stated there was "no way" that they were going to negotiate with teachers are now "up to their ears" in negotiations, arbitration, grievances, mediation, etc. Parenthetically, it was also about the same ten years ago that the same Boards of Education haughtily announced that they had no intention of "feeding at the trough" of federal aid. A lot has changed in this area as well.

Whether or not these events have confused the public more regarding what they expect from their schools is uncertain. It is reasonably certain, however, that the public has remained fragmented as to their expectations. For example, bitter debates occur in many districts regarding sex education. Not since the Scopes trial has the theory of evolution received so much attention. The drug culture was somehow perceived as primarily a school problem, and massive amounts of money have been poured into drug education to the consternation of those who feel that schools should concentrate on the "3R's." While some critics and parents excoriated the schools as "joyless prison-like institutions,"[12] others are condemning the same schools as too permissive. Feminists and racial minority groups allege that text book materials do not treat their concerns fairly, while right-wing elements complain that the same material makes a mockery of patriotism.

Despite the confusion, however, and despite writers like Ivan Illich who would do away with formal schooling entirely,[14] the demands on the schools have been for more services, rather than fewer. By federal decree, schools with any economically deprived students (which means practically all schools) are expected to institute hot lunch programs if the district expects to continue receiving federal assistance.[15] Draft counseling, once thought to be the function of the local draft board, has become a major responsibility of high school counselors with the blessing and assistance of the Federal Selective Service office. Black studies classes have increased at about the same rate that Russian classes have declined. Ecology-minded citizens want to know what the schools intend to do about cleaning up the world. Day care advocates observe that the schools are a natural place for day care centers and find support (and occasional opposition) from early childhood education advocates who favor starting formal education at age 3 or 4. Career education was recently boosted into a priority setting by the U.S. Office of Education, while at the same time the vocational efforts are labeled "too little, too late".[16]

As the public frustrations increase, so do the costs. Committees have been appointed at the national, state and local levels to see what might be done to relieve the taxes on the property owner. Few acceptable answers have been found, though. With the authority of collective negotiations behind them, teachers demand a larger piece of the economic pie with smaller work loads. This is bewildering to the man on the street who sees the teaching function as lots of vacations and little accountability. The taxpayer revolt, given additional legitimacy by Phase II of President Nixon's wage-price freeze, resulted in many of the metropolitan school systems operating in the red while others balance the books only by major cutbacks in program. All of this is further complicated by a decreasing student population (primarily at the elementary level), the closing of parochial schools and urban sprawl which develops population centers where there are no schools, and, conversely, schools where there are no populations.

As difficult as these problems are and will continue to be, they might be slightly less difficult to deal with if society remained quite stable. Such, however, is not the case. Both Alvin Toffler and Vance Packard[17] have documented the increasing mobility of the population. Mobile people tend to restrict their concerns to short run, rather than long run solutions, since they anticipate little investment pay-off in the latter. Whether or not this mobility has contributed to the declining role of the PTA (Parent-Teachers Association) is uncertain, but the PTA, which once served as a stable balance wheel within the school system, appears to have lost considerable influence.

In many cases the PTA cause has been preempted by special interest groups with special "axes to grind." Likewise, student government, which played at least a moderate stabilizing role within schools, has declined in impact either as alleged "tools" of the administration or simply as "irrelevant." Students, like their adult counterparts, have learned that their interests may be better served in narrower special interest groups.

Finally, public officials in general seem to be more suspect than in past years. Whether this is a spin-off result of the public attitude toward the Viet Nam war, the disenchantment (too fast or too slow) of the Civil Rights movement, or the consumer concern with product quality is uncertain. Whatever the reason, public officials often have a "credibility gap" to cope with in order to properly perform their function.

It is obvious that the swirl of events just summarized is placing extraordinary demands on the public structure of education. How the educational community responds to these

demands will undoubtedly shape the future of the educational process. Hopefully, educators will respond in an intelligent fashion and improve upon a "track record" which has not been particularly responsive to major change in the past.

Various "publics" are watching with interest as educators attempt to respond to these new demands. Public attention usually focuses on those who are perceived as most responsible, most visible, and most accountable for the functioning of the school — the administrator. Any major decision made by an administrator today stimulates varied responses from the watchful publics. These responses come from teacher unions, parent groups, administrative associations, media, etc., as well as other special interest groups. Conflict is almost inevitable, not only between administrators and groups, but among the competing groups as well. Thus, administrative decisions are continually being "put to a vote." How to deal with the demands for change while at the same time maintaining personal and professional integrity is one of the most perplexing problems facing administrators today.

It is within this context that Management by Objectives should be considered. MBO provides a reasonable procedure through which change and direction can be facilitated. Implementation of such a program, however, is not easy. Individuals and groups may resist this business-based model for a variety of reasons — some valid and some not. The process requires hard work, exceptional dedication, and may also be considered personally or professionally "risky" to the implementors. MBO is not a panacea and includes no guarantee of solving all of a school district's problems.

Caveats to the contrary, though, MBO is still a reasoned and workable system, and the procedures described in this book are based on the implementation of such a system in the Madison, Wisconsin, Public Schools. Whether the MBO program is *the* answer, a part of an answer, or no answer at all will be known only in the years to come. At this point, though, it is a promising alternative to "running faster and getting behinder".

II

"... But Before You Leap ..."

The old axiom, "look before you leap", may be a cliche, but its usefulness has lasted over time. The wisdom applies today as much as it did a century ago. But while the wisdom may be the same, the speed of events is not. Alvin Toffler,[1] for example, has rather alarmingly pointed out that the sheer number of activities, problems, changes, etc. that pass through a fixed period of time today has increased at a fantastic rate when compared with our fathers' or grandfathers' generations. Thus, the time for "looking" today is greatly truncated. We are too often persuaded to "leap" after only a casual glance. Under such circumstances the dangers are obviously compounded.

Most administrators are aware that supervision and evaluation of personnel is poorly handled in most school districts (most organizations for that matter). The data seems to support this. For example, a 1965 survey by the National Education Association showed that more than 50% of the teachers responding had "no confidence" in their schools' method of evaluation.[2] Very similar results were determined by Blumberg and Amidon in a different survey the same year.[3] The situation seems to be no different at the administrative level. Harvey Goldman, University of Maryland, observed:

> Without dissent, educators, teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, and the public have lamented the lack of a systematic process or instrument that would permit and facilitate the evaluation of administrators within their areas of responsibility.[4]

While the public may not have these data to support their concerns, they do seem to express a visceral feeling that the schools are not evaluating their programs and personnel with

systematic rigor. It is this uncertain feeling that may very well be the cause of "accountability" reverberating across the land.

It is under such tenuous circumstances that administrators may "leap" to the techniques of Management by Objectives without first "looking" at the underlying assumptions. Good programs such as team teaching and modular scheduling have ended in disaster for those who plunged ahead without preparation or understanding. This could also be the fate of those who would jump on the MBO "bandwagon" without adequately digesting the potential impact of the process on their organization.

The techniques and operational procedures to be presented in later chapters flow from a set of reasoned assumptions. These assumptions are based primarily on the observations and experiences of the authors as they "wrestled" with the application of Management by Objectives. There is a growing body of theory and research, however, that lend support to the experiential observations. Where applicable, this identified theory and research will be used to support the cited assumptions, techniques, and procedures.

The assumptions about Management by Objectives examined in this chapter are offered as a necessary foundation for the techniques and procedures described later. Since these assumptions are based on the observations and experiences of the authors, they are *true* only to the degree that they conform with those observational experiences of the reader.* If the assumptions are "true", then it is reasonable to believe that the techniques and procedures described later in the book have merit. If they are not "true", then the techniques and procedures may be equally faulty.

It is important to keep in mind that the assumptions which follow are confined to the category of *personnel supervision and evaluation.* It should be pointed out that many knowledgeable people consider the confinement of MBO to personnel supervision and evaluation as too limited, i.e., they correctly indicate that MBO has broader application in such areas as total systems design, long-range planning, and program budgeting. Using the MBO processes in total systems design, long-range planning and PPBS is certainly a worthy goal. But such an effort usually requires major resource commitments beyond what most school systems can (or believe they can) supply. Too often when confronted with such major mental or financial outlays, school systems (and most other organizations) end up only talking about the procedures they "hope" to design someday. How long have school districts talked about "getting in to PPBS"? How many have?

While acknowledging that the MBO concept has wider application than just supervision and evaluation, the authors also feel confident that if the application is successfully made in this area, the MBO process will evolve to include the broader spectrum of long-range planning and development.

The assumptions that follow are closely interrelated. When considered as a "total package" they not only point to a need for a system of supervision and evaluation, but to an operational climate — a set of attitudes — that needs to permeate the entire organization. Management by Objectives can succeed as a system of supervision and evaluation only if the climate of the organization fosters mutual confidence and trust, a willingness to share

* For a summary of how a substantial number of administrators from the state of Wisconsin evaluated the assumptions, see Appendix A. These feedback data were collected by the authors in workshops and presentations on MBO throughout the state.

control and responsibility, in interdependent relationship, and a willingness to resolve conflict through bargaining or problem-solving discussion. Whether or not the development of such a climate is feasible is something the potential practitioner should give some thought to.

Two Observations

Before considering the *assumptions* underlying the *processes* of supervision and evaluation*, it might be helpful to examine a couple of *observations* concerning *attitude* about supervision and evaluation.

Observation #1. *Most people do not like to engage in face-to-face evaluation of other* people. This is especially true when the evaluation is negative. "Telling it like it is" may be something wished for but seldom practiced. How often is a speaker told "Your speech was terrible"? How often do we tell the hostess that the roast was overdone? Why are credentials and recommendations confidential? Perhaps we are simply remembering, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."

Accurate and honest appraisal is compounded in the education enterprise with the nebulous but pervasive concept of academic freedom. What supervisor wants to be accused of abridging academic freedom via critical comments? Most of us know that almost any teacher, supervisor or administrator can sort out the "outstanding people" and the "duds" over a cup of coffee. We also know, however, that such divergent appraisals are seldom reflected with equal accuracy on the yearly evaluation form. Conclusion: People don't like to formally evaluate other people, even though they feel certain that evaluation is important.

Observation #2. *Some people (maybe many) feel that extensive supervision and evaluation doesn't make much difference anyway.* Anyone knows that "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" and certainly "Those who can, do, and those who can't, teach." How often have we observed that A students tend to continue to get A's and C students continue to get C's? In other words, once classified, we tend to stay in that classification.

Many harried administrators see themselves as too busy "running the place" to be spending time trying to "make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." The supervision of individuals simply is too time-consuming and the rewards too small to be worth the effort. After all, professionals don't need that much supervision, do they? For those with such an attitude, Management by Objectives (or, for that matter, any other technique) will not make much difference.

The observations above are just that — observations concerning *attitudes* about the supervisory and evaluation processes. However, they do seem to have significant confirmation from numerous administrators (see Appendix A). To successfully install an MBO program, these observations have to be dealt with.

Six Assumptions

In addition to the two observations above concerning *attitudes*, there are at least six assumptions about the actual *processes* of supervision and evaluation that must also be carefully examined.

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*The authors recognize that some opinion would classify supervision and evaluation as distinctly different activities. While recognizing that each may have a slightly different definition, they appear ultimately to be necessary complements to one another.

Assumption #1. *Evaluation systems that are primarily oriented at finding the "bad apples" in the organization or "cutting out the deadwood" are counterproductive. Such a negative orientation too often equates not doing something wrong with successful performance. The focus should be on showing continual growth and improvement, i.e., continually doing things better. It is the responsibility of teachers to develop (or allow to develop) students, and it is the responsibility of supervising administrators to develop (allow to develop) the administrators and teachers of the district.*

How do teachers/administrators view the supervisory process? Is it something they look forward to as an aid to their self improvement? Hardly, according to Emil Haller, who pointed out that teachers simply do not place much credibility in suggestions emanating from sources other than fellow teachers.[5] Far too often, it seems, teachers respond to the principal's visitation, or the principal, in turn, responds to the visits from the central office with apprehension or uncertainty. Why is he coming? What does he want? "I hear the superintendent called you in. What did you do wrong?"

Part of this apprehension may in part be due to the subordinate not knowing what the visitation is about. But people are also aware that historically supervision has been intensified when there are problems or trouble. Hence, the functions of supervision often have the negative connotations of trouble. The supervisor is too often seen as a "checker" and not as a "helper." Is his job to "cut out the deadwood"? Competent people don't need much supervision, do they?

Such an attitude is unfortunate because it encourages an equation that *not doing anything wrong* equals good (or at least satisfactory) performance. Yet most of us know that neither people nor programs necessarily improve because the people involved are *not doing anything wrong.*

This assumption is based on some very pragmatic considerations. First of all, the "cutting out the deadwood" simply hasn't worked in most organizations. For example, ask yourself how many teachers or administrators in your district or state have been fired or released because of incompetence during the last year or two? If the number constitutes a mere .5 of 1% it is probably much higher than most districts or states. The point is simply that most people don't get fired for a lack of competence. This observation is not confined to education. The same is true in most other organizations as well. As a simple test, think of all the people *you know personally* in any profession who have been fired or dismissed from their jobs in the last ten years. Add to this list the names of people you suspect were "allowed" to resign or who got out while the "getting" was good. In most cases it is difficult to come up with a dozen names in each category. If a couple of dozen people is a rough but reasonable estimate when compared with all the people each of us has known personally over the past decade, the point is well made — most people don't get fired. The illustration either means that almost everyone is viewed as satisfactorily competent in their jobs or — if that defies reason — it may mean that supervisory programs designed to "cut out the deadwood" have not been very effective. How much more difficult will it be in the future as unions build in stronger procedural requirements for dismissal?

Supervision should be viewed as a positive activity by both the supervisor and supervisee. Continual growth and development should be the end product. But "positive growth and development" are abstractions until translated into some operational form. For example, for

a coach to develop an average boy into a good quarterback, he must first know what a good quarterback does, what skills are needed, and what skills the boy presently has. The same is true with teachers and administrators. To facilitate growth and development, a supervisor must know what a good teacher/administrator is supposed to do, what skills are needed, and what skills the teacher/administrator has.

Unlike quarterbacks, however, there are great varieties of teachers (English, physical education, music, etc.) and administrators (principals, coordinators, superintendents, etc.) with a range of opinion as to what "good ones" are like. Until these roles are made more specific in terms of the mutually defined objectives of the position, the supervisor will only be guessing as to how to contribute to positive growth and development. It is management's responsibility, according to Peter Drucker, to identify and build on the strengths of its personnel.[6] Guessing is simply not good enough.

Assumption #2. *Unless a supervisor works almost daily in direct contact with an individual, there is no way he can evaluate all the things that individual does. At best he can intensively evaluate only a few (four or five) things that individual does, and then only if those "things" are well defined. This means that priorities must be set so that the most important responsibilities are always in focus. Just as students are different, so are teachers and administrators. Priorities will differ from person to person.*

Whether the district sales manager, the first vice-president for marketing, the assistant superintendent of schools or a junior high principal, your immediate supervisor probably sees you *at your work* a very small percentage of time. Think, for example, if a supervisor spent 10 days with a principal, that would still constitute only 5% of a 200-day contract. If the supervisor spent this 5% with each of ten principals, he would be spending 50% of his time in supervision alone. This would be quite a chunk of time when considering these supervisors are usually directors or assistant superintendents and have many other functions to perform.

Even where proximity is close (e.g., principal/assistant principal or superintendent/business manager), the majority of tasks are carried out with minimal supervisory contacts between the offices in the hierarchy. Thus, it is foolish and probably impossible to think that an evaluation system can thoroughly evaluate the "whole job" or the "whole person." At best only small slices can be carefully examined. If this be true, it would seem logical that the determination of which "slices" are to be evaluated is of critical importance. Is it more important to examine "gets reports in on time" or the quality of the reports? Is keeping the school free of litter more important than collecting and examining data on reading progress?

Any educator may easily do a hundred different "things" in fulfilling his job during any given week or month. Some of these "things" are anticipated and some are not. All of the hundred, however, cannot be of equal importance to the best performance of the job. This is not to suggest that each of the hundred may not be necessary or desirable, but only that they are not of *equal importance.* If we say that supervisory time is limited to a few "slices", it would seem far more important that out of the hundred "things" that might be considered, the supervisor focus only on the five or six that might be considered absolutely critical. But herein lies the rub — seldom has anyone tried to identify what the critical half dozen "things" or responsibilities of his job are.

Stated another way, very few have defined the critical *objectives* of the job. This does not necessarily mean that educators operate without objectives in mind. It does mean, though, that such objectives are more often than not in the mind of one person only. If the supervisor is intended to play a positive role, i.e., to help the person move toward objectives, he must have some idea of what those objectives are before he can make any positive input. It is precisely because of the lack of such defined objectives that supervisors are left to deal with such vague categories as "cooperation, professionalism, rapport, punctuality, self-growth, etc."

Admittedly, many people feel uneasy in confining the supervisory/evaluation function to five or six objectives, i.e., such procedures do not "evaluate the whole person." While such a concern may be disconcerting, it misses the point. First of all, as was suggested earlier, there are not enough hours in the day for a supervisor to be knowledgeable of all the things a supervisee does. Nor would such comprehensive supervision be advisable even if time were available. Studies have shown that professionals don't work at their best with someone constantly looking over their shoulder.[7] "Snoopervision" increases the opportunities for conflict, rather than cooperation between the professional and the supervisor.

Second, as will be discussed later, a supervisor's role should be an active one — to actively help the supervisee to move toward objectives to the degree the supervisee needs or wants help. Obviously, the degree to which such help can be provided is dependent upon the number of objectives the supervisor is working with and evaluating. A supervisor can put more help into five objectives than he can with twenty-five.

Third, there seems to be an unlimited number of opinions as to what constitutes the "whole person." Does the "whole person" include appearance? language? hobbies? contributions to worthy causes outside the profession? Where does the list stop? And on what basis are items included or not included? It would be an impossible task and not particularly productive at that.

Assumption #3. *A lack of defined priorities may easily result in a dissipation of resources. If everything is equal a person tends to be guided by his own interests or the situation at hand.*

All of us know people who are going forty different directions at the same time — heavy on motion and light on results. George Odiorne once said, "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there." For the directionless person the fun is in exploring many roads, rather than determining the ultimate destination. And why not? The former is usually exhilarating and rather easy, while the latter is difficult and full of controversy. Perhaps this is why education is periodically accused of "fadism." When we're not quite sure of where we want to go, we find it necessary to promote the vehicles that look like we're going somewhere. Team-teaching, flexible scheduling, continuous progress programs, open classrooms and, yes, MBO have all been questioned from time to time by a skeptical public wanting to know where these procedures are intended to take us. Sometimes we provide good answers and sometimes we don't. Until we have defined our priorities, however, the public and maybe the profession itself will perceive educators as flitting from process to process whenever something new comes along. Stated in other terms, educators will be seen as dissipating their resources on the fleeting situations of the moment.

The same allegation, of course, can be leveled at the supervisory process. What is it that educators want supervision/evaluation to do? Hopefully, supervision is thought of as a process to facilitate improvement. But seldom is there a very precise definition of what is to be improved, what the improvement would look like once it had occurred, or what skills the supervisor should employ to facilitate the improvement. Without stated priorities there is often a tendency to try to make *people* "better," i.e., to make them more cooperative, more professional, more imaginative, etc. And even this is done poorly — usually with some check list that indicates that the person is "average" or "below average" in cooperation, professionalism, imagination, etc. There is little evidence that people improve thes characteristics because someone has checked a box which defined them as "average." On the contrary, evidence indicates that this kind of supervision is not satisfying to the employee who would much prefer legitimate recognition of achievement, additional responsibility, and the possibility of advancement.[8]

Jobs are created because certain needs have to be met. While specific expectations may be identified when the job or position is created, those expectations tend to become hazy over a period of time as new needs are identified or the person filling the position molds the position to fulfill his own personel needs. This is further complicated by the personal needs and dispositions the person brings to the job. Unless the supervisor is aware of the changing expectations of the job and is sensitive to the personal needs of the employee, he is in a poor position to help the person move toward the accomplishment of objectives. The result is that both the supervisor and the employee dissipate their resources and the job still does not get done. Since it is management's responsibility to prevent this dissipation, constant communication regarding the objectives and priorities of the person and the organization must take place.

Assumption #4. *Supervision is not a passive activity, i.e., a supervisor should not be only a "scorekeeper." A supervisor should be actively involved in helping subordinates achieve objectives and continually grow in competence. The development of subordinates is probably the most important of supervisory-management functions.*

How many times are formal supervisory meetings held when something has not been a problem? When they are held, is there a mutual give and take between the supervisor and subordinate? Think for a moment and ask yourself, do the people I work with perceive my meetings with them as helpful and leading to their improvement? If your answer was yes, then you are a rarity in the ranks of supervisors. Experience indicates that most supervisor/administrators are clumsy in dealing with the supervisory process and most organizations compound the clumsiness through the supervisory procedures they use.

Too many times the supervisory procedures that are evident in an organization are perceived by the people involved as "keeping score." Take, for example, the yearly evaluation form for teachers. Rarely is the completion of the form preceded by thorough and comprehensive supervisory visits which include follow-up conferences. Filling out the form is viewed as an administrative procedure necessary to keep the Personnel Department records up-to-date. It is viewed as a passive and perfunctory task to be completed with a minimum of energy so that everyone concerned "can get back to work."

This is not to say that supervision does not take place. Rather, most of the supervisory procedures expounded by the organization do not really relate to the supervisory practices

actually employed. Of what improvement value is the evaluation when delivered three or four weeks before the school is about to close its doors for the summer? In many cases two or three months elapse during the summer before the supervisee can act on any recommendations coming out of the evaluation. No wonder that people see such "one shot" evaluations as merely a "score-keeping" exercise, rather than a means for the supervisor to help the supervisee move toward objectives.

Within the framework of the attitudes that have been described, how can the supervisory process be productive? The authors would agree with McGregor[9] that if it is not productive then it is management's fault. The first step is for top level management to assign high priority to the supervisory process. That step must be accompanied by the attitude that supervision is *working with people, not doing something to them.* This includes giving the subordinate opportunities to define those priorities he feels are important and helping him direct his energies toward the accomplishment of those priorities. The supervisor's task is to help the subordinate identify priorities, state them as objectives, and then "lead interference" toward accomplishing the objectives. By taking this active and helping posture the supervisor can identify and help the supervisee build upon his competencies. This is especially important in the field of education, where the use of vertical mobility as a reward is somewhat limited. Peter Drucker pointed to the lack of vertical mobility as a major problem and indicated that it was management's job to provide horizontal mobility in a way that insured that the individual's psychological needs were realized.[10] By sharing in the identification of job expectations and reinforced by active supervision, the supervisee can attain both personal and job satisfaction.

Assumption #5. *People often have perceptions of their priority responsibilities that differ from the perceptions of the supervisor or the organization. Until this is clarified, the individual may be growing and developing in his own perceptions but not in the perceptions of the supervisor/organization. Where the perceptions of priorities are the same (or close) between the individual and the supervisor/organization, the results are positive and productive. Where the perceptions are far apart, the results are nonproductive, and one or the other must change.*

While this is listed as an assumption there have been some practical observations which tend to support the assumption. Professor Odiorne cites a simple technique he used when consulting with various business enterprises. In trying to "zero in" on the problems of a particular business organization, Odiorne would ask the president to list all the people who reported directly to him. Next, the president was asked to list the priority responsibilities of each of these people and to indicate the process by which he evaluated the work of the subordinate in those priority responsibilities. At the same time, each of the identified subordinates was asked to do the same thing, i.e., to list what they perceived to be their priority responsibilities and to identify the processes by which the president evaluated them in the performance of those responsibilities. The results regularly showed, according to Odiorne, considerable variance[11] between what the president perceived to be the major responsibilities and how they were evaluated and what each of his subordinates perceived to be his major responsibilities and how they were evaluated.

It must be kept in mind that almost all executive responsibilities (as opposed to specific technical responsibilities) are *defined* responsibilities based upon a perception of needs to perform a certain task or achieve certain outcomes. The higher the executive function, the

broader the responsibilities and the more difficult to define and evaluate. This may be one reason why such functions are so seldom defined or evaluated with precision.

These difficulties of definition and perception are illustrated in a commonly known story. It seems that three stone masons were performing exactly the same task on a construction site. When the first one was asked what he was doing, he answered that he was "earning a living." Asked the same question, the second one responded that he was "becoming the best damned stone mason in the country." The third one pondered the question and answered that he was "helping to build a cathedral for the ages." Thus, although each was performing the same task, each perceived the reasons for his performance in different ways. Such differences in purpose and motivation undoubtedly exist in educational organizations as well, and each person, left to himself, may very well pursue a direction consistent with his own purpose for being there. This may or may not be in accord with the purposes of the organization, and can lead to conflict. The supervisor who is trying to "build a cathedral for the ages" will find the subordinate who is "earning a living" to be disinterested and unmotivated. The opposite is also true. The supervisor who is "earning a living" may find the subordinate who wants to become "the best damned stone mason in the country" to be self-centered and a boat-rocker. While it is unlikely that the perfect integration of individual and organizational goals will take place, the authors would agree with Herzberg *et al*[12] that alternative goals are a source of motivation, and if the individuals share in decisions involving the choice of alternatives, the "integration gap" will be narrowed considerably.

Assumption #6. *Continuous dialogue between supervisor and supervisee concerning agreed upon priorities are both productive to the efficiency of the organization and to the psychological/ emotional well-being of the individuals involved.*

Most of us in the professions are too proud to continually be asking the boss "How am I doing?" Such actions smack of insecurity or the currying of favor. The boss, too, might find this awkward, especially if he hasn't been paying much attention to your work. But proud though we may be, we are all anxious to know how others (especially our superiors) perceive our actions. In a service industry such as education the verbal appraisal may be the only point of reference we have. Behavioral scientists simply call this "feedback" and the concept has appeared on hundreds of flow charts and behavioral models. The purpose of "feedback" may be to reinforce what is taking place, to suggest "in-flight" corrections, to analyze what has happened to date, to offer assistance and resources to better perform the activity, etc. In other words, the intent of the "feedback" loop is to assess what is happening while it is happening and, as any child psychologist knows, praise or criticism should be as close to the time of the incident as possible. Unfortunately, education does not seem to operate on this principle, and the authors would agree with McClelland[13] that the lack of evaluation and feedback has inhibited needed changes.

Ironically, the procedure of formally evaluating students each quarter (grades) is intended to give them a checkpoint *while events are happening*, on the assumption that such information will be of value to them in either sustaining or changing their efforts. If this is a reasonable assumption concerning the development of students, why is it not also reasonable in the development of administrators and teachers? One could just imagine the outcry from students and parents if the school system announced that it would evaluate students only once near the end of the year. The MBO quarterly review, discussed in a subsequent chapter, is designed to deal with this situation.

It is of little wonder that in the absence of feedback teachers and administrators are threatened by evaluation and supervision. The general perception is that it is something done to them by someone else. The criteria used to evaluate is most often obscure, and teachers/administrators are left with the feeling that the whole process is geared at determining status relative to dismissal, tenure, or promotion. Given these attitudes, both the efficiency of the organization and the individual suffer. This is not to say that supervision and evaluation should be a "peaches and cream" process. As Brown[14] discovered in his research of administrator teacher supervision and evaluation, a certain amount of criticism can be a source of motivation. This motivation was found to be dependent on a common understanding of the expectations of the job. If criticism was related to these expectations, it was perceived as motivational in nature, rather than oriented toward conflict and stress.

Continuous dialogue between the supervisor and the supervisee regarding agreed upon priorities are the key to individual and organization success. If the subordinate has been involved in defining the priorities and recognizes that he has contributed toward their realization, he obtains a certain amount of personal satisfaction. According to Maslow[15] this "self actualization" motivates the individual to even greater levels of performance. At the same time, if the supervisor has worked to create this attitude in each of the persons he works with, then he directs a considerable amount of energy. Assuming this energy is aimed at accomplishing organizational goals, then the "participatory supervision" that has been described has led to what Argyris[16] considered the epitomy of organizational success — the realization of organizational goals being personally satisfying to those who accomplish them.

As indicated earlier in the chapter, the MBO design in this book focuses on a supervision/evaluation technique or model in the belief that such is the most logical and practical starting point for most school systems. The operational procedures described in subsequent chapters are based on assumptions about supervision and evaluation which have been discussed in this chapter. If you find yourself in substantial agreement with the assumptions just discussed, the rest of the book will probably make sense to you. If, however, you are in major disagreement with the assumptions in this chapter, the remaining chapters will be of little value. □

III

The Management Contract

The primary vehicle for applying Management By Objectives in the Madison Public Schools is the management contract.[1] A management contract is a written agreement between two people (supervisor and supervisee) in the organization. It should not be confused with the employment contract, which is the legal contract issued by the school district confirming employment and rate of compensation. Nor should the management contract be confused with a general job description. Most general job descriptions are broad statements which try to describe the total responsibilities of the position. The management contract concentrates intensively on only four to six carefully defined priority items *within* that general job description, on the assumption (discussed in Chapter II) that a supervisor cannot evaluate *everything* the supervisee is responsible for.

The management contract is the "vehicle" through which priorities are determined, achievement strategies are defined, and evaluation methods are agreed upon. As such, the contract is the "battle plan" or "road map" for a specified period of time. This period of time is usually the school year but need not necessarily be so. Contracts or parts of contracts can be written for shorter or longer periods of time than the school year. While the contract is the visible "vehicle" in implementation of the MBO program, the procedures for developing, monitoring and evaluating the contract itself are of equal importance (and in some respects may even be more important).

As indicated earlier, the MBO process concentrates on four to six priority items (components). Each component is written out following the six steps described below. The total number of components, each one following the six steps, constitutes the management contract.

Contract Item #1. A precise description of the project, process, skill, etc., to be evaluated in this agreement. This should include (to the degree that is possible at the initial conference):

A. Intent of what is to be done,

B. Procedures to be used, and

C. Outcomes to be expected.

Just as in writing behavioral objectives, it is not sufficient to write in vague terms, e.g., "to *encourage* the staff to . . ." or "to promote a better program in . . ." The contract should specify exactly what the individual intends to do and/or how he intends to do it.

Contract Item #2. A description of who will do the monitoring and evaluation. A description of exactly how this person(s) will monitor/evaluate the performance in Item #1 (visitations, conferences, reports, other materials, etc.) and (to the degree possible) what constitutes good, average, or poor progress.

The supervisor has an obligation to perform the supervisory and evaluation functions in a manner that is agreeable and understandable to the supervisee. An occasional "visit" will not be adequate.

Contract Item #3. A description of any materials, resources, and other aids *not readily available* but needed to properly execute the agreement and who/how will see that such is provided.

In some cases the supervisee may not have either the budget or the authority to secure materials or resources necessary to the fulfillment of the contract. In such cases, the supervisor will have to put himself "on the line" to secure the materials/resources if he believes the particular objective to be important. Obviously it is foolish for both parties to agree to a contract specifying material/resource needs if they know there is little or no chance of securing them. In Madison, this item is usually filled in with "nothing identified that is not readily available", which indicates that most administrators have at their command the tools to do the job.

Contract Item #4. Are there any tasks or responsibilities that must be performed in fulfilling this contract by any person not a party to the contract? If so, do they understand their responsibility and have they agreed to perform it?

While the management contract is between two people, there may be occasions where a third person must perform a task in order that the objective defined in the contract can be completed. In order to avoid delays or problems after the contract is in operation, it is advisable to confer with the third person when the contract is being written. For example, if the contract calls for the printing of considerable material, will the print shop be able to handle the volume called for at the time it is needed?

Contract Item #5. How often will the supervisor and supervisee meet to *officially* review progress? Once a quarter is recommended.

Official Review Sessions are "for the record." They include summaries of each session written up by the supervisor with a copy to the supervisee. This allows the supervisee to know exactly where he stands with the supervisor throughout the year. If the quarterly evaluation sessions have been well conducted, there should be no "surprises" in the final, year-end evaluation session.

Contract Item #6. Any other information not included in Items 2 through 5, but felt to be relevant to the agreement.

This is simply a "catch-all" item — a place for any contingencies.

The completed contract is binding on both sides, and each party to the contract should expect the other member to perform in the manner described in the contract. There is flexibility, however, in that the contract can be changed, modified or cancelled at any time by *mutual agreement* of the parties involved. □

IV

Orienting the Staff to MBO

As suggested earlier, the development of an MBO program is anything but easy. Disaster is almost a certainty if a decision is made to institute MBO "next week." A lot of preliminary work is necessary in order to launch a successful program. Even prior to the orientation program there are at least five questions that decision-makers must wrestle with:

1. *Why* do we want to develop an MBO program?

2. Are we organized in a way that will allow the MBO process to work? If not, will we be willing to change the organization to a more appropriate design?

3. Does the MBO program have the solid support of the superintendent and the board of education?

4. With what group or groups should the MBO program be started?

5. What kind of orientation program should be conducted:

+1. Why do we want to develop an MBO program? A critical question indeed. MBO, like team teaching and modular scheduling before it, is becoming a "hot item" in education. To simply land on MBO because it is a "hot item" is ill-advised. It is equally ill-advised to develop such a program because a community critic implores the school district to "stop being so wishy-washy and become more businesslike."

Probably the most valid reasons for considering an MBO program is a dissatisfaction with the present methods of evaluating personnel (supervision and evaluation and/or a felt need

to focus the district's resources toward some defined directions (planning and development). As indicated in an earlier chapter, most organizations do a very mediocre job in supervising and evaluating their personnel — especially the professional personnel. If the intent of instituting MBO is to improve the evaluation of personnel within the district, a second question must be asked: To what end? In other words, is the improved method intended to *get rid* of people rated as less effective, or is the intent to help the less effective improve and to help effective people stretch even further?

MBO, as described in this book, is intended to foster growth and development. If it is perceived by the people involved as a better way to "make book" on them in order to get rid of them, the process will have considerably less support. In adopting an MBO program, then, will the district also commit itself to developing the supporting means by which individuals can grow and develop? Keep in mind that in many districts the personnel development effort consists only of granting attendance at a conference once or twice a year, and this, in turn, is more often viewed by the participants as a "fringe benefit", rather than a real development opportunity. A commitment to a growth and development program does not necessarily mean a great increase in district expenditures, but it does mean that that commitment must be placed in a much higher priority status than it currently is in most districts. In summary, the movement to MBO should in itself have some objectives in mind. What objectives is MBO expected to accomplish? Sorting out those objectives is a first priority.

#2. *Are we organized in a way that will allow the MBO process to work?* The MBO contract is developed between two people, a supervisor and supervisee. Are the responsibility lines sufficiently clear in the organization so that each subordinate knows who his or her immediate boss is? And do the supervisory personnel know what people they are responsible for supervising? For instance, is the teacher directly responsible to the department chairman, an assistant principal, or the principal? Is the director of public information directly responsible to the superintendent or an assistant superintendent? Does the organization chart show one thing and the reality of the situation prove to be another?

There will, of course, be more general "umbrella-type" supervisory responsibilities the higher up the administrative ladder you go. In a sense, the superintendent is responsible for the supervision of all below that position, just as a ship's captain is expected to be responsible for all that takes place on his ship. But this is more a philosophic concept than an operational reality, and it is important to sort out just exactly who is responsible to whom and for what. Critics sometimes point out that creating such clear-cut definitions reinforces the bureaucratic hierarchy format, and to some degree they are right. The same critics, however, seldom give evidence that this is necessarily bad, if the management or instructional contract is intended to be the vehicle for the MBO program, clear definitions of supervisory responsibilities are a necessary prerequisite. Contracts can be developed along other than strictly hierarchical lines, but experience suggests that such variations (peer group, etc.) should wait until sufficient experience has been logged with vertical contracting before branching out into other variations.

A second consideration concerning organizational structure is supervisory span of control. The number of contracts a supervisor can handle varies with the scope of the responsibilities involved and the proximity of the supervisor's "home base" to the place of work of the supervisee. Obviously, an office supervisor responsible for the supervision/evaluation of

people all within a 100-foot radius of his office can handle more people than a director of elementary education where the schools range three or four miles in all directions from his office.

These extreme differences aside, the maximum number of people that can be reasonably supervised/evaluated via the contract process appears to be about 15. This may decrease to 10 to 12 as the physical distance and/or scope of the responsibility increases. The point is that organizational patterns that have 20 to 30 people under the supposed supervision of one person are ill suited to the MBO contract. Most administrators know that under such circumstances the best the supervisor (administrator) can do is to "put out fires" and occasionally offer a little assistance. The intense affirmative kind of involvement called for in the MBO contract is practically impossible unless that supervisor has no other responsibilities — and that is rarely the case.[1] If a district finds itself in such a circumstance — i.e., with 20 to 30 people reporting to one person — is it willing to reorganize so that the span of control is decreased to 15 or under? If the district cannot or will not, it would seem advisable to discontinue further consideration of MBO.

#3. *Does the MBO process have the solid support of the superintendent and the board of education?* It is reasonable to assume that the initiation of an MBO program will probably originate in the superintendent's office. This is not always the case, however. For example, in those systems where the personnel office is charged with the responsibilities for evaluation, that office might be a likely originating source. Or the superintendent might ask an assistant superintendent or some other office to look into the idea for possible implementation. Wherever the origination, it is very important that the implementation have the *full support* of the superintendent's office.

Implementing an MBO program is an arduous, time-consuming process that will probably require a reallocation of priorities as well as the redirecting of some resources. The uninterested, the frightened, the lazy, and even those who have legitimate concerns about the implementation of an MBO system will all be watching for "signals" from the superintendent to see just how serious he is about the whole process. The more indifferent the "signals" from the number one office, the more difficult the implementation. Each district has its own style and machinery for deciding whether they want to "get into MBO" or not. But once the recommendation is made, that recommendation must carry the clearly visible imprimatur of the superintendent.

Not only does the superintendent need to endorse the process, but it is also important that the board of education do likewise — especially if a management contract is to be written between the superintendent and the board. The degree of board involvement/endorsement will, of course, vary from district to district, depending on the inclination of that board to become involved in personnel evaluation matters. In the current era of "accountability" that interest may be considerable; thus, a knowledgeable and supportive Board is a decided plus in MBO implementation.

#4 With what group or groups should we start? Here again each district will have its own peculiar set of circumstances which will dictate the decision. A small district may be able to start with everyone. A larger district may feel it advisable to pilot the program with a small group of people. Madison followed the latter course with the decision that (1) the MBO process will be applied *only* to administrators during the initial years, and (2) the very first attempt would be piloted by half dozen volunteers. Experience suggests this was a wise decision. MBO is more than a management technique. Properly applied it is somewhat a "way of life" within the organization. If the process is ultimately to be applied to the organizaton as a whole, there must be a cadre of people who are well grounded in the process to serve as leaders. There are a number of "bugs" to be worked out, and thus it is advisable that those who make most of the organizational decisions, i.e., the administrators, fully understand what they are doing before trying to lead others.

Piloting or "dry running" the process with a few people also has merit. The first time around is bound to be awkward and time consuming. There is a need for those charged with implementation to get the "feel and rhythm" of the process. This is probably better done by concentrating time and effort on a relatively small number (5-10) of volunteers at first. Some districts have chosen a variation of this by "dry running" one objective (as opposed to the 4-6 in a regular contract) with a larger number (20-30) of volunteers or conscripts. To be effective the MBO process must be built step by step, and selecting the initial target group is the critical first step. Instant MBO for everyone is more likely to be instant disaster for everyone.*

#5. Should there be an orientation program? An orientation program is a *must*, and one of the first things the superintendent must do is to appoint a "ramrod," i.e., a person charged with the *major* responsibility of making MBO operational. This, of course, would include responsibility for the orientation program. Committees can be helpful, but getting the process "on line" should be in the hands of one person. Obviously, the selection of that person is a critical decision. The higher the rank of the "ramrod" the better, but perhaps even more critical is the credibility of that person with others in the organization. If the office of the person selected doesn't carry enough decision-making authority to execute district-wide decisions, the person should be placed on "special assignment to the superintendent's office for implementation of the MBO program." Such enhancement of authority, however, should not be perceived by others as authority beyond the implementation of MBO. In most cases such special authorization will not be necessary, since the "ramrod" status is assumed by either the superintendent or one of his immediate assistants.

Each district will have to determine what kind of orientation program it wants to conduct. Madison conducted a seven-week (one three-hour meeting per week) orientation program. These general orientation meetings were followed up with several small group meetings (with all 140 administrators) in which the participants practiced writing contracts. While the content of the Madison orientation is not necessarily offered as a model, the description of that program below may be helpful to the reader in designing his own program.

*The MBO contract may not realistically have application to everyone. A Madison rule of thumb in determining who should be on an MBO contract is that the person uses independent judgement a majority of the time in the performance of his job.

1. *Film series.* Two film series were used. One film from each series was shown during each of the first six sessions. Preview notes concerning what to look for were handed out and briefly discussed prior to the showing of each film.

   A. "Management By Objectives," featuring George Odiorne. Educational Resources Foundation, South Carolina Educational TV Network, Copyrighted in 1967 by Educational Systems and Design, Inc., 136 Main St., Westport, Connecticut.

   B. "Management By Objectives," featuring John Humble, Bureau of National Affairs, Washington, D.C.

The BNA series features John Humble, an Englishman, and is set in the context of an English industrial system. The foreignness and the industrial context of this film series may "turn off" some educators unless the leader emphasizes that the major importance of this film lies in the conceptualization and development of the MBO process.

2. *Books* Two books were used as primers during the orientation. These include:

   A. *Management By Objectives* by George Odiorne, Pitman, 1965.

   B. *How to Manage by Results* by Dale McConkey, American Management Association, New York, 1967.

A number of good books on the general topic have been published since 1970 and certainly might be useful. As primers, however, the two indicated above are among the better ones.

3. *Articles on MBO.* Here again numerous articles have been published on the topic and can be found by consulting *Education Index.* Care should be taken not to overload the participants. Five or six good references would probably be more digestible than a dozen or more. (See Bibliography for some references.)

4. *Discussion of assumptions underlying MBO Process.* One full session was spent in discussing the assumptions underlying the MBO process as described in Chapter II. (See Appendix A for subsequent validation of these assumptions as responded to by educators — mostly administrators — in Wisconsin.) If the initial focus of the MBO program is on *supervision and evaluation*, it is important that the underlying assumptions, the implementation of the MBO program will be difficult indeed. By the same token, if the assumptions concerning supervision and evaluation appear to the participants to be sound, the logical step to the MBO process (contract or other means) is greatly facilitated.

5. *Determining Priorities* Supervision/evaluation via the MBO process makes no pretense of examining *all* the responsibilities of a particular position. The focus is limited to only the top four to six priorities of the position. Unfortunately, most educators (most people in organizations for that matter) have never systematically sorted out and carefully described those half dozen priorities of their jobs. This is, to some degree, understandable. First of all,

most people have never been required or requested to do so. Secondly, to seriously do so is a brain-numbing, fatiguing task. Unless individuals can see some value resulting from such an effort, neither do they see much reason to run through such a mental obstacle course.

Finally, identifying such priorities can be considered "dangerous" in that it puts the person's perceptions of his job priorities on paper for the "whole world" to see. There is the "danger" that others may disagree with the priorities listed or be disappointed that their vested interests are not included on the list. So long as there is no priority listing, the "problem" is avoided because no one has any clear indication of what other people consider their priorities to be. The fact that priority identification is more talked about than practiced is not to suggest that individuals (especially well organized individuals) do not mentally set priorities and plan accordingly. Obviously they do and always have. But in most cases priority setting has been somewhat eclectic. There seem to be relatively few instances in which priorities have been systematically developed through a procedure in which the priority identification is tested, refined, redefined, etc. via dialogue with other interested parties (especially the supervisor).

In the Madison orientation, an exercise was designed in which each administrator was asked to identify three of their perceived priorities and explain to three other people who held dissimilar positions the full ramifications of each priority and why it was selected. The observers asked questions, requested refinements, examined rationale, etc. until they clearly understood the priority selected and the rationale for the selection. This exercise gave a good indication that something that seems to be clear in the mind of an individual may not necessarily be clear to the person to whom it is explained. Dialogue, questions, etc. help clarification on both sides.

Activities vs. Objectives. One of the subtle difficulties sometimes overlooked in establishing MBO programs is differentiating between *objectives* and *activities.*[2] An objective is some kind of result or end product to be achieved. An activity is one of the *means* of achieving that end. The two sometimes get confused. For example (a real case), a person stated his objective as follows: "...to establish a series of inservice programs to familiarize the teaching staff with the (Acme) reading program." No one would deny that this is an admirable effort, but the question should be raised as to which is the objective — the inservice program or the familiarization? If it is the latter (as it should be), the inservice program is only *one* activity through which familiarization could be achieved. The objective would perhaps be better written as follows:

> ...to familiarize the teaching staff with the (Acme) reading program to the degree that they feel they have sufficient information to decide whether the (Acme) reading program should be substituted for the (Elko) reading program in the fall of 1973.
>
> A. In order to achieve the necessary familiarization, the following *activities* will be used:
>
> 1. Inservice programs.
>
> 2. Distribution of selected informational material concerning (Acme) reading program.

3. Class visitations by the principal.

4. Individual conferences between teacher and principal.

While it is important to sort out objectives from activities, it is also improtant to keep in mind that sometimes *an activity is the valid objective.* For example, "...to increase parent input through the development of a parent advisory council..." is intended to increase parent input through one specific activity — a parent advisory council. Thus, in this case the activity (establishing parent advisory council) is a very major part of the objective. Sorting out objectives and activities is simply a matter of thoughtful practice. The more the practice, the better the results.

The orientation period is the time for working as many of the "bugs" out of the system as possible. But participants should understand that operating through MBO procedures/ writing MBO contracts is developmental process. Under the best of conditions "bugs" will continue to exist — especially during the first couple of years. The MBO system (or any other system, for that matter) has to be continually examined, procedures reevaluated, refinements made, etc., if it is to become a truly successful system. That takes several years of hard work. A good orientation program will only "get people to the playing field with a reasonable readiness to play." How they "play on that playing field" is another matter. □

V

Developing the Contract

Most organizations (including school systems) have quite a range of administrative styles. There are those administrators who "go by the book": the idea men, liberals, organizers, authoritarians, etc. At times each makes contributions to the organization, but occasionally each may also thwart progress. In some cases a balance of these divergent styles can create a healthy "check and balance." Too often, however, the divergent styles of administrators may simply end up neutralizing the efforts of one another. This is particularly true when an organization lacks defined direction or goals.

Under such circumstances it is not uncommon for the "blame syndrome" to set in. Since no one is sure where the organization is supposed to be going, frustrations are taken out by blaming "someone else" for the directionless circumstances. A great deal of individual as well as organizational energy can be wasted in finding blame. What is obviously lacking in such cases is a mechanism for harnessing the aspirations and energies of administrators toward understandable common goals. The management contract has the potential of being that mechanism.

But why a contract? Experiences over the past three years suggest several reasons:

Reason #1 Developing a written contract requires a tight dialogue between the supervisor and supervisee and establishes the ground rules for subsequent supervision

Communication is a basic element in any objective-setting process and is at the core of the MBO process. But the word "communication" can be a very general word. Communication can be tight or loose, vague or specific, comprehensive or narrow. The contract is a written document that prescribes direction for an extended period of time; and because that

direction is *written down*, neither party to the contract can afford to be casual about it. Experience indicates that the parties involved listen carefully to one another as ideas are presented. There are frequent attempts to clarify those ideas not carefully understood. Superficial and vague explanations are minimized. In other words, because the contract under discussion will eventually take a written form, the dialogue has much more direction and precision — much more so than if the process were left to oral agreement.

Reason #2: Writing a contract insures as much as possible that it has been developed honestly.

Since an MBO contract is a document mutually agreed to by supervisor and supervisee, both parties are fully aware of the obligations, responsibilities, time lines, etc. that are contained within it. If the proper intent of the MBO process has been observed, neither party has been *forced* to agree to any of the components in the contract. Both should have had ample time to clarify any parts of the contract that they felt were not properly understood. The process of "talking through" the contract before writing it down should create credibility in the minds of the parties involved. The completed contract is dated and signed by both parties with the understanding that no signatures should be applied until each is satisfied with the document. Each party retains a copy of the signed contract.

Reason #3: The contract insures "due process" much in the manner that a legal document might.

It must be emphasized that the management contract is not a legal document *per se*. As indicated earlier, it should not be confused with the employment contract issued to all employees indicating the amount of work time and compensation for work. Secondly, the major intent of the MBO contract is to help people perform and meet objectives and not as a means of firing them. However, where poor performance toward meeting objectives is observed and appropriate help has not resulted in improvement, the requirements stipulated and agreed to in the contract do provide a reasonable "due process."

Were the objectives appropriate and reasonable? Was the contract entered into without coercion? Did the supervisor perform his/her function as agreed to? Were there extenuating circumstances that prevented the achievement of agreed upon objectives? Was the supervisee appropriately notified of supervisor dissatisfaction during the quarterly reviews? "Due process" is certainly better served under such circumstances than it is with the commonly used check-sheet which tries to reach conclusions about such vague terms as "cooperation," "professional growth," "appearance," etc. More and more, education is entering into the legal arena in a variety of fronts — not the least of which relates to personnel practices. Personnel practices which may be "arbitrary or capricious" are increasingly being challenged in the courts. Whether this is good or bad for the profession is a value question. The point is, it is probably here to stay. Again the MBO contract *is not a legal document per se*, but the concepts inherent in the contract are quite in line with the increasing legal process relating to personnel policies and practices.

Reason #4: Writing a contract requires a rigorous interpersonal relationship which results not only in a plan of action but a commitment to carry out that plan as well

The rigorous interpersonal activity required to write a contract is in itself a motivational factor to both parties for successful completion of the objectives. Involvement in creation and commitment to the creation go hand in hand. This is especially true if both parties have rigorously and honestly attempted to create the best contract possible. If the contract is developed in a slipshod or casual manner (as if it didn't really make much difference), the motivational elements are probably diminished.

Reason #5. The effective writing of an MBO contract requires that the parties involved share each other's talents and experiences to realize objectives.

This is especially true if, as advocated in Chapter II, the *primary* function of a supervisor should be to develop or allow to develop subordinate competence. A supervisor who perceives his role as such will use his own background and experience accordingly. Careful definition of the monitoring and evaluation procedures and the identification of responsibilities and resources contained within the contract force the parties involved to be precise about the way in which they coordinate their efforts. This preciseness creates a greater urgency for each to rely on the talents and experiences of the other. Less precise procedures run the risk of defining these relationships in more superficial terms. An example of unprecise/superficial circumstances are statements that the supervisor is expected to "encourage the development of innovative programs." How do you measure "encouragement" and what do you define as "innovative programs"? Compare that with a contract item which states "...will develop a continuous progress program in mathematics covering grades K through 6." Writing a contract helps prevent superficiality from happening and forges a teamwork neccessary to realizing the mutually defined objectives.

Reason #6. The written contract serves as an impartial third person against which the performance of those involved can be measured.

Writing a contract is the first step toward proper evaluation via MBO. If the mutual definition of objectives has taken place the contract somewhat assumes the status of an impartial third person. The monitoring and evaluation components of the contract provide the basis upon which progress toward the objective is gauged. It is no longer a matter of the supervisor's random perceptions which serve as the judgment. Rather, the contract itself speaks in terms of whether or not agreed to stipulations are being met. Thus, the contract tends to take away some of the negativism associated with evaluations based only on the judgment of the supervisor. No longer are personal characteristics such as appearance, speech, promptness, etc. the primary considerations. Recall that in Chapter II the first observation was that "most people don't like to evaluate other people on a one-to-one basis, especially if that evaluation is negative."

Once the contract is completed, it (the contract) becomes the "taskmaster", rather than the supervisor. Tasks are to be completed and objectives reached not because the *supervisor* says they must but because the *contract* (which the supervisee helped to create) says that they must. This "depersonalization" helps to diminish personal animosity and conflict. It is far more palatable, for example, to say *"according to the contract,* I would have to conclude that you are not meeting or moving toward the objectives in a manner we agreed to", as compared with, "*I* don't think you are doing a good job." The referee in a basketball game is not reflecting any personal animosity when he calls a foul. The rules of the game have

been pre-set and both the referee and the players understand that. The same is true with the contract.

The Mechanics of Writing the Contract

Accept the fact that the first management contract will be difficult and time consuming to establish. A typical time allocation for a contract that includes four or five objectives would be between six to eight hours. This would include two hours for a meeting at which time priorities would be identified and two or three meetings for the actual contract writing. To those not used to objective setting, this may seem to be an inordinate amount of time. Consider, however, just how much time is actually being devoted to establishing the contracts. Assuming that a supervisor is responsible for fifteen people and spends eight hours with each one developing the contract, he would spend one hundred and twenty hours accomplishing the task. If he worked an eight-hour day it would take him fifteen days, or approximately three weeks, to develop the contracts. If supervisors have employment for forty-eight weeks, this figures out to be six to seven percent of his total work year. In other words, seven percent of the work year would be spent developing mutually agreed upon objectives which would be realized through a defined plan of action. This plan would incorporate a process for monitoring and evaluating the objectives and provide a systematic means through which each individual could improve his managerial performance. It hardly seems a question of whether or not the supervisor can afford to spend the amount of time referred to, but whether or not he can afford not to!

As stated earlier, the development of the written contract generally requires from three to four sessions between the supervisor and supervisee. These sessions are usually two to three hours in length. Experience has shown that trying to accomplish too much in any one session leads to a certain amount of unproductiveness. This, of course, varies according to individuals, but generally speaking, a mental fatigue begins to set in after two or three hours of intensive concentration. Efforts to continue developing the contract after this fatigue sets in often changes the intent of the session from mutually identifying objectives to "getting the thing written." This should be kept in mind especially during the development of the first contracts. Uncertainty as to procedure, the lack of skills in identifying objectives, and a need to develop confidence in the entire processs all serve to extend the time required to develop the first contracts. As procedures, skills, and confidence develop, the time requirements should diminish.

The parties involved in developing the contract should block out their calendars so that they can devote undivided attention to each session. The sessions should be free from interruptions with a relaxed yet businesslike atmosphere. Most important, every session should have a purpose. If the intent of the first meeting is to establish priorities (as it should be), then both parties should know that and come with some concrete ideas in mind. The same is true for those sessions in which the contract is actually written. Primary responsibility for determining purpose should rest with the supervisor.

Experience suggests that the sessions necessary to developing a management contract can best be described in two phases. The first phase includes the session in which the priorities are identified but no contract writing takes place. The priority identification session will be discussed more fully later in the chapter. Suffice to say that several simple procedures can make the session more meaningful. For instance, both parties should take notes as priorities

are discussed. This procedure will help to focus attention on those priorities that are really most important.

Second, at the conclusion of the priority identification session, each of the parties should have a clear understanding of what they must do in preparation for the next meeting. For example, this might involve a principal checking the identified priorities with his staff or the supervisor determining whether or not certain resources would be available to facilitate the further development of an objective. At any rate, the session should not end without identifying the prerequisites for the next session.

The second phase includes those meetings in which the contract is actually written. Again, each party should come to the session with some concrete ideas in mind. These ideas should have evolved from the first phase meetings in which priorities were identified. Writing would not start immediately. A review of the previous session will help to reaffirm that both parties are talking about the same things. When both are comfortable that a priority has been agreed to, then, and only then, should the writing of an objective start.

It is also suggested that the parties follow some pre-defined contract format — especially during the first year. A poorly defined contract format or modifications and variations of an agreed upon format can easily lead to confusion, especially when neither of the parties has logged any experience in writing contracts. It is certainly allowable to be creative and imaginative inside the pre-set format, but it is advisable that different formats not be used with different people. The format suggested in Chapter III has been productive and is recommended.

It is also important to "rough out" a contract during the writing sessions. This should be the supervisor's responsibility. Both should recognize that the rough copy is tentative and can be changed. At the conclusion of the session, the parties should agree as to who is responsible for putting the contract into final form. Usually this is the supervisor's role, but on occasion the supervisee may be in a better position to finalize the contract. Regardless, once finalized, both parties should receive a copy of the contract and review it. If modifications are necessary and agreed to, they should be made. The retyped modifications should be reviewed again. Once the contract is acceptable to both parties it should be signed, and each person should have a copy for his own use.*

Identifying Contract Priorities

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread" are lyrics to a once popular ballad. The lyrics may have equal applicability to the writing of the first management contract. The authors have found that there is an impatience that may develop as individuals approach the writing of the first contract. The individuals feel a "pressure" to get things down on paper. In some ways this may be a healthy attitude, but experience indicates that time must be taken to "talk through" the priorities which, in turn, may or may not become contract objectives. Writing too quickly often results in the premature definition of objectives which must be later changed. Changing an objective is, of course, a perfectly legitimate aspect of MBO.

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*Examples of actual contracts can be found in Appendices B,C,D, and E. Note that each contract deals with only one objective. The entire contract consists of four or more objectives. Note that the contract format in Appendix E is more carefully outlined in terms of the contract format described in Chapter III.

However, changes can be kept to a minimum if the objectives have been properly identified in the first place. Remember, the objective of developing a written contract *is not just to develop a written contract.* The overriding objective of the whole process is to identify priorities, state them in terms of objectives, develop a plan of action that will allow the objectives to be realized and set in motion a supervisory process that will result in performance and a sound evaluation of that performance.

The mutual identification of priorities is central to the MBO process. During the first year of implementing MBO the authors found that they had not set aside time for actual discussion of priorities. Contract writing started almost immediately and was, in many cases, premature. The following year time was taking to identify priorities, and considerable payoff resulted. Probably the most important thing learned from the first year's experience was that every session between the supervisor and supervisee must have a basic intent. Too many of the first year sessions were characterized by undirected energy. It is very easy in review sessions to get sidetracked on to other topics. If this becomes a pattern in the priority setting sessions it becomes increasingly hard to get back to the topic.

In establishing the parameters for the contract, i.e., the boundaries which will circumscribe the content of the contract, the focus should be on those activities or processes that the supervisee does or can control. In addition the supervisor needs to identify those priorities that are systemwide in nature and will require attention at all management levels. With those paramenters set, the supervisor should be observant that the supervisee does not try to zero in on objectives that are too narrow. And conversely both must be alert that the identified objective does not get so wide that it becomes meaningless or that an objective doesn't get "rammed down the throat of the supervisee."

For example, a building principal may be concerned about the way in which the science curriculum has been progressing. His top priority may deal with improvement in that area. At the same time the science curriculum's progress may be typical of the progress of all curricular areas in the school. The supervisor should point this out to the principal so that the principal could consider broadening his thinking. On the other hand, if the progress of the science curriculum is indeed a priority, even though it is typical of all areas, the principal should defend his determination to stay with a narrowed objective. This kind of dialogue provides the supervisor with a feeling for the principal's priorities while at the same time making the principal aware of the broader issues he may wish to examine.

Purposeful dialogue helps the real priorities to surface. When this kind of dialogue does not take place, the resulting contract can easily reflect secondary priorities rather than primary ones. The supervisee then allocates energy to the secondary objectives because they are "in the contract" and not because they are key elements of his job. The attitude that results from this improper priority identification is one where the supervisee views the contract as being an "additional job" to be accomplished, as opposed to being the critical job at the core of his responsibilities. Both parties should work diligently to sort out the primary objectives from the secondary. With only four or five objectives upon which the entire process of supervision and evaluation will be based, the tolerance for error (if the process is to be productive) is considerably narrowed.

In summary, the priority-identification meeting sets the stage for the proper development of the management contract. The meeting should (1) establish a pattern of dialogue that will continue during the entire process; (2) prevent wasted energy and the formation of unfavorable attitudes by insuring (as much as possible) that the contract focuses on primary and not secondary priorities; (3) assist in dealing with the uncertainty that individuals may have in developing their first MBO contract; (4) bring into focus the relationship between individual and organizational priorities; (5) identify the lateral commitments necessary to the realization of agreed upon objectives (Has the staff been involved in determing the priorities? Are sufficient resources available from the school: central office? community? etc.); and culminate with an understanding of what both parties will do prior to their next meeting.

Developing Objectives

One of the most difficult aspects of the MBO process is the actual development of the objectives. More precisely, it is difficult to develop objectives that can be measured in terms of results. This is a malady found in many organizations - not education alone. No one really likes to be pinned down about what they are going to accomplish. Such prospects can be a bit scary. It may be for that reason that many administrators or managers have not developed the habit of carefully defining objectives, and consequently have not developed the skills to do so. There seem to be no shortcuts to developing that skill - one simply has to work at it. Certainly a number of good references can provide introductory information and basic techniques which should keep mistakes to a minimum. Still, experience is the best teacher. Both parties should understand that in developing the first contract (and maybe the second one) they are going to make mistakes. Accepting that probability, they should also agree to analyze mistakes and learn from them. Making mistakes in this process is not "wrong"; rather, it is normal. To learn from the mistakes is a sign that the process is growing and developing.

Perhaps the point can be illustrated by an example of a real contract objective which was poorly written. This objective was written by one of the authors and a principal during the first year of MBO implementation. The broad priority identified by the principal was the need to improve communications within the school/community. From this priority two specific objectives were stated: (1) to improve internal communications within the school and (2) to improve relationships within the community. The first objective was to be accomplished by developing and applying a communications model. A process for the organization of the model was defined, a calendar determined, and a log was kept describing how the model was used. Each of these contract stipulations were realized and evaluated accordingly. Unfortunately, the communications between the principal and the staff deteriorated. The point is that the purpose of developing the internal communcations model was to *improve communications* and not to insure that the *model was developed and used.*

In the final analysis, the supervisor who agreed to the contract was in error because he allowed the contract to be written without proper understanding of the objective. There was no doubt that the supervisee improved his ability to develop and use an internal communications model. The only thing was that developing a model did not by itself get to the objective - to improve internal communications.

Preventing such mistakes is probably impossible. However, mistakes can be held to a minimum if one is able to recognize the kind of contract objective being written. Basically

there are four kinds of contract objectives: (1) an objective that focuses on an *end product*, (2) an objective that focuses on a *process*, (3) a combination of #1 and #2, i.e., a product that creates a process or vice versa, and (4) an objective that focuses on a *planning document* which may later be put into operation.

Obviously, there are overlaps among the four types, but nonetheless it is probably helpful to think in terms of these four different types of contract objectives when building the first contract.

The end product objective. The first kind of objective, the end product, is probably the one that will be most frequent in early MBO thinking. What is the end product that can be measured or assessed? This is common in industrial process, and perhaps in search of a response for tangible accountability, educators are quick to pick it up. Because of a similarity to performance contracting, i.e., the raising of achievement scores, etc., it makes some educators a bit "queasy." Still, it is an important and proper item in the MBO process and should be identified as such. Development of a policies and procedures manual, writing specifications for construction, lowering truancy rates, increasing test scores, etc. all have an end product that can be measured with accuracy.

Process objectives are used when it is quite difficult to really measure the end product of an action or procedure. In some cases an end product might be measureable, but the district has neither the resources nor sophistication to dig out the end product. An example of this would be an objective intended to improve public relations. Measuring an end product in a public relations effort would be quite difficult. Where this is so it is necessary to assess (note the word "assess" instead of measure) the quality of the process. In the case mentioned the supervisor would try to assess the quality of the public relations effort.

A product that creates a process is not an uncommon type of objective. For example, the development of a product (Unipacs) results in a process (individualized instruction). Conversely, the initiation of a particular attendance system (process) could result in a better attendance (measureable product). Obviously, process and product are often closely related, but to not understand the differences can lead to concentration on the wrong objective. Remember that developing a communication model (product) is not the same as improving communication (process).

Planning objectives may be especially important in the development of the first contract. Many times when sitting down to develop the first contract, mutual agreement can be developed on *what* is to be done, but *how* to do it is still quite uncertain. It is ill-advised to simply write something down so that the contract can be completed. It is far better to specify that a *plan* will be developed by a specific time (September 18, November 25, etc.) In other words, the first step of the final objective is the development of a plan. The completed plan is evaluated by the supervisor, and if approved the *execution of that plan* becomes the second (final) step of the objective. It must be emphasized that one of the dangers in the first contract is writing down objectives that have not had sufficient planning. Again, the purpose in writing a contract is to get at specific objectives, not just to get the contract written.

Overwriting

When writing an objective, care must be given not to "over-write." This seems to be a particular malady of many educators. Many of us become almost masochistic in the use of "pedagese." Objectives should be stated clearly and concisely. An example of "over-write" may be helpful.

The objective to be realized:

(A) Coordinate and direct student activities (not including athletics) to provide positive student involvement for an optimum number of students at the high school if they desire, maximizing personal satisfaction to the participants. (B) To promote the personal-social development of students, as well as the academic, by bridging the class with extracurricular activities which promote feelings of cohesion and esprit de corps. (C) Initiate and experiment with innovative types of activities programs, involvement of clubs and departments in schools to increase the spectrum of participation in the high school area and raise the esprit de corps. (D) Implement and utilize the communications/shared decision-making organization (grade level cabinet) concerning the planning, promotion, and executing of class concerns and activities.

There may be some reasonable objectives in the above but they are hard to find. Too much jargon has served to confuse, rather than clarify, what the real intent is. Even cutting through the jargon one has to wonder how ". . . personal-social development as well as academic . . ." will be measured or assessed. Perhaps this confusing objective could be restated more simply:

The objective to be realized:

A. To coordinate and direct student activities for the purpose of:

1. Involving a larger number of students in activities than are currently involved.

2. Creating positive attitudes among students about the student activity program.

3. Initiating new and experimental activities.

4. Sharing decisions about the student activities program with the grade level cabinet.

This is a much more clear and concise statement of the objective which clears the way for some further definition in terms of results. Each of the four parts of the objective can now be further developed in ways which will allow some indication as to whether or not the activities program is being properly coordinated and directed. Obviously, additional questions will have to be asked. What constitutes an "activity"? How will "positive attitude" be measured? How does a "new" activity differ from an "experimental" activity? But these questions can be answered and the supervisor and subordinate can *mutually agree* as to the specific result which will indicate progress toward the objective. A clear statement of the objective just makes it easier to determine what results should be expected, what strategies will enable the results to be realized and who is responsible for carrying out strategies.

Defining Objectives in Terms of Results

Stating objectives in terms of results is another skill required in writing good contracts. An example used a few pages back cited an objective in which the principal was to improve communications within the staff. The entire focus of the objective was on the development of a "model." The expected result, as defined in the contract, was the development of the model. The result was realized—a model was developed. Since that was the result expected, the supervisor would have to agree that the objective was accomplished. This is where the process sometimes becomes awkward. A poorly stated objective may have accomplished results that leaves the supervisor in an untenable position. The results may well be realized, but they don't reflect the intent of the objective - the model was developed, but communications within the staff continued to deteriorate. Developing clearly defined objectives that get to the root of the agreed upon priorities is demanding, but absolutely necessary.

Controlling the Scope of the Objective

Experience indicates a tendency to focus on rather broad objectives when writing the first contract. This tendency compounds the problem of defining specific results. The subordinate will want to be sure that the objective is "big enough" to provide a good basis for the evaluation of performance. The supervisor, on the other hand, will want something narrow enough that he can accurately handle the process. The problem may be further compounded with a tendency to define results in vague terms, terms "to *encourage* the staff to . . ." or "to promote a better program in . . ." Such vague terms will probably create a quandary. Much energy will be spent in trying to define what is meant by "encouraging the staff" as opposed to finding out what is happening as a result of such encouragement.

Objective and Subjective Evaluation of Results

People tend to place more credence in what they call objective evaluation. Objectivity connotes a neutral or unbiased analysis of results. But total objectivity is more often "something wished for" than a reality. MBO is no different. Both objective and subjective evaluations are necessary. Since a service industry such as education deals heavily in process, subjective evaluation may be the more important of the two. The problem is how to make subjective evaluation more empirical as opposed to intuitive in application.

Defining Objectives in Terms of Activities, Rather than Results

Lack of experience many times allows for an objective to be defined in terms of activities, rather than results. Here, again, a real example might be illustrative for those making first attempts at writing contracts. The objective was to "improve the human relations between faculty and students and among students in an ethnically and socio-economically divided school." To this end a series of activities for the faculty were set up. These included: (1) Distribution of selected materials to the faculty dealing with race and human relations. (2) After-school discussions on the topic. (3) Selected movies shown on the topic. (4) Two well-known speakers spoke to the faculty on "ethnicity in the schools." (5) Parents were invited in to discuss with the teachers the topic of human relations in the schools. A questionnaire was administered to teachers and participating parents at the end of the year. The responses were quite positive and indicated that both teachers and parents learned a

great deal and now had a better understanding of the scope of the problem. This, of course, is commendable, but it misses the point. The objective was not to "learn more" or to "better understand" but to *improve* the situation. The effort had been expended on *activities* that may very well be related to the objective, but there was no indication that involvement in these activities did or did not result in an achieved objective.

The administrator in this case was really not trying to avoid the problem of human relations—quite the contrary—but in establishing this first objective he had not sorted out activities from objectives. This is not uncommon the first time around. Keep in mind, though, that there may be situations where the only thing that can be evaluated is the process (an activity), but care should be taken not to confuse process and product, as in the example above, i.e., the objective was defined as a product— "the improvement of human relations" - and the results were assessed on a process—the inservicing of the school faculty.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Process

Chapter VI will go into detail about the monitoring and evaluation of a contract. Our concern here will be directed at what is written into the contract. The monitoring/evaluation section of the contract normally describes who will do the monitoring and evaluating and how that monitoring process will take place. In some cases this may include a pre-agreement as to what constitutes good, average, or poor progress. Most often, though, the degree of progress is determined by the supervisor and supervisee as they meet in formal quarterly evaluation sessions.

The MBO contract formats in Appendices D and E indicate two ways of dealing with the monitoring and evaluation phase of the contract. Appendix D contains the monitoring and evaluation process under one heading. Appendix E separates the process into three categories: (1) the operational strategies to be followed; (2) a definition of individual responsibilities; and (3) a definition of the monitoring processes to be followed by and with the supervisor. The formats are essentially the same. One merely divides the process into sub-components.

Here, again, one of the most valuable aspects of the monitoring and evaluation processes is the "thinking through" of the objectives by the supervisor and supervisee. This enables the parties to test their perceptions, share each other's experiences, and coordinate the resources necessary to realize the objectives. During this process the parties get a "handle" on techniques and procedures that will be used, timetables, individual responsibilities and other logistical concerns. In other words, thinking through the objective has the benefit of creating a mutually agreed to and logical plan for the realization of the objective. This is the action part of the contract.

The action plan that is developed should not include every item, technique, strategy, etc., that is discussed. Only the critical elements need to be placed in writing. To try to identify everything could subsequently stifle the creativity of the supervisee. The items to be written down could reflect several things: (1) a specific strategy that will be used (e.g., a training program); (2) an obligation that either of the parties has (e.g., the supervisor is to provide funds for the training program or consultant help); (3) a specific date (e.g., the training program will be designed and administered prior to January 21, 1975); (4) the way in which evidence will be gathered to determine whether or not the program had the desired results

(e.g., questionnaire, talk sessions, etc.); and (5) a way in which the supervisor will be informed about the inservice program (e.g., actual attendance at the training session, written reports, etc.).

Checkpoints

The action plan should be organized around the accomplishment of certain things by certain times. These "checkpoints" serve as indicators to both parties as to the rate of progress that is being made toward accomplishment of the final objective. In calendarizing the objective the contracting parties build in an understanding that certain things must be accomplished by specific dates. Not to do this may encourage the feeling that the objective can be completed in a time sequence convenient to the supervisee. What may be convenient for the supervisee may be quite inconvenient to the supervisor and other interested parties. Calendarizing an objective helps to insure that progress will move in accordance with a logical plan.

Lateral Commitments

Another critical consideration in "thinking through" the monitoring and evaluation process is the identification of the needs for lateral commitment in order to realize the objective. For example, if part of the contract called for the development of a special education inservice program for the regular school staff, it would be quite necessary to coordinate the resources of the special education department with those of the school. This lateral commitment between the special education department and the school would be clearly defined in the contract. Identifying lateral commitment allows a department/division, etc., of a total organization to order their obligations to their own objectives and their lateral commitment to the objectives of other people/department/divisions, etc.

Establishing Some Understandings in Monitoring and Evaluation

Establishing certain understandings between the supervisor and subordinate help will ensure reasonableness and legitimacy to the process. An example of one such understanding regards the exchange of written materials (related to the objective) to the supervisor. These written materials may serve as partial evidence that the contract obligations are being met. What can sometimes happen, though, is that the supervisor does not have a chance to read the material because (1) he does not assign great importance to it, or (2) he receives similar information from other subordinates to the degree that he is deluged. On the other hand, the subordinate wants to make sure that the supervisor has the necessary evidence on which to make a proper evaluation, so he "cranks out" an extra copy of everything he does. This paper deluge may do more to confuse proper evaluation than to facilitate it. An understanding should be established early regarding exactly what kinds and amounts of written material will be exchanged. Having the subordinate keep a file of the written material for review during the quarterly evaluation sessions can also be helpful.

One excellent way for the supervisor and subordinate to communicate is through the use of summary reports. It is important to determine, however, for whom the summary report is prepared. If the report is prepared *only* for the benefit of the supervisor, much of the value

may be lost. If it can be assumed that movement toward an objective involves people other than the subordinate, preparing a summary report for the supervisor *only* would miss the opportunity to gain feedback from those parties (teachers, for example) who may be involved in implementation.

The preparation of a summary report should provide information and opportunities for feedback from all those who might be involved with the objective. The purpose of the report is *not* to provide *evidence* to the supervisor (although it certainly may), but rather to indicate progress to those who are interested in accomplishing an objective. It should be added that preparing a summary report is not only informative to those receiving the report but is usually an excellent sorting-out activity of the person preparing the report. Not all people are skilled at sorting out summary reports, however, and some initial experimenting or training may be necessary. Once the skills are acquired, it becomes evident to the subordinate that the summary report facilitates a review of the contract, makes clear progress or lack of it, and points out needed contractual changes.

Defining Responsibilities

The proper development of a monitoring and evaluation process should also include a clear definition of responsibilities. Who is going to do what, why, when and where? For example, an objective was written to develop a special education team which would concentrate the team talent on certain critical community problems. This involved coordinating the resources of several schools and several central office departments. A plan was developed, certain meetings established, and a calendar set. The objectives were mutually agreed to and signed. Unfortunately, no progress was made during the first month of the school year. The principal with whom the contract was written became concerned at this point and called his supervisor. The discussion revealed that the principal was waiting for the supervisor to bring the parties concerned together for the first meeting and the supervisor was waiting for the principal to do the same thing. The fact of the matter was that neither had been assigned that responsibility, and both assumed the other was taking care of it. Talking through the monitoring and evaluation process must include the proper designation of responsibilities.

Finally, the monitoring and evaluation process must include a precise description of the way in which the supervisor will work with the supervisee in evaluating the contract. Chapter VI will deal with that in more depth. The intent here is to discuss the process of writing those responsibilities into the contract. Just who will do the monitoring and evaluation is, of course, of primary importance. Will visitations be made, conferences held or attended, written reports developed, etc.? Once determined, the supervisor has an obligation to perform the supervisory and evaluation functions in the manner that was agreed to in the contract. Simply "visiting" a building once or twice will not be adequate, and neither the supervisor nor supervisee should accept it as such. The importance of establishing these ground rules cannot be overstated.

Attitudes and Roles Important to Writing a Contract

From the experience gained in writing contracts over the past three years, some firm conclusions have become apparent. First and foremost is that a positive attitude about the MBO process is essential to its success. This is especially important for the supervisor. As explained earlier, a half-hearted attempt to implement Management by Objectives is doomed

to failure, particularly if the half-heartedness is a representative supervisor attitude. It must be remembered that some (maybe many) people in the organization will possibly be threatened by MBO. This is not necessarily an unusual human reaction to change. The fact that it exists, however, will motivate opponents to probe for any indications that the commitment to the process by top management or supervisory personnel is less than serious. Thus, if the process is to get off the ground, supervisors must not only be positive, but *aggressively positive*. An old adage reads, "When you are up to your neck in alligators, you sometimes forget that your objective was to drain the swamp." Some "alligators" will be out there and unless supervisory personnel are aggressively positive about the MBO process, they (the alligators) will retain "the swamp."

Another important attitude contributing to the success of the MBO process is a mutually honest effort on the part of all parties involved to provide realistic feedback. Realistic feedback means that no one party dominates the development of an objective. If the supervisor tries to direct the subordinate to accept his point of view and *no other*, the credibility of the MBO process is immediately suspect. The parties involved must be willing to "stand in each other's shoes." This requires that each acquire good listening skills. If both parties have been involved in listening to the mutual definition of priorities they will make better judgments about what the objectives should be. A good personal check as to whether or not good listening is taking place is the extent to which *you* may feel bored during the writing session. This boredom usually takes place when a person is not able to stay mentally involved with the person he is working with. It may be that the session has gone on too long. Regardless, when boredom sets in, listening diminishes. At that point the process should be discontinued and rescheduled for another time.

Developing a good contract also means that the contracting parties have the attitude that they can be helpful to each other. The supervisor is usually in a particularly good position to do this. He probably will have broader experiences within the district and is aware of other resources that can be helpful. This experience should be at the disposal of the supervisee, just as the unique experience of the supervisee should be at the disposal of the supervisor. Too often people rely solely on their own frame of reference for the creation of ideas or the solution of problems. Seeking help from the other party or parties to the contract can positively broaden perspectives.

It is well for the contracting parties to recognize that in spite of all the expertise and planning that takes place, personal judgment will still be necessary. The contract will be only as good as those judgments. This may frighten people who want the contract to be "air tight." It is necessary to recognize that it may not be possible to get totally precise definintions into the contract. However, in the dialogue of defining objectives, those definitions that evade precise description will "bubble up" and be noticed. The parties will have to understand that under such circumstances a "judgment call" will be necessary. MBO goes a long way toward developing precision of definition, but will probably never be 100% precise. Human judgment has to make up the missing percentages.

Mutually sharing decisions and developing written contracts is basic to MBO. However, one cannot lose sight of the fact that certain people are designated as *supervisors*, others as *supervisees/subordinates*. The supervisory responsibility is not lost in the concept of mutually defining objectives. What is to be done with the person who says "Why don't you write up the contract, I'll just sign it"? Or the individual who stalls to the point where

writing a contract is no longer appropriate? The supervisor is still in charge. It is essential that the supervisor emphasize a participatory, rather than an authoritarian style in the MBO process. But his willingness and ability to share decisions should in no way be an abdication of his supervisory responsibilities. The sign on President Truman's desk, "The Buck Stops Here," is still appropriate.

At the same time a subordinate must take advantage of the supervisor's willingness to share decisions. The subordinate cannot assume a passive posture and expect that the contract will reflect his concerns. If the supervisor has the responsibility to be sensitive and receptive to the ideas and concerns of the subordinate, so must the subordinate accept the responsibility to take an active role in the development of objectives. If he remains passive during the process, then he must accept the fact that the contract may be "laid on him." If he does actively participate and the contract is still "laid on him", he should have the right of appeal – usually to his supervisor's supervisor.

A final attitude important to the MBO process is in considering the priorities in the contract as *the job* and not as *addition* to the job. Getting the contract written so that one "can get back to his real job" misses the point entirely. The priorities and objectives established in the contract are at the *core of the job* and not something extra. The most instrumental person in creating the appropriate attitude is the supervisor. If he makes *MBO his job* he serves as a model for those he works with. If he provides subordinates with the feeling that he considers MBO as an addition to his regular job, he can expect them to react the same way.

Whether or not MBO is considered as central to the job will be reflected by the way in which the contract serves as a basis for supervision and evaluation. All of the energies expended in developing an MBO contract will be for naught if once the contract is written it is filed away and not looked at until next year. The contract only defines the "playing field." How the "game is played" is the crucial matter.

VI

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is a key part of the MBO process. The written contract serves to begin the process by defining priorities and translating these priorities into objectives. The monitoring and evaluation phase is based on the actual implementation of the contract. Defining objectives, determining results, developing strategies, delegating responsibilities and agreeing on monitoring procedures by no means insures that the objectives will be achieved. Neither does the actual monitoring and evaluation. But the latter two can contribute a major assist in moving toward and achieving objectives.

Formalizing the Monitoring and Evaluation Phase Of the MBO Process

The monitoring and evaluation phase of the written contract provides both the supervisor and subordinate with a "handle" to determine whether or not objectives are being achieved. Generally, there are two methods employed: (1) those that take the form of written documentation, e.g., data from objective measurement, summary reports, minutes, logs, etc.; and (2) those in the form of direct observation, e.g., attending planning sessions, observing classes, participating in inservice programs, working with parent groups, etc. Both written documentation and personal observation/involvement are important. Thus, the parties writing the contract should give careful thought to those methods most appropriate for providing evidence that objectives are being realized. No doubt it would be more comfortable if only general opinions were the basis of evaluation. Most people don't like to be pinned down in terms of proving formal evidence of progress (or lack of it). However, if general opinion constituted the major means of monitoring and evaluation, the MBO process would soon lose some of its precision, which in turn would reduce its effectiveness.

A sound system of formal evaluation needs balance. Both objective documentation and subjective data resulting from personal involvement should be woven together as part of any evaluation scheme. Perhaps an example can best illustrate this.

An objective written cooperatively by a principal and one of the authors was directed at improving the skills of the staff in the teaching of reading as a top priority. One of the major strategies for improving this skill was the organization and implementation of an inservice training course. One expected result was that the staff express positive attitudes toward inservice training as a way of improving teaching skills. Formal monitoring and evaluation included: (1) examination of a written course outline, (2) receipt of objective evaluation of each of the training sessions, (3) receipt of a written summary of all objective data, (4) a teacher-principal interview in which each staff member evaluated the course, (5) a written summary of the combined interviews, (6) the attendance of the supervisor at one of the planning sessions and two of the training sessions, and (7) the involvement of the supervisor in classroom activities for one and one-half days. It can be seen that both written documentation (items 1, 2, 3, 5) and personal involvement (items 4, 6, 7, 8) formed the basis for monitoring and evaluating the objective. The important point is that *both methods were formalized* as part of the written agreement.

Formalizing evaluation procedures may seem to be unduly complicated — and they can be. To prevent this it is important to develop a format for the total evaluation process. The format that is used in Madison will be described in the following section of the chapter.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Format

A high priority must be assigned to the overall evaluation process. This is necessary because good evaluation takes time. For those whose commitment to the MBO process is somewhat "shaky," establishing this time priority is very difficult. They view it as taking time away from their regular job. Again, as George Odiorne has stressed on a number of occasions, if MBO is not considered to be *the job*, then the monitoring and evaluation process, or for that matter any part of the MBO process, will probably not be effective.

Experience has proven to be the best teacher in recognizing the need to establish a uniform monitoring and evaluation format. During the first year that Madison used the MBO process, each supervisor was allowed some latitude in developing his own format. Although this made some supervisors and subordinates happy, the discrepancies that became evident indicated that more consistency was necessary. (It should be pointed out that most of the dissatisfaction resulting from a lack of a common format came from those being supervised.) Much more energy went into the development of a consistent monitoring and evaluation format during the second year of implementation.

The format used in Madison includes four formal review sessions. The final evaluation takes place during the last session. Recognize that the contract spells out other monitoring techniques and procedures which require the parties to interact as the contract is implemented. These are *in addition* to the formal review sessions and generally lead up to or away from the sessions.

It is important that enough time be allocated to each of the formal review sessions. Experience indicates that periods of time up to two hours are most productive. Some

sessions may be shorter, others longer, but it is important that the parties give each session the importance that is worth two hours.

Each party should come to the review session prepared. All objectives should be reviewed prior to the meeting so that time is not wasted determining what was supposed to be done. The sessions should be conducted in a business-like fashion with the focus being on the various contract objectives. Perhaps all this seems unnecessary to say, but the review session can be somewhat like the "alligators and draining the swamp" discussed previously, i.e., it's not hard to lose sight of what the review session is supposed to do and wander off into some other interesting and maybe more immediate concerns. Major responsibility for maintaining the business-like atmosphere rests with the supervisor, and he should prepare himself accordingly.

An important feature of the monitoring/evaluation format is the preparation of a *written summary* of each formal evaluation session. Here, again, this responsibility is with the supervisor. Two techniques have proven to be effective. The first technique involves the supervisor taking brief notes during the evaluation session and then preparing a written summary after the session is over. The second technique is reliant on the supervisor developing the summary report as the review session is taking place. Both techniques are good. The basic difference is that developing the summary during the session allows the subordinate to read it and seek clarification of any item prior to the summary being finalized. This technique provides both parties the opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings that might have been developed during the session. *There should be no surprises included in the written summary.*

If the review sessions have been handled properly the final review should be a capsulization of the previous reviews. Probably the major differences are that in the prior reviews some tentativeness is allowable, whereas in the final review final conclusions must be reached. Normally the progress of each of the four or five components in the contract is discussed separately in the reviewing process. Each item stands by itself. However, a district may want to reach some over-all conclusion in the final evaluation, i.e., to make some single judgment on the total contract. This judgment may be expressed in some kind of numeric rating scale (like 1-5) or through some verbal descriptors (like "excellent," "satisfactory," etc.). If there is a desire for some single number, letter, or verbal descriptor as an over-all evaluation of the total contract, it is highly advisable that the criteria for this conclusion be established beforehand. For example, is the over-all conclusion an average of each of the four or five components in the contract? If so, does each component have equal weight? How will you average out verbal descriptors? What is an over-all rating for 3 "excellent's" and 2 "satisfactory's"?

The fact that the final evaluation criteria are the results of human perception and effort makes such criteria subject to human interpretation. While there is probably no way to make human interpretation exactly alike among supervisory personnel, it is important to try to prevent wide variation. One way is to bring all the supervisors charged with making evaluations to a workshop on that topic alone. The criteria can be discussed among the group, and perhaps even more productive, a number of hypothetical cases can be presented, with each member establishing a rating and discussing his or her rationale for that rating.

Most of us have heard of the research which shows that the same freshman English theme can receive a grade ranging from an A to an F when graded independently by college

instructors. The same can be true for MBO contracts unless a serious attempt is made to create some uniformity. Just as wide discrepancies in the grading of English themes create a credibility question in the minds of English students, so do wide discrepancies in the evaluating of MBO contracts create a credibility question in the minds of those being evaluated.

It is also advisable to have pre-established an appeal mechanism, i.e., a means by which a subordinate can appeal the decision of his supervisor. In Madison the appeal mechanism allows the subordinate to appeal a decision to his supervisor's supervisor. The appeal agent reviews the documentation and review summaries with both parties and comes to a conclusion regarding the accuracy of the evaluation. It would have to be concluded that where subtle errors or misinterpretation have been made by the supervisor, the advantage probably lies with the supervisor, i.e., the appeal agent will not have been close enough to the situation to reach strong conclusions about subtle differences. However, where there have been major errors or misinterpretations, the advantage will lie with the subordinate who is appealing the case. If procedures have been handled properly along the way it is unlikely that there will be many — if any — such appeals. The important thing, rather, is that people understand that such an appeal mechanism is available.

Several Reminders About Evaluation

Supervising and evaluating an MBO contract is a continuous, ongoing process and not a series of segregated, unrelated events. Being a process, there are certain attitudes, techniques, strategies, skills, etc. that are basic to it. Several of these have been mentioned before, but it seems appropriate to bring attention to them again.

Several assumptions about supervision and evaluation were presented in Chapter II. One that is especially significant is that evaluation should not focus on "getting rid of the bad apples," but rather on the improvement of individuals within the organization. To be effective the evaluation process must be perceived in a positive light by both supervisor and subordinate. The supervisor needs to be cautious about emphasizing the negative factors during a review session. If those factors are apparent they should be brought to light and discussed. But overstressing the negative is probably unproductive. The intent of review and evaluation is not just to find out what is going wrong, but to emphasize how to make things go right. If, after suggestions, recommendations and other attempts of the supervisor to make things go right, the movement of the subordinate toward objectives is still negligible, this should be documented in the final review session. But every positive attempt should be made first.

Another assumption stated earlier was that continuous "hard-nosed" dialogue between supervisor and subordinate concerning agreed-upon priorities is productive to the organization and the psychological/emotional well-being of the individual. "Hard-nosed" dialogue assumes that it is meaningful to all parties involved. If, as mentioned previously, the supervisor should not over-emphasize the negative in a review session, neither should he over-emphasize the positive. Most individuals know that most good performances do not come into the category of "incredible," "unbelievable," "outstanding," etc. And to comment on each good effort with such adjectives is to run the risk of attempting psychological manipulation — something which is easily detected by the subordinate. Still, it is important that good performance be properly reinforced. When a person is doing a good

job he or she should be told so. People like to hear it, especially when they themselves believe the job was well done. Positive reinforcement by no means suggests a "milk and honey" approach. Every effort must be made to provide honest evaluation and help the individual to accept shortcomings and capitalize on strengths.

Any individual has an "ego investment" in his job. If he is performing in an unsatisfactory manner, the chances are that he is conscious of it. A supervisor must recognize this and use compassion and common sense in helping the person come to grips with his shortcomings. At the same time, if the priorities of the job are beyond the individual's capabilities, the person should be made aware of it and aided in determining if his abilities would better match up with some other position. It is well to remember that not doing a good job is not equal to being a bad person.

Another aspect of the MBO process concerns the attitude of the supervisor and subordinate about the concept of "results." It has been stated several times that objectives should be measured in terms of results. To most people that means that when you get results you get something positive. Results tend to prove that your initial perceptions were correct. But when those initial perceptions are wrong, rather than obtaining the expected results, you obtain some problems. *But problems are results.* If the parties to the contract spend some major energy identifying priorities and trying to deal with those priorities, they are bound to "scare up" or run into some problems. This may be because the problems have lain undetected until the MBO process brought them into view. Or it may mean that the initial perception about what achievement of the objective would do was faulty, not extensive enough, or not totally accurate. In other words, the achievement of certain objectives may bring along with it a series of unanticipated problems. This should not be seen as negative, but as an opportunity to deal with those problems and to develop better projection skills.

A final observation about the evaluation process concerns for whom the data is gathered. In traditional evaluation systems data is often gathered for the supervisor. It is seen as evidence that the task has been performed. Although there is a certain legitimacy to this, gathering data only to prove to the supervisor that something has happened delimits its use. For example, summary reports are generally prepared for the supervisor. Yet the data is obtained by the individuals implementing the objective. If they see the collecting of the data only so the boss can complete his MBO contract or so that other bosses know what he is doing, the data itself will have diminished significance to the implementor — it's for someone else. It is far more productive when the data is prepared for those who are implementing the objective — not just for the boss. The implementing audience should be the primary benefactors. The supervisor should receive a copy of the report, but he need not be the primary audience. If the supervisor doesn't have the skill to relate the data to the objective, then *his* competencies, not the subordinate's, need to be improved.

A Look at the Review Sessions

Session #1

The first formal review session usually takes place after about eight to ten weeks of the school year have passed. Since it is the first formal review, the primary emphasis is on the determination of whether or not the processes described in the contract are "getting off the ground." Indicators may or may not have been written into the contract. If they haven't,

the supervisor must use his judgment. This is the time to see if all the preliminaries have taken place. Have the resources identified as being necessary been procured? Have support staff services been coordinated? Has the staff who are to implement the objective been involved and are they supportive? Has the necessary timetable/calendar been organized? Have organizational meetings taken place? Are work groups formed? Has baseline data been collected? The answers to such questions can serve as pretty good indicators of initial progress.

If initial progress is not evident, the supervisor must make note of that with the subordinate. Recognize, however, that this may be difficult to do, especially the first time when the supervisor may be anxious that the first effort at review be particularly positive. But the longer the time span in identifying problems or potential problems, the shorter the time to correct them.

A real life incident may illustrate the point. A particular principal was not very supportive of the MBO process. The first evaluation session made evident that his contract was not developing properly. Unfortunately, his supervisor did not emphasize the need for improving performance, but rather concentrated on trying to make the principal's attitude about MBO more positive. The second review session saw a repeat of the first. When the final review session took place, the supervisor had to rate the principal's performance as poor. In turn, the principal indicated that the supervisor had not given him proper counsel. The end result was that the contract was not realized, the performance of the principal did not improve and the principal felt more negative about the MBO process than he did previously. The moral of the story is that if a supervisor is to help a subordinate move toward objectives, an honest appraisal of performance must take place.

The second review session focuses on an interim assessment of each of the objectives. It generally takes place midway through the school year. All the strategies that relate to each objective should be underway, necessary working relationships should be established, initial written progress reports generated, a firm calendar/timetable for each objective determined, comparable data (if required) gathered and analyzed, and initial results should be evident.

Probably the most important aspect of the second review session is that it should make evident legitimate changes to the contract. Emphasis must be on the word *legitimate*. A tendency that has to be discouraged is that of the supervisor changing the contract in order to avoid pointing out an obvious shortcoming. For example, a component of an objective might include gathering data during the second and fourth quarters in order to compare results. If data was not gathered during the second quarter, the chance for comparison is eliminated. A supervisor, rather than making an issue of this, could agree to change the contract to read that data would be gathered once rather than twice. Although this might make the supervisor-subordinate relationship a happy one, it could hardly be considered as good supervision.

If the contract is to be changed it should be the result of some logical thought and/or data. As an example, assume that a series of inservice training sessions designed to reinforce skills in the teaching of reading had been written into the contract. After several training sessions it becomes evident that the purpose of the inservice training — to teach skills — was incorrect. Differences in the reading philosophies of the various members of the teaching

staff made it extremely difficult to decide which of the reading skills are most important. At this point it would be appropriate to change the focus of the objective from providing teachers with skills to one of developing a common philosophy and set of goals for the reading program in general.

A change in the MBO contract can take place at any time. However, the second evaluation session is a *key time*. Both supervisor and subordinate should recognize this, and their evaluation of each objective should take place with an eye toward contract modification.

Session #3

"Putting it all together" is the focus of the third evaluation. By this time all parties concerned should *know* the status of each objective. All components of the contract should be well underway with a number of them nearing completion. Preparations should be in progress for the final analysis of data and the development of final reports. At this time it is also appropriate to begin developing direction for future objectives. The data gathered up to the third evaluation session usually can provide a basis from which these plans can develop. The parties involved in the contract should take time during the session to discuss the tentative results of each objective and to project their thinking toward the future.

Problems that have cropped up during the year should be reviewed, and any discrepancies in satisfying the components of the contract should be specifically noted. Noting contract deficiencies at this point of the year usually stimulates a great deal of activity from those individuals who have not been very serious about the process. They suddenly realize that their contract is "coming up to scratch." Realizing this, they may make extreme efforts to complete the contract between the third and final review session. Usually this is too late and the supervisor must be adamant in pointing this out. A well thought-through contract can seldom be accomplished with a great "sprint to the wire." On the positive side, though, maybe all will learn from the experience.

Session #4

There should be no surprises at the final review/evaluation session. Since the evaluation is based on the process set for the year, every aspect of the contract, negative and positive, should have been reviewed previously. The final evaluation, then, is essentially a culmination of what took place during the year.

An effective way of preparing for the final evaluation session is for both the supervisor and subordinate to rate the subordinate's performance. It is usually amazing to find out how similar the parties evaluate the performance. And it is quite easy to identify those areas where the parties disagree. The fact that an honest disagreement can be identified makes the dual evaluation especially meaningful. Perhaps the supervisor did overlook something that the subordinate identifies as important. This being the case, it is possible for the parties to modify the final evaluation during the session. If the supervisor alone fills out the final evaluation, the subordinate is placed in a somewhat passive role. After all, who is really going to argue with the boss when it appears that he has his mind made up? If there is an attitude of openness present during the final evaluation session, the session will be far more productive than if the subordinate is handed a final written evaluation.

Finally, supervisors have to learn how to bring the contract to a final evaluation while at the same time moving into the next year's contract. The MBO process is a continuous one that moves on through time. It does not start and stop in one-year jerks. If the subordinate believes "Well, that takes care of that for a year," it is some indication that he is thinking in terms of yearly starts and stops. If anything, the conclusion of a contract is merely a "breather", and the supervisor should make an effort to see that the final session reflects that. He can accomplish this by using the final evaluation session as a "lead in" to the next contract. It may be that various objectives written into one contract should be refined and continued into the next year. This, as a matter of fact, will often happen.

Also, the results obtained from an objective may point out new priorities from which future objectives can be developed. It is necessary, then, for the supervisor to maintain a future orientation during the final evaluation session in order that the MBO process is viewed as continuous. As the old song goes, "the song [contract] is over, but the melody [MBO process] lingers on." □

VII

How's Your MBO? Compared to What?:

The first person says, "How's your wife (husband)?" The second responds, "Compared to what?" Perhaps this shopworn quip is appropriate to MBO in education today. "What do you think of MBO?" Response: "As compared to what?" If compared with supervision/evaluation systems commonly found — it's probably much better. As compared with other ways of showing accountability — it's probably more realistic and attainable. Undoubtedly, MBO in education will go through a lot of "as compared to what" questions in the next several years. Unfortunately, though, MBO in education will probably carry the albatross of being a "hot item." Far too often the tendency to "get with a hot item" looms without consideration of the arduous but necessary planning and thinking which are requisite to making such a process work.

The Formal and Informal Organization. MBO is not a panacea for all the problems in education. Frankly, those who adopt the procedures described in this book should anticipate the development of new problems (along with the solving of some old ones) due to the MBO process. For example, it appears that most of the *real* problems in organizations are not really found in the formal structure of the organization. If the real problems were there, simply changing some boxes and responsibilities on the organization chart would probably take care of the situation. No, the real problems are more often than not found in the informal structure of the organization — that grey, nebulous, unofficial area that has developed historically over a period of time. Rather than solving those hard-to-get-at problems in the informal structure, most organizations have developed coping mechanisms, i.e., other informal processes to get around the problems.

For example, almost any organization has some office (person) in the formal organization that is relatively unproductive. The office (person) does not aggressively deal with problems

— only reacts to them. Decisions are made slowly or not at all, etc., etc. Too often (in lieu of formal resolution) the informal structure establishes ways of coping with the situation by going around, over, or under that office to get the decisions or information needed. The MBO process will come directly into conflict with such procedures. MBO will pinpoint the problem and "bubble it up" into the formal organization. It now becomes a formal problem that has to be dealt with.

Some of these problems that are "bubbled up" from the informal structure are awkward to deal with, and people might feel more comfortable if the problem would just disappear, or at least return to its quiet position in the informal structure. Under MBO the problem keeps coming back into the spotlight. As advocates of the MBO process, the authors believe the surfacing of these problems to be productive to the positive thrust of the organization, but at the same time they caution those organizations not willing or able to deal with the problems quietly hidden in the informal structure to think twice about MBO.

Dynamic vs Static Organizations. MBO also assumes that an organization is dynamic, rather than static. The nature of a dynamic organization is one of constantly growing, developing, improving and achieving. The nature of a static organization is reacting, explaining away, defending and satisfied. Unfortunately, the characteristics or circumstances of school systems more often tend to static, rather than dynamic status. Richard O. Carlson speaks to this by describing the school system as "domesticated."

> Thus, some service organizations operate in an environment where they can select their clients and the clients are free to take or leave the service according to their desire. One of many examples of this type of organization is the *private college.* And some service organizations operate in an environment where they *cannot* select the clients they are to serve and the clients *must* accept the service. One of several examples of this type of organization is the *public school.*

The significance of the relationship with clients is implied in the label of "domesticated organization" which is given to organizations like the school which cannot select clients and where the client must accept the service. The label of domesticated organization is used to indicate that this class of organization is protected and cared for in a fashion similar to that of a domesticated animal. They are not compelled to attend to all of the ordinary and usual needs of an organization. For example, they do not compete with other organizations for clients; in fact, a steady flow of clients is assured. There is no struggle for survival for this type of organization — existence is guaranteed. Though this type of organization does compete in a restricted area for funds, funds are not closely tied to quality of performance. These organizations are domesticated in the sense that they are protected by the society they serve. The society sees the protection of these domesticated organizations as necessary to the maintenance of the social system and creates laws over and above those applying to organized action in general to care for these organizations.

The consequence of domesticating organizations, as far as organizational change is concerned, is to restrict the need for, and interest in, change because the environment of the domesticated organization in many important respects is more stable than it is in other types of organizations. When important elements of the environment are stable, as you know, the necessity for change is reduced.[1]

To some degree the MBO process with its focus on results, improvement, achievement, etc., runs contrary to the inclinations of a "domesticated" institution. Despite the shouting from the public or from professional critics, most people on the "inside" know that the school system (like the Post Office) is not likely to disappear. Some heads may roll — usually the superintendent's — and some unpleasantness may erupt, but the high probability remains that ten years from now the same schools will be sitting where they now are and will continue to enroll children. Those who might wish to consider MBO for application to their school system should understand the problems inherent in applying a dynamic model to what may be a static/domesticated institution. Such an application requires concentrated work, a dedication to "thrust," and a lot of follow-through.

Union Opposition. MBO may very well elicit negative responses from teacher unions. Some union criticisms are valid, while others are not. One valid criticism is: "How are you going to apply this more sophisticated and time-consuming process to teachers when administrators have not had the time, inclination, or competence to successfully apply a more simplistic model?" The answer, of course, is that MBO would probably be badly applied if there is no concomitant effort to upgrade the skills of those charged with supervision/evaluation. Commitment to MBO also means commitment to developing the tools to do the job.

Another concern of unions who have fought for *collective* representation is viewing the individual contract developed between a teacher and principal as *individual* negotiations, which is contrary to collectivism. This concern seems to be misplaced. There is nothing in the contracting process which has to be outside of the unions' right (at least in various states) to bargain for "wages, hours, and conditions of employment."

Finally, with tenure under attack throughout the country, the drums of accountability beating loud, and with declining employment opportunities, some unions may see MBO as an administrative process for making "better book" on teachers in order to fire or release them. Here again, if the *primary* function of any supervisory/evaluation system is to get rid of people, then, in truth, MBO would probably do a better job of "making book." However, as indicated in Chapter II, supervisory systems that are oriented at "finding the bad apples" are counter-productive. "Finding the bad apple" hasn't worked very well, and such a process characterizes the supervisory function as something that is "done to" the three or four percent of personnel in the system that might be considered nonproductive. The ninety-six percent remaining do not particularly benefit from the plusses inherent in a positively oriented goal-setting procedure. If school systems incorporate MBO as a more refined "head-hunting" device, it will soon be defeated.

Consultant Help. MBO has only recently surfaced in education. Efforts to look at the process have been developed through seminars by the American Association of School Administrators and at least nibbled at by some other school organizations (mostly administrative), but there are still relatively few consultants in the field who can help a school district put an MBO program "on line." A major intent of this book is to try to fill some of the gaps by describing the efforts and procedures of one school system which has wrestled with the process.

There are a number of independent consultants and consulting organizations entering the MBO field. Some of them are undoubtedly very good. Others often have difficulty

"breaking in" to education. First of all, their experiences are usually drawn from business or industry. While this fact alone should not be prejudicial to them, it does hamper their effectiveness. In order to establish the necessary credibility, they have to show they understand the peculiarities of school operations. Such consulting organizations *do* exist, however, and a school district should *seek out one that has educational experience and expertise.*

In response to the argument that administrators are paid higher salaries to solve problems, and if administrators are to deserve the continuation of such salaries they ought to be able to solve MBO problems, we simply say this: No administrator can know *everything*, and it is the hallmark of a good manager that he knows whom to turn to when his own expertise falls short, and calls in the right consultant to do the job. No consultant should be considered an "outsider" — especially not if he works in close cooperation with top management.

Tying Compensation to MBO Performance. At some point in time this question will undoubtedly be raised. There appears to be a rising interest by the public and by boards of education in establishing salaries based on some kind of performance criteria. Most teachers and middle administrators, however, have not been very receptive to merit pay proposals. Such cool receptions tend to anger the public and boards advocating such proposals. They see such opposition as a sure sign that a considerable number of incompetents do exist in the school system and that single salary schedules and tenure are simply devices to protect them. Whether in actuality incompetent people exist in education to any greater or lesser degree than any other profession is at best speculation.

In all probability the opposition to merit pay stems from two or three sources. As mentioned previously, there is currently little confidence within the profession regarding the efficacy of personnel evaluation. While the intent of the MBO procedure is to change that, there are still substantial feelings of "we'll believe it when we see it." Whether better supervision/evaluation practices would promote more receptivity to merit pay or whether merit pay would force better supervision/evaluation practices is a circular question.

Secondly, salaries of educators have historically been relatively low. While this has improved over the past decade, there remain few opportunities to get rich. People entering the profession usually do so understanding the monetary rewards they might expect. They have chosen to accept more modest rewards in exchange for job security or perhaps the joys of the academic life and service to the community, or maybe opportunities to be with family, etc., during the summer months. The point is that most did not enter the profession with financial rewards as a primary motivator. Some, whose orientation is toward social service, may even see emphasis on financial rewards for such services as a bit crass.

Third, the rise and maintenance of teacher unions is predicated, at least in part, on the strength of collective negotiations; i.e., the union's strength lies in its ability to negotiate for its clientele collectively — not individually. Any system in which the employer evaluates and pays the employee on an individual basis would be anathema to union processes. Whether all this is good or bad is probably a philosophic question more than anything else. The authors are reluctant to become embroiled in that particular question.*

*Madison school administrators are paid on the basis of performance evaluation as determined via the MBO contract fulfillment, rather than by a pre-set salary schedule. Teachers remain on a negotiated salary schedule.

There are arguments by MBO enthusiasts on both sides of the issue. The advocacy for MBO in this book is for a *functional* method of dealing with supervision and evaluation. Whether or not school systems wish to attach financial rewards to such a process is a separate question that each system will need to wrestle with individually. But the question is certain to come up.

Conclusion

The problems cited above are not intended to discourage educators or school systems from adopting MBO. Quite the contrary. The problems are cited so that those who see a positive logic to the MBO system can better anticipate how to proceed and not be caught off guard. The problems cited can be sensibly handled — especially if strategies are developed before the fact of implementation. MBO has been described throughout this book not as a panacea, but as a sound and rational system. The process requires hard work, but for those searching for ways to develop a dynamic organization and to show professional competence in surfacing and solving problems, the MBO process offers extraordinary possibilities. Perhaps there are better organizational procedures than MBO, but if there are they seem to lack advocacy. Question: "How good is MBO?" Answer: "As compared to what?" If the comparison is with organizational procedures most commonly found today, the full answer is that MBO is a decided improvement. □

VIII

Common Questions About MBO

1. *Who must decide that MBO is the supervision/evaluation system to be used in the district?*

The basic decision to use MBO in any school district must come from a recommendation made by the superintendent and be supported by the board of education. Without top managerial support the process will simply not work. There are too many problems that must be weathered before the MBO process becomes viable, and those that are "faint at heart" or lack commitment to the process will be quick to give up on it. Firm executive support and commitment are necessary to sustain the process through the initial difficulties that must be expected.

2. *Won't individuals concentrate on doing well on their MBO's at the expense of their regular job?*

MBO *is* the job. Certainly not every aspect of a person's job is covered in the MBO contract, but all aspects of a person's job do not require specific supervision either. The time and energy of both the supervisor and supervisee dictate that those elements of a job that are most crucial — that have a top priority — are those that need and should have intensive supervision. These can become part of an MBO contract. All the other aspects of the job must still be completed; they just won't be supervised as carefully. After all, when a person is hired for a job there are certain abilities and skills that are basic to his doing it, and he is paid accordingly. As a principal once said, "If you don't think that other parts of your job (other than those related to MBO) are being supervised and evaluated, just do something wrong and see how many people know about it."

3. *Should MBO evaluations be related to salary?*

Each school district must decide whether or not the MBO evaluation should be related to salary. Experience in Madison has indicated that this is the most controversial aspect of the entire process. There seems to be little question that relating MBO evaluation to salary is threatening to many people. The question becomes philosophical to the extent that MBO is a process that is aimed at improving individual and organizational performance. Hypothetically it is the process, not the salary, that causes the improvement. And those who would argue against the evaluation/salary tie-up indicate that the relationship inhibits, rather than enhances the intent of MBO.

On the other hand, relating salary to MBO evaluations has demanded a precise definition of the process that might not have taken place had that relationship not been a reality. Also, it has been interesting to note the degree to which some individuals have improved their managerial behavior during the past two years. Although this improvement cannot be attributed solely to the evaluation/salary marriage, it is certainly true that the marriage has not prevented it.

4. *Won't individuals select easily achieved MBO objectives in order to insure successful completion of them?*

Yes, some people might be inclined to select easily achieved MBO objectives. But the MBO process involves everyone in the organization. If a person writes an easily achieved objective, that objective had to be mutually agreed to. The supervisor then assumes equal responsibility for that objective. His supervisor might, indeed, question whether or not proper managerial techniques were being employed. Also, if easily achieved MBO objectives are suggested continually by a supervisee, it would be legitimate to review just how much responsibility is associated with the job he is hired to do.

5. *Can MBO objectives be modified and changed?*

The objectives included in an MBO contract should be subject to change at any time during the process. However, the change should be based on adequate data and must be agreed to mutually. No change should take place just because it is a comfortable way out of a difficult (perhaps negative) evaluation situation The change must be the result of honest appraisal and basically should evolve into being — it should not be a surprise when it is mentioned for the first time.

6. *What happens if there is an impasse between the supervisor and supervisee?*

Placed in proper perspective, the number of impasses experienced during two years of MBO have been very small. In most cases conflicts are resolved at the supervisor/supervisee level through "hard-nosed" dialogue. There have been instances where impasses were evident and they have been handled in one of two ways. First, it is well to remember that after all efforts to mutually resolve an issue have been exhausted, that the supervisor still has the authority to effect a decision. That's part of his job. Second, if the supervisee is still unhappy about the decision, he should have the right to use a defined appeal procedure. Generally, this appeal procedure consists of a hearing before the next ranking supervisor in the organization.

7. *How are consistently top performers rewarded?*

The obvious answer here is more money. But those in education recognize that the opportunity for financial reward is somewhat limited. Also, the potential for vertical mobility, another obvious reward, is limited. Both of the rewards mentioned are available to industrial organizations. All too often direct analogies between governmental service organizations and industrial organizations are made. The fact of the matter is that governmental service organizations, e.g., public schools, have limited access to both money and vertical mobility. Other means of rewarding top managers must then be sought. The potential in this area is limited only by the creativity of the school district itself, because few districts have been able to allocate resources to developing such a reward system. Some suggestions for rewarding top performers include conference attendance, additional professional training, additional responsibility, e.g., new program development.

8. *Isn't MBO a system which leads to centralized authority and decision-making?*

No, it is not — but it could be. MBO will provide a system with a better coordination of resources, more precise goals and the identification of top priorities. The secret, however, is that these elements of a system evolve from the *mutual* development of objectives. If MBO is used by central office personnel to control and direct the actions of managers in an authoritative fashion, it would be possible to centralize control. However, the MBO system would last as long as it took the subordinates to develop an informal system capable of coping with it. MBO will not be a useful management system unless concepts such as cooperation, trust, honesty, coordination, dialogue, mutual respect, etc., are part of it.

9. *How do you start MBO in a school district?*

First the MBO process must be investigated thoroughly by managers from all levels within the organization. The decision to implement the MBO process must be supported by top executives within the district. A pilot program can be used to develop the strategies and techniques necessary to implement the program. Next, a training program involving all personnel who will be directly involved with MBO must be conducted. The MBO process can be successful only if the district has prepared for it. It is not possible to merely try MBO out — there must be commitment to making it work.

10. *Whose goals are being implemented?*

Ideally, both the goals of the district and the individual goals of the people in the organization are being implemented at the same time. Realistically, there are shortcomings which make the ideal hard to realize. A strong-willed superior or subordinate who cannot compromise will force objectives upon people he deals with. Lack of perceptiveness as to the top priorities in the organization also means that secondary objectives will receive undue attention. The important element again is the *mutual definition of objectives.* If the subordinate defines those objectives that are critical to his responsibility and he and his superior relate these objectives to organizational goals, the chances that individual and organizational goals will be implemented increase considerably. The alternative, of course, is to let each person define his own objectives with the chance that organizational energy will be proliferated to such a degree that management's major role will be trying to hold the organization together, as opposed to providing common direction toward mutually agreed to organizational goals.

11. *What is the basic focus of the MBO process?*

Much energy is wasted trying to answer the above question. The argument focuses on whether or not MBO should result in long-range planning and development or be introduced as a system to improve supervision and evaluation processes. Basically, MBO will evolve into a system that includes all four elements: supervision, evaluation, long-range planning and development. The important decision is to concentrate on those elements of the process that will have some immediate results. Discussions that focus on long-range planning and development tend to become philosophical and entangle the practitioner in lengthy and time-consuming meetings which, initially at least, seem to be unproductive. By concentrating on supervision and evaluation first, the locus of energy expenditure is at a very practical level, i.e., the person's job.

With proper planning and implementation the MBO process will evolve from a system that concentrates on supervision and evaluation to one that includes long-range planning and development as well. Finally, in order to provide an optimum for successful MBO implementation, the system to which it is introduced should be small enough so that enough assistance can be given those who are involved in the process. For example, rather than beginning the MBO process with all administrators (depending on the size of the district), it might be more productive to select a smaller group to pilot the process.

12. *How much does MBO cost?*

The financial expenditure necessary to introduce and implement the MBO process is quite modest. If consultants are hired to help train the staff and audiovisual aids are used to supplement the training sessions, the process can be introduced and implemented for between four and five thousand dollars. However, the dollar and cents expenditure is a pittance in relation to the time and energy necessary to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to make MBO work. MBO must become the focus of a person's job, and the personal changes required to accomplish that attitude really cannot be measured in terms of money. Suffice to say that the major expenditure required to implement the MBO process will be in terms of individual and organizational energy, not dollars and cents.

13. *How do you deal with those personnel that oppose MBO?*

It must be assumed that if an organization is considering the MBO process seriously that the number of individuals who oppose such a move are in a minority. Strong resistance from the majority will insure MBO's demise. Granting the assumption, it is unproductive to devote disproportionate resources in an effort to try to convince those who oppose the MBO process to feel more positive about it. A more productive exercise would be to dwell on the positive elements of MBO and on the individuals who are attempting to make it work. Experience has shown that those who oppose the MBO process either become convinced of its attributes by those who favor it or else they become disenchanted to the extent that they alter their careers within or outside of the organization. On the other hand, increasing dissatisfaction with the MBO process is usually a sign that improper policies and procedures are being employed to facilitate it. Constant assessment, then, is critical to the proper functioning of MBO, and it cannot be assumed that those who are critical of it are incorrect. What must be determined is exactly what is being criticized in light of who is

doing the criticizing. A criticism by a person generally positive about the process must be awarded more credence than one expressed by an individual with a generally negative attitude.

14. *Doesn't MBO require a lot of paper work?*

MBO does require good written communication. It also makes evident written communication that is not really necessary. In other words, the MBO process quickly points out unproductive, out-moded and/or unused channels and methods of communication. Initially it may seem as if more paper work is required because new procedures and documentation are necessary. Former procedures and documentation must be considered in light of the new requirements, and if they are found to be unnecessary or duplicate they should be eliminated. Over the long haul MBO will streamline the procedures and nature of the paper work that an organization generates.

15. *How many people can be adequately supervised by one person using MBO?*

In answering this question, a person who is being supervised is considered to report directly to one person. This individual develops and evaluates the contract with the supervisee. Experience indicates that a supervisor can work reasonably well with 10 to 12 subordinates. The ideal number would be 6 to 10, with 15 being an absolute top limit.

16. *Are all contracts for the duration of one year?*

During the first several years most contract objectives will be one year in duration. This is especially true where a yearly rating is necessary and/or where salary is attached to a yearly rating. As experience with the MBO process is logged, contract objectives written for longer periods of time can be expected. When this happens two or three interim "final" evaluations can be written into the objectives. What is important is that the individuals involved in the MBO process deal with it as a process and not as a series of relatively unrelated contracts that are written on a yearly basis.

17. *Can more than one person be involved in writing an objective?*

It is possible to have more than one person write an objective with a single supervisor. This requires considerable skill, however, and during the first one or two years attempts along this line should be minimal. The involvement of more than one person should be encouraged as experience and skill with the MBO process is gained. More than likely the necessity of developing these joint contracts will become evident before the first year has been completed. When this happens, it is necessary for the supervisor to control the extent to which joint contracts are developed in order to ensure that proper evaluation of the process takes place. Also, care must be taken to make sure that a joint contract is legitimate and not just a way for a group of people to diffuse responsibility in such a fashion that good supervision and evaluation are not possible.

18. *Will MBO cause problems within the organization?*

Certainly! Any change which has the magnitude of MBO can be expected to cause organizational problems. These problems will probably not be new to the organization,

however. MBO will cause those problems that have been successfully ignored or that have been resolved in an unsatisfactory fashion to "bubble up" to the surface and demand attention. This may be disconcerting to those who felt the organization was running smoothly, because it will mean that new priorities will emerge and additional energy will be required to get at the priorities. But problems can be expected. What is somewhat reassuring, though, is that not only does MBO represent a process through which organizational problems can be identified, but a process through which the problems can be addressed as well.

19. *Does MBO allow for all of the aspects of a person's job to be supervised and evaluated?*

There is no supervisory process that provides opportunities for all aspects of an individual's job to be evaluated. MBO is no exception to this. In order for all aspects of a person's job to be supervised and evaluated it would be necessary for a supervisor to follow a subordinate on a one-to-one basis for extended periods of time. Even then it would be doubtful that accurate evaluation of *all* the components of the job could be successfully undertaken. To begin with, a person is hired for a position on the basis of certain expected competencies. These competencies are considered as necessary to performing the day-to-day aspects of the job. Rather than evaluating a person on the day-to-day job expectations, a far more productive approach would be to identify wishes to allocate major energy. These four or five priorities would be mutually agreed to by the supervisee and his supervisor, and would become the basis for evaluating the supervisee's job performance. Certainly other job factors can be considered, particularly if performance seems to be deteriorating. Chances are, however, that the deterioration of job performance will be evident in relation to a person's top objectives as well as his day-to-day functions. Focusing on the top objectives then allows for their close supervision and evaluation. This is far more productive than diffusing supervisory and evaluative energy over such a broad basis that the process resembles more of a cursory inspection of performance, as opposed to an intensive evaluation of it.

Appendix A

SUMMARY: MBO RESPONSES CONCERNING ASSUMPTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

(Data collected from more than 483 school administrators in MBO workshops conducted in Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota and Pennsylvania.)

Observation No. 1 — Most people don't like to evaluate other people on a one-to-one basis.

Basically true	425
Somewhat true	102
No opinion	4
Somewhat false	5
Basically false	6

Observation No. 2 — Most people do not believe that supervision and evaluation will result in appreciable positive change in the performance of the supervisee.

Basically true	142
Somewhat true	226
No opinion	12
Somewhat false	124
Basically false	38

Assumption No. 1 — Supervisory practices that are designed to find the "bad apples" in a system are counter-productive.

Basically true	321
Somewhat true	154
No opinion	16
Somewhat false	36
Basically false	12

Assumption No. 2 — Unless you work almost daily in direct contact with an individual there is no way you can evaluate all the things that individual does.

Basically true	284
Somewhat true	120
No opinion	7
Somewhat false	70
Basically false	59

Assumption No. 3 — Lack of defined priorities results in a dissipation of resources.

Basically true	416
Somewhat true	102
No opinion	10
Somewhat false	8
Basically false	4

Assumption No. 4 — Supervision is not a passive activity, i.e., a supervisor should not be only a scorekeeper.

Basically true	496
Somewhat true	40
No opinion	2
Somewhat false	—
Basically false	2

Assumption No. 5 — People often have perceptions of their priority responsibilities that differ from the perceptions of the supervisor or the organization.

Basically true	347
Somewhat true	171
No opinion	7
Somewhat false	11
Basically false	3

Assumption No. 6 — Continuous "hard nosed" dialogue between supervisor and supervisee concerning agreed upon priorities is both productive to the efficiency of the organization and to the psychological/emotional well being of the individual.

Basically true	325
Somewhat true	112
No opinion	18
Somewhat false	39
Basically false	40

Appendix B

MANAGEMENT CONTRACT WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 1972 – June 30, 1973

I. Objective No. 1

A. District Goals: Year of Assessment. Because of the many programs and procedures that have been both implemented and maintained by the Madison Public Schools over the past several years, it seems advisable to spend a "Year of Assessment" in "taking stock" in order to regroup existing and potential resources with future objectives. To facilitate this, the Superintendent will:

1. Develop a plan to include a series of studies concerning citizen perceptions of school programs, building utilization and needs, communications (to professional staff and to public), cost analysis of selected programs.

   a. The plan will be presented to the Board of Education by April 1972 and will include an estimated time line for completion.

2. Given approval of the Board of Education, will execute the plan by assigning responsibilities for implementation, reviewing assessment design with those assigned and hold monthly progress meetings with those (other than himself) assigned.

3. Will evaluate and summarize information to the Board of Education along with recommendations concerning the future of each item. These evaluated summaries and recommendations to be provided on the time line described above in 1.

4. Given Board response, will define appropriate resources and administrative responsibilities for the 1973 budget year.

B. For analysis and evaluation, the Board of Education will receive the plan as described in A-1 by April 1972 for evaluation and decision to proceed. They will also receive the reports described in the plan on the time line described in the plan. In addition they will receive documentation on how such findings will be reflected in the 1973 budget as well as any administrative responsibilities which may be adjusted as a result of the findings.

C. Review of this item by the Board will take place at the following times:

1. After submission of plan in April 1972.

2. At the end of the first semester.

3. At the end of the second semester.

Time and place of review to be jointly established by President of Board of Education and Superintendent.

Appendix C

MANAGEMENT CONTRACT FOR THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

1972-73

I. Objective No. 1

A. In order to facilitate the Management By Objectives procedure this year it will be necessary and advisable to continue to monitor the procedure, to help clarify where clarification is needed and to develop data to get some idea of how well the procedure is moving in the second year. To this end the Assistant Superintendent will:

1. Design and administer at least two questionnaires to solicit feedback data on the process from all administrators. One questionnaire will be administered shortly before the end of the first semester, the second after the third quarter, and a final one at the end of the school year. The data will be analyzed and corrections or clarifications will be developed if the data should call for it.

2. Continue to write or reprint material on Management By Objectives for distribution to our own administrators and other school districts requesting information.

3. Develop and monitor Management By Objectives contracts with each of the Directors and Administrative Assistants.

4. Chair the evaluation committee to reach conclusions on evaluation procedures.

5. Hold a series of two-hour workshops for teachers who voluntarily wish to know what the MBO process is all about.

B. The Superintendent in monitoring and evaluation will:

1. Receive copies of the summarized questionnaire, the analysis and recommendations when completed.

2. Receive copies of any written or reprinted material made available to school administrators.

3. Review both the contracts and the review sessions written with each of the Directors.

4. Receive recommendations from the evaluation committee.

5. Receive an oral report concerning voluntary sessions with teachers.

C. No resources needed.

D. Review sessions to be set up for December, March and May.

E. No additional information needed.

Appendix D

MANAGEMENT CONTRACT FOR DIRECTOR OF SPECIALIZED SERVICES — 1972-73

I. There is currently a great need for definitive statements on the various services and programs provided by the Specialized Educational Services. Considerable work toward this end was completed by several task forces and the S.E.S. administrative staff in 1971-72. However, due to an entirely new administrative staff for 1972-73, and the director's desire to have their input in the program, it was decided to postpone final statements until the new people could assess the system and provide their own contribution to the program plans. The completed plans are expected to meet the State Department of Public Instruction requirements as well as provide guidelines for program planning, implementation, operation and evaluation for the Madison Public Schools.

A. The Director will complete all aspects of a total Specialized Educational Services Plan to be available by June 30, 1973.

In completion of the Departmental Plan of Service, the Director will:

1. Provide an overall framework for the plan which will allow the integration of all program area plans into a unified whole.

2. Delegate and coordinate the work toward the total plan through the S.E.S. Coordinators and other staff. This may include such activities as:

(a) group meetings of the S.E.S. administrative staff for coordination and planning.

(b) employment of ad hoc task groups to deal with specific aspects of the plan.

(c) integrate the task force work completed in 1971-72.

(d) consult with appropriate school staff for information and input.

3. Work with other administrators to communicate and clarify areas of departmental functions, decision-making and authority, in order that the plan when complete will be easily implemented with minimum conflict.

B. The evaluation of this objective will focus on the quality of the completed plan. While it may be expected that some parts of the plan may be professionally or administratively controversial, the plan on a whole should be effective in:

1. Making quality educational provisions for all handicapped children from the mildly handicapped through the most severely handicapped.

2. Providing service on a functional or educational need basis rather than on a medical disability basis.

3. Allowing areas and schools to plan ahead for serving handicapped children by

(a) Specifying criterion for providing services in all programs.

(b) Specifying systems for ongoing screening and referral.

(c) Specifying criterion for decision-making in determining appropriate program administrative arrangement (i.e., self-contained, self-contained integrated, resource, itinerant, etc.).

(d) Specifying relative functions of the available S.E.S. staff.

4. Clarifying the relative roles of the S.E.S. staff and the school staff in crucial and vague areas of decision-making (i.e., transfers, placement in and out, classroom modification in the mainstream, program housing decisions, staff assignment — permanent and temporary, S.E.S. staff development, program and personnel evaluation, etc.).

5. Providing an effective communication vehicle for the Madison System, parents, other agencies, and the Department of Public Instruction.

The Assistant Superintendent will make a quality determination and may utilize outside consultants in judging the professional quality. Selected principals, teachers and parents will be asked to respond to the document from their own perception and this data utilized for evaluation.

A monthly informal review of progress will be held with the Assistant Superintendent.

C. Due to the unusual circumstances leading to the late completion of the S.E.S. M.B.O.'s, it may be necessary to reallocate some field resources to aid in the routine of information gathering and crisis handling. The Assistant Superintendent will support reasonable requests for such modifications.

D. Official review sessions will be held on February 23, 1973, April 10, 1973, and June 26, 1973.

E. No additional information needed at this point.

Appendix E

MBO CONTRACT

1972-73

This contract is between (Principal), Principal of ABC Elementary School, and _____, the East Area Director. Those items included in the contract have been mutually agreed to and represent the major objectives of (Principal) for the school year 1972-73.

Principal	Director	Date

1. The Objective to be Realized:

   To establish an outdoor education area bordering the school.

   a. Coordinate the services of the city in developing the nature area.

   b. Provide the staff with inservice training so as to adequately use the area.

2. The Expected Results:

   a. The establishment of an outdoor area.

   b. The development of a coordinated program for the use of the area.

   c. The organization and implementation of an inservice program designed to provide the staff with knowledge and skills important to using the area appropriately.

3. The Operational Strategies to be Followed:

   a. The City Parks Department will work with the school in establishing the outdoor area.

   b. The student body will be involved in the physical development of the area.

   c. The services of the Parks Department and the Curriculum Department will be coordinated to provide the staff with an inservice training program.

   d. The faculty Science Committee will establish the format for the inservice sessions.

   e. The inservice training sessions will result in a first draft of a coordinated K-5 program for the use of the outdoor area.

4. A Definition of responsibilities:

   a. The Principal will coordinate the services of the Parks Department in developing the area.

b. The Principal will coordinate the energies of the Parks Department, Curriculum and Science Committees in the organization and implementation of the inservice program.

c. The Principal will coordinate the efforts of the student body in developing the area.

d. The Principal will share responsibilities with the staff in the development of a K-5 outdoor education goal.

5. Resources that will be Needed:

   a. The services of the City Parks Department.

   b. The resources of defined curriculum personnel.

6. A Definition of the Monitoring Process to be Followed in Conjunction with the Supervisor:

   a. Quarterly written progress reports will be sent to the Area Director.

   b. The Area Director will visit the outdoor area at least once during the year.

   c. The Area Director will be invited to attend at least one inservice training session.

   d. The Area Director will receive a copy of the first draft of the K-5 outdoor education program prior to the final evaluation session.

7. Formal Evaluation Dates:

   (same as before)

FOOTNOTES

Preface

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2. *Ibid.*

Chapter I

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4. B. Frank Brown, *The Appropriate Placement School: A Sophisticated Nongraded Curriculum* (West Nyack, N.Y.: Parker, 1965).

5. Jonathan Kozol, *Death at an Early Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).

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8. *Tinker v. Des Moines*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

9. *In re Gault*, 387 U.S. 1 (1967).

10. Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children, Nancy Beth Bowman, *et al.*, v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, David H. Kurtzman, *et al.*, Civil Action No. 71-42 (3 Judge Court, E. D. Pennsylvania).

11. See Lee C. Shaw, "The Development of State and Federal Laws," *Public Workers and Public Employee Unions*, ed. by Sam Zagoria (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1972), pp. 20-36.

12. Silberman, *op. cit.*, p. 507.

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14. Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

15. Public Law 91-248.

16. See Grant Venn, *Man, Education and Manpower* (Washington, D.C.: American Association of School Administrators, 1970).

17. Vance Packard, *A Nation of Strangers* (New York: McKay, 1972).

Chapter II

1. *Op. cit.*

2. "Methods of Evaluating Teachers," *NEA Research Bulletin*, XLIII (February 1965), 12-18.

3. Arthur Blumberg and Edward Amidon, "Teacher Perceptions of Supervisory-Teacher Interaction," *Administrator's Notebook*, XIV (September 1965).

4. Harvey Goldman, "Evaluation of Administrative Behavior at the Building Level," *The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals*, Vol. 54, No. 347 (September 1970), pp. 70-79.

5. Emil J. Haller, *Strategies for Change* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Department of Educational Administration, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1969), p. 26.

6. Peter F. Drucker, *The Effective Executive* (New York: Harper and Row, Inc., 1967), pp. 71-79.

7. Richard H. Hall, "Some Organizational Considerations in the Professional-Organizational Relationship," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (1967), pp. 471-478.

8. Lance W. Seberhagen, "What Motivates Civil Service Employees?" *Public Personnel Review* (January 1970), pp. 48-50.

9. Douglas M. McGregor, *The Human Side of the Enterprise* (New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1960), pp. 50-51.

10. Drucker, *The Effective Executive*, pp. 76-79.

11. "1. On regular, on-going responsibilities, the average boss and subordinate . . . will fail to agree on expected outputs at a level of 25 percent.

"2. At the same time, resulting from this failure to agree on regular responsibilities, they will also disagree on what the subordinate's major problems are at a level of 50 percent.

"3. The worst gap of all is the failure of boss and subordinate to agree on how the subordinate's job should be improved. On this latter count, they fail to agree at a level of 90 percent."

George Odiorne, "The Activity Trap," *Supervisory Management*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring, 1973), Web Travel Publications, St. Paul, Minn., p. 27.

12. Frederick Herzberg, Bernard Mausner, and Barbara Bloch Synderman, *The Motivation to Work* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1959), pp. 114-115.

13. William A. McClelland, *The Process of Effecting Change* (The George Washington Human Resources Research Office, Professional Paper 32-68, October 1968), pp. 8-9.

14. Alan F. Brown, "Conflict and Stress in Administrative Relationships," *Administrators Notebook*. Vol. X, No. 7 (March 1962).

15. Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review*. Vol. 50 (1943), pp. 370-396.

16. Chris Argyris, "Organization Leadership and Participative Management," *Journal of Business*. Vol. 28, No. 1 (January 1955), pp. 1-7.

Chapter III

1. The contract for administrators is called a "management contract" and for teachers an "instructional contract." Madison has concentrated on the management contract in the belief that the managers (administrators) of the system must fully understand the process through experience before broader application to other staff members could be considered. The same types of logic applied to the management contract in this book would also apply to the instructional contract.

Chapter IV

1. There is a way of using a variation of the contract method that can be applied to a larger number of people. Say that a supervisor has 30 people reporting to him. For the first ten he writes a "full blown" contract complete with monitoring, review sessions, etc. He also writes a "full blown" contract with the second ten but includes no active monitoring on his part. Each of the second ten write written reports each quarter on how they are proceeding on their objectives. He reads these reports and responds with questions, comments, observations, etc. He must take the report at face value unless he knows for certain that something is not correct. The third group gets a "free ride," i.e., they write no contracts nor reports. Each year the groups are rotated.

2. Extensive discussion of this is given by George Odiorne in cassette No. 2, "The Activity Trap," *Executive Skills* cassette series, MBO, Inc., P.O. Box 6075, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Chapter VII

1. Richard O. Carlson, "Barriers to Change in Public Schools," *Change Processes in the Public Schools*, one of five papers presented in seminar, Portland, Oregon, October, 1964; published by The Center For The Advanced Study of Educational Administration, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 1965, pp. 6-7.

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