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ABSTRACT

This booklet describes a research program that developed eight Educational Leadership Appraisal (ELA) exercises specifically relevant to the roles of middle-management personnel in state education agencies (SEAs). ELA is a performance-based procedure for the observation, assessment, and training of leadership behavior in educational managers and administrators. This new SEA/ELA system appraises an individual along 20 leadership dimensions that are grouped into the broader categories of "Management and Organization," "Communication," "Problem-Solving," "Task Orientation," and "Interpersonal Qualities." Behavior along the leadership dimensions is elicited through a set of individual and group situational exercises, role-playing tasks, analysis problems, interviews, and writing and speaking assignments. (Author/JG)

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# Performance-Based Staff Appraisal

DIAGNOSING AND RESPONDING  
TO PRECISE  
MIDDLE-MANAGEMENT  
TRAINING NEEDS  
IN  
STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES



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Final Report to The Ford Foundation

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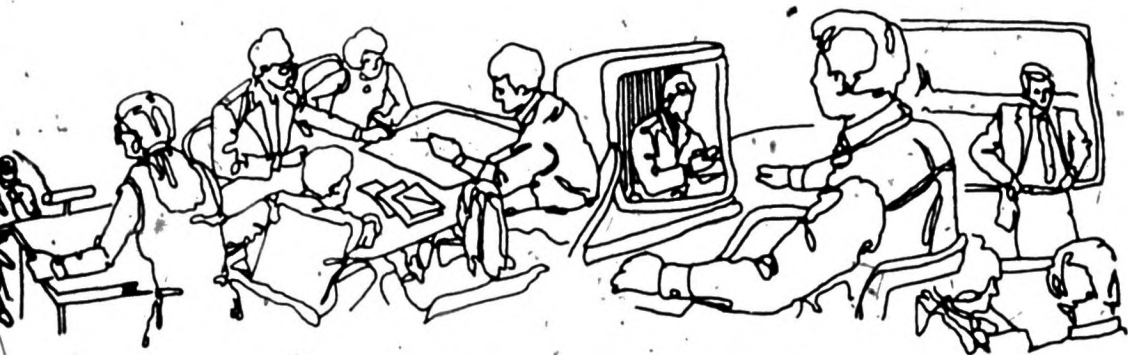
Many people contributed to the success of this project. First, we are grateful for the unstinting cooperation of more than 30 SEAs that provided essential information on their operations, particularly at the middle-management level, and a list of their principal training concerns. Thanks go also to the Honorable Dr. Barbara Thompson, Maggie Burke and the staff of the Wisconsin State Department of Education, and the honorable Dr. Thomas Schmidt and the staff of the Rhode Island Department of Education for their assistance in developing and testing items of performance-based exercises to be used in SEAs. The project wishes to acknowledge the assistance of others in both the public and private sector: Janice Zimble of the U.S. Civil Service Commission; Dr. John Kurutz and others on the staff of the U.S. Postal Service Training and Development Institute; Dr. Thomas J. Burns, Associate Commissioner, U.S. Office of Education; Dr. Robert Solomon, Executive Vice President, Educational Testing Service; Dr. Joel S. Berke, Director, Educational Policy Research Institute, Educational Testing Service; David S. Bushnell and Sol Lavisky, Human Resources Research Organization; Dr. Warren Hill, Executive Director, Education Commission of the States; Dale Durkee, Training Director, Florida Power and Light; Victor Leavengood, General Telephone of Florida; Richard Arnold; Director of Educational Programs, American Telephone and Telegraph; William J. J. Gordon, President, Synectics Education Systems; Dr. Jack Culbertson and Dr. Dick Podemski, University Council for Educational Administration; Dr. William Davis, Department of Education, Oklahoma State University; Dr. Leon M. Lessinger, Dean, School of Education, University of South Carolina; Meg Conner, Executive Vice President, The Women's Institute/The American University; Dr. Ruth Mylecraine, Advisory Committee on Women's Educational Programs; Ms. Mariana Miko, Resource Center for Planned Change, American Association of State Colleges and Universities; Dr. Robert E. Corrigan, President, Corrigan Associates; Dr. John Thurber, Director of Staff Development, West Palm Beach Public Schools; Dr. Donald Mitchell, Director, National Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders, Nova University; Dr. Edward Foulker, U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School; Dr. Allan Ellis, President of Educational Research Corporation, Dr. Leonard Glick and the staff of ERC; Dr. Adrienne Bank, Associate Director, Center for the Study of Evaluation, UCLA; Dr. Paul Hersey, National Association of Secondary School Principals; Anne Elmore, North Carolina SEA.

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To the staff of the Council of Chief State School Officers, we appreciate all the help throughout the project.

And to the members of the Task Force goes a profound expression of admiration and gratitude for the hours of work they put into this project. Nothing would have been possible without their help.



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## FOREWORD

Human enterprises are an amalgam of process and product, of complex interactions and numerous transactions, of personal and collective aspirations, of compromise. The SEA/Staff Development Project was no exception. What was exceptional about the project, however -- in degree, if not in kind -- was the quality of help and counsel provided by a group of outstanding advisors, under the chairmanship of Charles Nix, Associate Commissioner for Planning with the Texas Education Agency. Indeed, the advisors' passionate commitment to the project's goals provided considerable inspiration and energy. Their diligent, reasoned scrutiny of various aspects of the project helped to get at the essence of things. In their persistence, they conducted what T. S. Eliot calls a relentless "raid on the inarticulate". The ultimate effect of their refinement-by-reason was that some initially-stated goals were not accomplished, due doubtless to a widespread initial inability to apprehend adequately the complexities involved. On the other hand, significant progress was made toward identifying and pinpointing some of the critical staff development needs in SEAs and the parameters for action. Indeed, the SEA/Staff Development Project can boast proudly that it developed the first comprehensive process for determining the idiosyncratic training needs of SEAs, using performance-based criteria and processes. In effect, the strategy evolved for the project was concerned with depth rather than breadth. The result was that more of the significant goals were accomplished by attempting less.

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## THE SEA/STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

### Project Mission

After considerable refinement, the project's mission was formulated as follows:

To create a way of:

1. Providing Chief State School Officers with alternative methods, structures, and strategies to meet identified needs primarily for top- and middle-level management of the SEA.
2. Providing developmental strategies and methods for the chief and his immediate team in proactively directing the agency toward established objectives.
3. Serving as a clearinghouse for information on programs appropriate for SEAs.
4. Providing assistance in developing instruments and processes for a continuing assessment of SEA needs.

### Underlying Propositions

The mission and project strategies were based on the following propositions:

## Underlying Propositions

In planning programs for the project, the following propositions will serve as guidelines:

### Focus on Priority Concerns

*Proposition #1:* Assuming a commonality of priority concerns, in spite of considerable diversity among SEAs, program development should focus on selected priorities, with built-in flexibility to meet individual agency needs.

### Training for Future Needs

*Proposition #2:* Programs should be developed to address not only present-day exigencies but prepare SEA staffs for anticipated and emerging roles and responsibilities.

### Support of Chief State School Officers

*Proposition #3:* Programs of the project should be designed to provide maximum support to the Chief State School Officer and State Board\* in carrying out responsibilities.

### No "Cookbook" Approaches

*Proposition #4:* The problems in SEAs are complex and varied; there are few, if any, ready-made solutions.

### Development of A Utilization Mechanism

*Proposition #5:* A major thrust of the project should be development of a utilization mechanism based on identified SEA staff development needs. Thus, a principal concern will be for identifying and synthesizing existing programs and practices, in addition to creating new ones.

### Organizational Development

*Proposition #6:* Programs should be directed primarily toward the development of team competencies, and centered on organizational goals and objectives.

### Transportability of Programs

*Proposition #7:* In most instances, programs for SEAs should be provided on-site.

## Marketing of Programs

*Proposition #8:* The design of the SEA/Staff Development Project should include a plan for maximum dissemination and diffusion.

## Needs Assessment

*Proposition #9:* An essential component of the SEA/Staff Development Project will be devoted to providing knowledge and skills in needs assessment in order that SEAs might most effectively meet the demands for renewal.

## Talent and Resources Within SEAs and Other Sectors

*Proposition #10:* There are great talent and resources within State Education Agencies and other organizations that should be utilized in any staff development.

## Self-Sustaining Organization

*Proposition #11:* If the SEA/Staff Development Project works out well, and if feasible, consideration should be given to creating a permanent organization for staff development.

## Autonomy of Permanent Organization

*Proposition #12:* To assure maximum effectiveness, a permanent organization for staff development should have a high degree of autonomy.

## Training of Management Staff

*Proposition #13:* The major target for programs is confined to the Chief's management team and the level below that.

## Organizational Processes

*Proposition #14:* The content of programs will be directed toward organizational processes rather than at "subject" areas — such as early childhood, vocational education, etc.

## Extra-Agency Influences

*Proposition #15:* Staff development programs in SEAs should include consideration of extra-agency forces and influences.

\*It is recognized that not all states have governing boards

## Performance-Based Appraisal: A Growing Imperative

Just how timely is the development of an appraisal system based on performance criteria can best be appreciated by examining several developments that are certain to exert enormous impact on the educational community. Not only state education agencies but all educational institutions are likely to feel the growing weight of developments. Beginning with the Griggs vs. Duke Power decision in 1971 -- and moving in exorable steps--the U.S. Supreme Court and various lower courts established clear requirements for objective, relevant criteria for screening and selecting personnel for jobs, promotion, and training. Stating the Court's opinion, Chief Justice Warren Burger said, "What Congress has commanded is that any tests used must measure the person for the job and not the person in the abstract." In several other cases, most notably the Chance/Mercado suit against the New York City Board of Examiners, U.S. District Court Judge Walter R. Mansfield, acting two years after Griggs, ordered the Board of Examiners to use processes quite similar to those developed by this project.

On still another front, the federal Education Amendments of 1976 include stringent provisions for overcoming sex bias and stereotyping in all federally-supported vocational education programs. Under this legislation, the states will be required to disclose fully, and in specific terms, the number of women in administrative and policy-making positions and to develop plans for correcting inequities in employment and training. It is apparent that tools and processes developed by this project will be extremely useful to SEAs in their attempt to meet new federal requirements.

Considerable activity in litigation and legislation centers on questions of employment equity for women and minorities. Although a major emphasis in industry has been on creating performance-based processes for screening and selection of personnel, the project has concentrated on developing appraisal processes suitable for diagnosing staff development needs. A major concern is maintaining the integrity of the SEA appraisal system. This can be done only if the processes of diagnosis/training are kept separate from the processes of screening and selection.

Although the project's focus was on diagnostic uses of performance-based processes, recent research on the use of an AT&T assessment-center version for pre-employment purposes underscores the possible benefits of a sound appraisal system. These are discussed by Edward Thigpen:

- "1. New employees spend less time in orientation. Orientations of two weeks have been reduced to 3 days.
- "2. Managers are quite enthusiastic about training new people because they have been involved with them in the program and are committed to their success.
- "3. Trainers find it easier to instruct because of a high degree of motivation and enthusiasm generated by new applicants....
- "4. Turnover which ran 10% among new hires has been reduced... to less than .06% of those hired during the 2-year period. The cost reduction in this factor alone pays for the... program many times.



"5. Applicants who were interviewed after a year were found to be enjoying their jobs and to be performing efficiently.

"6. The quality factor in their work still remained high and supervisors had very few problems with initiative or communications."\*

It is not inconceivable that SEAs might enjoy similar benefits from an appraisal process adapted specifically to their needs.

### Procedures: An Overview

Conventional approaches were used to determine the "state of the art" in staff development, in general, and needs assessment processes, in particular.

Interviews with the staff of six SEAs revealed that the principal concerns of SEAs are how to improve their management, capability and communications within SEA and with their various constituencies.

Concurrent with face-to-face interviews, a comprehensive review of the literature was undertaken using the North Carolina SEA ERIC retrieval capability. Out of this research, the project produced a twenty-page document, "Staff Development in State Education Agencies: An Annotated Guide."

Also during this period, a number of survey instruments and processes were examined. Some proved to be extraordinarily good: for example, that of the U.S. Civil Service Commission (presented in a special project paper) and that of Dr. Edward Foulker, U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School. None of the many survey instruments, however, is completely appropriate for use in assessing the definitive staff development needs of SEAs. And, if a diagnostic process is to be of value, the determination of relatively precise discrepancies is essential.

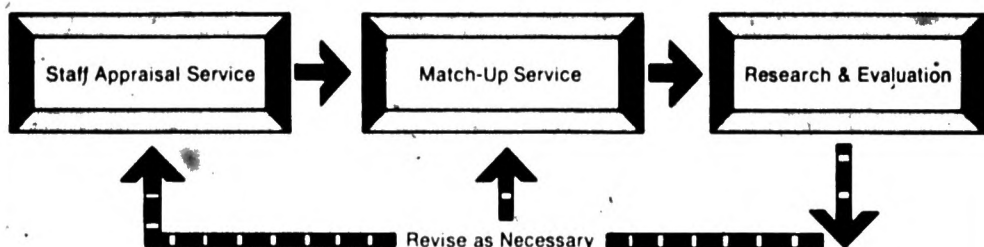
After developing several forced-choice surveys, the printed-survey approach was abandoned as unfeasible because it proved impossible to capture definitive data on staff development needs in this way. Thus, it was determined that direct interviews with chiefs or their designates were a more fruitful approach. Twenty sets of interviews confirmed earlier interview findings; i.e., the overriding concern in SEAs lies in the area of management and communications.

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\*"Preemployment Assessment--A Systematic Approach to Selecting New Employees," in Assessment and Development, Vol. IV, No. 1, March, 1977. Pittsburgh, Pa.: Development Dimensions, Inc.

Meanwhile in meetings with the Task Force, two far-reaching decisions were made: (1) if the project were to develop or utilize training programs, the programs should not encompass content areas, such as school integration, declining enrollment, school finance, etc. Rather, staff development should focus on generic processes; such as management, planning, data management, evaluation, needs assessment, etc.; (2) rather than attempt to create staff development programs, the project and any succeeding organization should broker staff development services to SEAs; that is, serve as a kind of matchmaker between determined needs and promising interventions. These two decisions -- to eschew substantive programs and to serve a brokerage function -- resulted in a profound shift in the project's direction by focusing the mission more finely. Indeed the concept of a match-up service -- as shown on the following page -- emerged from these two conceptual shifts. All this demonstrates that projects dealing with a complex universe deal with considerably more than products; there is an on-going process of problem refinement. It is hardly surprising that a sizeable gap should exist between the project's problem or mission, as originally given or stated and the problem or mission, as finally understood. It is a credit to the Task Force that it was at least as interested in identifying the mission of the project as it was in creating a product. Members of the Task Force demonstrated over and over that they were not interested in any "quick fixes".

## SEA/STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM-MODEL



### Functions

- Perform job analyses
- Formulate the job descriptions
- Diagnose staff development needs
- Screen personnel
- Conduct appraiser training

### Functions

- Select programs on basis of identified discrepancies
- Identify existing programs based on needs
- Coordinate programs to meet specific requirements
- Organize workshops and conferences
- Provide consumer information on program effectiveness and cost

### Functions

- Conduct continuing research to determine efficacy of various programs

Much credit goes to Dr. Byron W. Hansford, Executive Secretary of the Council of Chief State School Officers, for helping us keep our "cool" during a period of almost intolerable ambiguity. He was an exemplar of patience and wisdom.

Thus, almost eight months were required to refine the precise mission of the project. It should be clear that this period was highly productive from the standpoint of useful research data. Much information was gained about the status of staff development in SEAs; a better reading of SEA staff development concerns resulted; and most importantly, knowledge was gained about important developments in the area of staff appraisal. The overall effect of the work that went on during this period was development of a sound theoretical base upon which to build a program. Having identified the mission in clear terms, a principal task remained: How to develop a process to determine the precise training needs of SEAs in order that appropriate objectives and program criteria might be developed. For this, the director utilized the vast resources of trade and professional associations, government agencies, and industry.

Contacts with training directors in industry were highly productive. For years industry has been involved in developing and using processes to determine knowledge and skill discrepancies for purposes of training. Being results-oriented, industry programs tended to be more easily validated. Since Griggs vs. Duke Power, there has been increased attention, in both the public and private sectors to creation of valid performance-based appraisal processes. After examining some of these programs, there was concern that industry-related appraisal processes would be difficult to translate into an educational setting, particularly an SEA setting concerned, as it is, with complex matters of state governance.

At this point, the task seemed formidable. Continuing to talk with many people particularly training directors, the project director discussed his concern with Richard Arnold, Director of Educational Programs, American Telephone and Telegraph Co. Arnold said he knew of someone who was working on developing educational applications of the AT&T assessment center process, a process in growing use in both industry and government. Investigations led to an eventual meeting with Dr. Donald Mitchell, Director of Nova University's national Ed.D. program for school administrators. Nova had made a sizeable investment in developing performance-based appraisal materials and processes for local school administrators as part of its doctoral program. Further discussions ensued with Dr. Mitchell, Dr. Leon M. Lessinger, Dean of the School of Education, University of South Carolina, and Dr. Allan Ellis, President of Educational Research Corporation (ERC). ERC had developed and field-tested what came to be known as Educational Leadership Appraisal (ELA). The result of these and other discussions was a contract to pilot the use of ELA materials and processes in an SEA. The pilot was conducted with women administrators in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (A fuller discussion of the development of an SEA version of ELA is found in the attachment.)

Encouraged by the Wisconsin experience, the decision was made to devote most remaining resources to developing and testing a modified version of ELA that would be appropriate to the idiosyncratic characteristics of SEAs. The

project Task Force supported fully this direction. Funds did not permit the full development of an appraisal system. Although there are sufficient ELA exercises to become operational, one or two additional exercises would strengthen the system. As it now stands, the process developed by the SEA/Staff Development Project with the collaboration and assistance of ERC represents a quantum leap in the appraisal of SEA staff development needs at the middle-management level. Indeed, there is an incipient capability to provide performance-based appraisal services to SEAs across the nation. (See following report.)

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Because funds did not permit sufficient field-testing, continued field-testing and revision of the appraisal system are necessary.
2. On the basis of extensive interviews with SEAs, it is clear that SEAs on the whole, have inadequate means for ascertaining their staff development needs. The development of a performance-based appraisal system is obviously a step in the right direction. It is envisioned that extensive use of performance-based appraisals will result in a highly useful taxonomy of management and leadership skills in SEAs that could prove highly beneficial.
3. If sufficient appraisal capability is to be developed, ideally, a coterie of SEA staff should be trained in the use of the appraisal process. A training-of-trainers capability should be developed in SEAs in order to expand the use of performance-based appraisal practices. This can be done most effectively, perhaps, on a regional basis. Assiduous attention, however, must be given to questions of standards and control in both training programs and the certification of trainers or appraisors.
4. To protect against abuse of the process, a code of ethics for the appraisal process' use is essential. Particular care must be given to the proper separation of appraisal for staff development purposes and appraisal for the purposes of screening and selection.
5. Work should begin immediately to develop a match-up service in staff development for state education agencies. Such a service involves a clearinghouse of programs codified by and matched to documented needs.
6. ELA should be offered as one valuable tool to assist SEAs in meeting provisions of federal legislation aimed at reducing sex bias and sex stereotyping.
7. Serious attention should be given to the creation of a permanent national mechanism for delivering appraisal and match-up services on a continuing basis to SEAs. This might be effected by a consortium of interested SEAs.



8. It is clear that colleges and universities, by and large, do not, or are not in a position to serve the needs of SEAs. Therefore, graduate programs must develop greater sensitivity to the educational and training needs of SEAs. Wise use of a performance-based appraisal process can assist SEAs to develop clearer specifications for SEA programs in their discussions with higher education institutions or other training agencies.

TECHNICAL REPORT

DEVELOPMENT OF AN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP APPRAISAL SYSTEM  
FOR STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES •

TITLE:

Development of an Educational Leadership Appraisal  
System for State Education Agencies\*

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\*The SEA/Staff Development Project accepts full responsibility for all content in this report. Although a report was submitted to the project as part of ERC's contractual agreement, the project director has made editorial and substantive changes that may not reflect the philosophy of ERC.

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During the spring of 1976, Educational Research Corporation (ERC) began to develop, with assistance from the SEA/Staff Development Project of the Council of Chief State School Officers, a system of Educational Leadership Appraisal (ELA) exercises, specifically relevant to the roles of middle-management personnel in state education agencies (SEAs). This enterprise was prompted by Dr. James Conner, Director of the SEA/Staff Development Project, who had determined through his studies that the central concern in SEAs lay in the area of management or leadership skills.

ELA is a performance-based procedure for the observation, assessment, and training of leadership behavior in educational managers and administrators. Existing ELA exercises were relevant to the responsibilities of local school administrators. ERC's task was to create a system that focused on the middle-management position within a state education agency. This new SEA/ELA system appraises an individual along twenty leadership dimensions that are grouped into the broader categories of *Management and Organization, Communication, Problem Solving, Task Orientation and Interpersonal Qualities*, (Appendix A). Behavior along the leadership dimensions is elicited through a set of individual and group-situational exercises, role-playing tasks, analysis problems, interviews, and writing and speaking assignments. This report describes the development of the new SEA/ELA system.

## PROCEDURES

Our first step in the development of this new set of SEA-Based ELA exercises was to administer the existing public school administration ELA exercises to members of the Wisconsin SEA. The positive feedback from this experience indicated that the approach that ELA represents could operate as a means of determining the development needs of SEA personnel. Thus, after conversations with Dr. James Conner, ERC contracted to develop and pilot-test an ELA system geared to SEA middle managers.

In order to develop exercises appropriate to SEA management personnel, ERC had to analyze the components of an SEA middle manager's job. First, we chose, from among several job analysis techniques, one which we felt would be most helpful in identifying leadership dimensions required by these positions and in determining behaviors that are critical to the success of an SEA middle manager. Using the principles of this technique (Flanagan's critical incidents technique) we developed a job analysis interview format (Appendix B) which would produce the information we needed. We chose to construct a rather open-ended form so that interviewed managers could be free to discuss all aspects of their jobs. Instructions to the interviewers (all ERC staff) were detailed enough so that each interviewer gathered very specific and useful data.

Using this form, four ERC staff members interviewed eight middle managers of the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE).<sup>1</sup> We asked about their roles and responsibilities, their working relationships with others, and their frequent contacts, as well as specifically gathering detailed information about, and samples of, their mail, current projects, phone calls, visitors, calendars reference materials, and environment.

Because the exercises to be developed were to be appropriate for all SEAs,

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<sup>1</sup> We greatly appreciate the time and effort that the Rhode Island Department of Education contributed to this project.



rather than specific only to Rhode Island, we then sought a broader perspective on SEA activities by requesting and collecting descriptive information (such as personnel policies, job descriptions and organizational charts) from seven other SEAs: New York, Vermont, Michigan, California, Iowa, Georgia and Texas.

In addition, we reviewed feedback we had received from the Wisconsin SEA personnel who had taken our public school administrator ELA exercises earlier in the year. From them we had requested ideas of how that form of ELA might be changed to become more appropriate for SEA managers. Their suggestions included a change in setting, more emphasis on work with budgets, more items relating to the political issues in state government, and an increased emphasis on requiring the participant to think on his/her feet.

Particularly in response to their indication of the need for political items from the governor's office or legislature, we gathered information about the relationship between the state legislature and the SEA by interviewing Senator Walter Boverini, Chairman of the Education Committee in the Massachusetts State Senate.

Finally, having distilled the information gathered from all these sources, ERC senior staff returned to Rhode Island for a discussion with three members of the RIDE management team. Drawing on the results of our investigations to date, we presented our perceptions of the important dimensions of the SEA's middle manager's job. In turn, the management team specified for us certain critical incidents--specific behaviors in particular situations--which they had observed as contributing significantly to the success of middle managers. Among the points about middle managers that were raised in this discussion were:

- They should be able to translate objectives into action; that is, they should be able to analyze the activities needed to accomplish objectives. The management team mentioned that doing this well requires the ability to think logically, to analyze, and to put the results of analysis in writing.
- They are expected to think in at least two-year time spans.
- They should be sensitive to, and be able to react to, different audiences, including teachers, principals, the press, special interest groups and the like.
- They have to know how to handle money and to make decisions about it.
- They try to do too much themselves; they have problems in delegating to others.
- They should have a sensitivity to court decisions and to know when to go for legal help.
- They generally possess strong oral communication skills, which are viewed important to their job.

- They frequently have to analyze problems. The management team considered problem analysis to be especially important, and mentioned, for example, the importance of finding and analyzing the issues that are implicit in the letters middle managers receive.

Returning to ERC, we began to plan, as a team, what dimensions should be elicited by each exercise and what settings were appropriate for SEA exercises. Several conferences were held with Dr. Conner to assure continuity between ERC's efforts and the "real world of SEAs" as determined by his research. This cross-checking continued throughout the project. Individuals and pairs of ERC staff then began work on eight categories of exercises—Administrative Action, Leaderless Group Discussion/Unassigned Role, Question and Answer Period/Unprepared, Written Report/Prepared, Analysis Problem, Leaderless Group Discussion/Assigned Role, Background Information, and Oral Presentation/Prepared—which are described on the following pages.

CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Administrative Action*

The Administrative Action category presents items which range from day-to-day internal management problems to questions of policy and planning. In dealing with these items, the participant must make decisions, delegate responsibility, write letters, assign work, plan, organize and schedule.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Assistant Executive Commissioner's or Superintendent's Exercise*

Many critical problems and challenges of an upper-middle level manager in a state department of education are presented in this exercise wherein the participant is asked to deal with the accumulated notes, memoranda, letters, requests, and other pending action items that confront him as he takes over a new position as Assistant Executive Commissioner of Education.

LENGTH: 3 hours: pending action items  
1 hour: report on reasons for decisions and actions  
as needed: Participant Report Form

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED:

Primary

Planning and Organizing  
Management Control  
Use of Delegation  
Written Communication Skills  
Problem Analysis  
Political Behavior  
Judgment  
Adaptability  
Initiative  
Individual Leadership  
Decisiveness  
Considerateness

Secondary

Creativity  
Flexibility  
Risk Taking

CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Leaderless Group Discussion/Unassigned Roles*

Participants in an unstructured, cooperative, leaderless group discussion are asked to submit written recommendations within a specified time concerning an assigned problem or problems.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Job Applicant Review Exercise*

Three to six participants meet to review the resumes, recommendations, and performance ratings of three finalists from among the outside applicants for a Bureau Director's position in a state department of education. They must produce a list of each candidate's strengths and weaknesses, and they must rank them, reaching consensus on the best outside candidate for the job.

LENGTH: 20 minutes: briefing and review of material  
30 minutes: meeting  
10 minutes: listing of strengths and weaknesses and ranking  
as needed: Participant Report Form

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED:

Primary

Oral Communication Skills  
Persistence  
Initiative  
Group Leadership  
Problem Analysis

Secondary

Political Behavior  
Judgment  
Stress Tolerance  
Considerateness  
Adaptability  
Decisiveness  
Flexibility  
Planning and Organizing

CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Question and Answer Period/Unprepared*

This category measures a participant's ability to respond to questions and problems in public without preparation, think clearly on his/her feet, quickly grasp the essence of complicated questions, be articulate in defense of stated positions, explain complicated issues, respond to individual requests for guidance, and relate appropriately to all levels of audience.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Television Guest Appearance Exercise*

This exercise simulates the atmosphere and pressures of an unrehearsed television program in which the participant plays the role of the special guest who must answer questions and defend positions on educational issues as questions are telephoned in by members of the viewing audience. The exercise calls on the participant to answer questions on a variety of topics as posed by individuals who vary substantially in their level of sophistication with regard to educational issues.

LENGTH: 10 minutes: question and answer period

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED:

Primary

Oral Communication Skills  
Stress Tolerance  
Educational Perspective  
Adaptability

Secondary

Problem Analysis  
Political Behavior  
Judgment  
Individual Leadership  
Flexibility  
Decisiveness



CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Written Report/Prepared*

This category of exercise measures a participant's ability to conceptualize issues and problems and to express them clearly and persuasively in an organized, written form.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Control of Education Written Exercise*

Given some briefly stated background information concerning the issue of the current struggle among various factions to gain control over public school education in the United States, participants are asked to prepare a carefully and persuasively written statement which describes their perceptions of the reasons for, and the factors involved in, the current struggle for control. They must also make recommendations as to the degree and type of control which they feel should be exercised by each of the competing sectors, being explicit in stating short-term and long-range implications of their recommendations.

LENGTH: 1-2 weeks: preparation period

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED

Primary

Written Communication Skills  
Educational Perspective

Secondary

Political Behavior

CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Analysis Problem/Written Presentation*

The ability to sift through data, come to a conclusion, and then present a logical argument to back up the conclusion may be observed in these exercises. Participants are given data on a situation and are asked to prepare a written report or write letters recommending appropriate courses of action.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Equal Opportunities Exercise*

The participant is given the three-year plan of a division in a state department of education along with supporting data such as a budget and the results of a needs assessment. After analyzing the data the participant must revise the division's plan and its budget. Finally the participant must prepare a press release about the future direction of the division.

LENGTH: 2 1/2 hours: analyze data/prepare commissioner's report and press release  
as needed: Participant Report Form

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED:

Primary

Planning and Organizing  
Written Communication Skills  
Problem Analysis  
Judgment  
Initiative

Secondary

Political Behavior  
Risk Taking  
Creativity  
Considerateness  
Adaptability  
Decisiveness

CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Leaderless Group Discussion/Assigned Roles*

Acting as both individuals and team members, six participants must allocate funds or make other judgments on a variety of conflicting proposals offered. Each participant is assigned a viewpoint to sell to the other team members. Each has two tasks: (1) to sell his or her assigned position and (2) to aid the group in making the best decision.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Stonefellow Foundation Exercise*

The Board of Directors of the Stonefellow Foundation is meeting to allocate a one million dollar grant to worthy projects in its headquarter city, Johnson Falls. Members of the Board are provided with a proposal from an organization in Johnson Falls (e.g., Youth Board, Urban Renewal Commission) and are asked to get as much money as possible for their organization. The exercise provides participants with a choice of projects to back and the opportunity to bargain and trade off projects for support. The Board must allocate the money in the time allowed.

LENGTH: 20 minutes: role assignment, briefing, preparation  
45 minutes: meeting  
as needed: Participant Report Form

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED:

Primary

Oral Communication Skills  
Persistence  
Initiative  
Group Leadership

Secondary

Planning and Organizing  
Problem Analysis  
Political Behavior  
Judgment  
Risk Taking  
Considerateness  
Decisiveness  
Flexibility  
Stress Tolerance  
Adaptability

● CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Background Information*

Actual past, current, and anticipated career-related information is elicited from the following exercise as if it were generated from an interview with the participant.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Background Questionnaire*

Participants are asked to complete an extensive background information form which requests details not only on their past and present employment and education, but also on their job preferences, goals, professional and personal accomplishments, means of handling job related activities, and personal strengths and weaknesses.

LENGTH: 2-4 hours

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED:

Secondary

Use of Delegation  
Management Control  
Risk Taking  
Creativity  
Persistence  
Stress Tolerance  
Individual Leadership  
Planning and Organizing

CATEGORY OF EXERCISE: *Oral Presentation/Prepared*

This category of exercise measures a participant's ability to make a persuasive, clear presentation of ideas and supporting evidence with time given for preparation, in a formal, organized delivery.

NAME OF EXERCISE: *Control of Education/Prepared Speech Exercise*

The participant must make a formal, prepared speech in which he/she presents recommendations to the Council of Chief State School Officers concerning steps which the Council, as an organization should take to help in implementing the participant's own recommendations regarding the degree of control which various sectors should exercise over public school education in the United States. The participant is asked to be directive in presenting recommendations for the Council's leadership activities.

LENGTH: 1-2 weeks: preparation time  
7 minutes: oral presentation

LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS APPRAISED

Primary

Oral Communication Skills  
Educational Perspective

Secondary

Political Behavior  
Stress Tolerance  
Group Leadership  
Adaptability  
Decisiveness

At each stage of its development each exercise was reviewed and criticized by staff members who had not been involved with its creation. Revisions and alternatives, solicited by the writer, were weighed and incorporated when appropriate. Together and apart, we fashioned exercises which withstood our peers' scrutiny and which would apparently elicit a desirable range of behaviors along the agreed-upon leadership dimensions.

ERC arranged two means of obtaining feedback about the exercises:

- (1) a review of the exercises by members of the RIDE management team and by eight observers' representatives from other SEAs; and
- (2) a two-day pilot test of the exercises with RIDE middle managers.

### Review of the Exercises

On October 2, after giving a short introduction, we gave the administrative action exercise to the SEA representatives and to members of the RIDE management team, allowing them an hour to look over and/or partially complete the items. To improve their understanding of the appraisal process, we then reviewed a few items with them, discussing the range of their responses and the dimensions of which they were indicative. We also solicited their opinions of the exercise, finding generally that they felt the items realistically represented the job of a manager in an SEA.

Following this, we asked the group to look over the oral presentation ("Control of Education") exercise, so we could obtain its feedback. Most felt it was appropriate. The only major objection raised was that it might be too difficult for middle managers. However it was our view, which was supported by members of the audience, that the issue is not so much what middle managers can do, but what ideally they should be able to do. This means that involvement in exercises can be frustrating for some. Frustration is, however, not a wholly undesirable condition; indeed, it may even be salutary in terms of training benefits.

The four questions to be asked participants after their oral presentations were then asked of four of the RIDE managers, giving them a sense of the behaviors we look for in that exercise. It is designed, among other things, to measure how well one is able to think and speak without preparation. The general opinion seemed to be that the questions were quite appropriate.

In the afternoon, while six of the group prepared to participate in the assigned role group discussion, the remainder explored with the ERC staff some of the leadership dimensions which that group exercise would bring out. Then, while the six actually discussed the problem they had been given (what to do with the Stonefellow Foundation's surplus funds), the rest of the group acted as observers/appraisers in an effort to discern behaviors which were indicative of strengths and weaknesses on the various dimensions. At the conclusion of the exercise a discussion of observed behaviors made it apparent that extensive appraisal training will be needed for complete and reliable observations to be assured as SEAs administer the exercises themselves.

The SEA observers, Allan Ellis and Normal Becker of ERC, and James Conner met the following day to discuss various procedural matters for disseminating the exercises, giving their feedback about how the ELA exercises might be handled. The topics discussed included who should hold the copyright, how to assure quality control of appraisals, the need for training of SEA people who will use the exercises, and the role of the Council of Chief State School Officers in the dissemination process.

### Pilot Test

The ERC staff also pilot-tested exercises with 10 members of RIDE middle management. Explaining that these middle managers were to see themselves both as participants and as consultants to the exercise development process, Dr. Leonard Glick outlined the reasons for the pilot testing and solicited their honest comments and criticisms. The group then took the administrative action exercise for 2-1/2 hours, until lunch. They devoted their afternoon to a discussion of individual items from the administrative action exercise, the range of responses they had elicited, and the dimensions such as management control and delegation, giving illustrations of strong and weak behaviors in these categories. The general feeling was that most items were appropriate and rich enough to elicit a variety of responses.

The following day the 10 middle managers piloted four exercises: the prepared oral presentation, the unprepared question-and-answer session, the analysis problem, and the unassigned role group discussion. In the morning they were divided into two groups. For one hour Group 1 prepared oral presentations while Group 2 worked for two hours on the analysis problem. Following the individual taping of his prepared talk each Group 1 participant was given an opportunity to review the analysis problem until the two hours had elapsed. When work on the analysis problem was complete, the last two participants from Group 1, who had not yet taped their speeches, gave live presentations in front of the entire group, followed by the question-and-answer period. Mary Havelock of ERC, who had observed all the oral presentations, then led a discussion of the two oral exercises, including their purposes, the dimensions they tap, and the range of behaviors which can be expected on them. Although some managers with business (rather than education) backgrounds found the oral presentation subject out of their field of expertise, the point was made that normally participants would have two weeks to prepare the talk and would thus be able to fully research any aspects of the question with which they were not thoroughly familiar.

In the afternoon, Mr. Becker went over the analysis problem with the participants, who generally approved the appropriateness of the setting, as well as the type and complexity of problem ERC had chosen to present.

Then, four members of the group prepared for the unassigned role group discussion while ERC staff trained the other members to observe the discussion ~~in order to identify behaviors illustrative of various dimensions.~~ Each was assigned to observe two discussants. When the discussion had been held and observers compared notes, they found enough evidence to believe that inter-rater reliability was possible with sufficient training. That is, people who



had been assigned to watch the same participant in general picked out the same behaviors as significant and gave comparable estimates of their meaning.

Concluding the pilot test, Mr. Glick explained that while ERC had emphasized training during this pilot test, actually the exercises are at least equally valuable for leadership appraisal purposes. He then detailed for participants the steps in the complex appraisal process which ERC employs to produce valid leadership profiles for participants.

#### Analysis of the ELA System for SEAs

Since the pilot test, ERC has conducted much more detailed analyses of all the SEA exercises, revising them in response to participants' comments and performance and as a result of ERC staff observations of their effectiveness. While no revision was major, the exercises did require several different kinds of revisions. For example, we replaced a few items in the administrative action exercise, and we modified others so that the exercises would do a better job of eliciting behaviors relevant to the dimensions. We developed sets of very specific directions for the two group discussions as well as modifying their participant report forms. We carefully edited the analysis problem to clear up a few ambiguities and revised one of the charts in this exercise. In short, we were pleased that the pilot test had served its purpose in revealing the need for certain minor revisions in the exercises.

While the revisions have strengthened the exercises, it is important to note that, because of budget constraints, ERC never intended to create a complete ELA system as part of this contract. And, although the eight exercises comprise a fairly extensive system in their own right and appear to be capable of measuring most dimensions quite well, ERC believes that two additional exercises would strengthen the system and make it even more comprehensive. First, it would be desirable to create an Observation/Judgment exercise, where the participants view a video tape or film and are asked to draw conclusions about the people in the film and the positions they take. This exercise would enrich the system, because it would require the participants to acquire information by listening and observing processes which generally are not stressed in the other exercises. In addition, it probably would be possible to design the exercise to elicit behaviors relevant to two dimensions, risk taking and individual leadership, which are not tapped by the current exercises as well as one would like.

Second, we envision the need for an Individual Fact Finding/Decision-Making exercise, where the participants are presented with a problem situation and are asked to determine its causes by asking relevant questions. Fact finding is a skill needed by middle managers. Moreover, this exercise would tap behaviors linked to two dimensions which are slightly underemphasized in the current system, flexibility (remaining open to new evidence) and decisiveness.

In addition to these two exercises, there are certain support materials that need to be developed. For example, in order to increase the reliability of the appraisal process which is described in the next section, forms that guide an appraiser's observations must be developed. There also is a need for manuals that provide directions to people who use ELA for training

purposes as described later. In summary, then, while ERC believes the current set of exercises can contribute greatly to the staff development needs of SEAs, not only should support materials for existing exercises be developed, but the system also would be enriched with the addition of two more exercises.

#### The Future Use of ELA with SEAs

There are two primary uses for ELA. First, it can be used as an appraisal instrument to identify staff development needs. More specifically, members of an SEA could take the exercises, their performance on each dimension would be appraised, and the strengths and weaknesses of each individual (as well as of the overall group) could be identified.

As Figure 1 shows, the appraisal process is lengthy and detailed, consisting of several steps. First, each individual's videotapes of performance are observed and written materials reviewed.\* The appraisers, generally three for each individual, then fill out detailed forms for the participant, which identify and sort his/her significant behaviors and actions on all exercises according to the leadership dimensions. In other words, the behaviors noted are reorganized by dimension (rather than by exercise).

The appraisers who have observed and reviewed the individual's tapes and written materials then assemble for a roundtable discussion of the behaviors and actions they have seen. Observations are shared. After full discussion, each appraiser on the team individually rates the participant on each dimension.

The appraisal team then resumes discussion of the candidate. The appraisers complement each other's judgments and provide a broader, richer view of the behaviors than an individual could provide. They compare their ratings on each dimension and present evidence to each other until consensus is reached on the rating for each dimension.

The team then analyzes the appraisee's performance, enumerating his/her strengths and weaknesses in preparation for the writing of his/her individual leadership profile. One of the team writes the profile, a twenty to thirty page report, which specifies for each dimension the candidate's behaviors that affected his/her ratings.

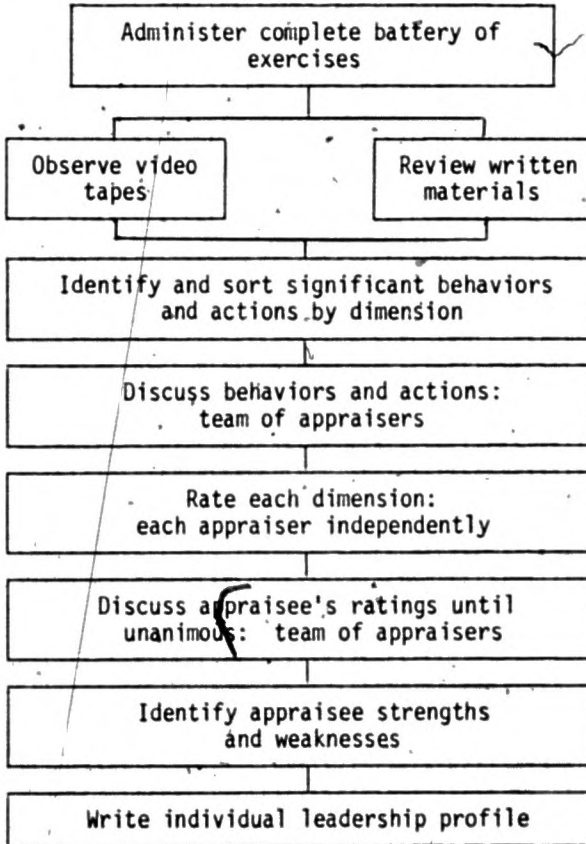
The second potential use for ELA is training. ERC has found that participants benefit from a careful review of the exercises in which many of the alternative ways of responding to the problems in the exercises and their implications are discussed. For example, discussions of the various issues presented in the administrative action exercise and the ways in which participants handled them can serve to illustrate proper and improper ways of delegating, exercising management control, analyzing problems, and the like.

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\*Video taping of certain exercises allows the opportunity for a more deliberate review at a later time.

FIGURE 1

THE APPRAISAL PROCESS



While the review of the exercises serves to teach the participant specific skills, an even more important function of the review is, perhaps, its capacity to help a participant to conduct self-appraisals and thereby become more sensitive to his/her own strengths and weaknesses.

Obviously, the two uses of ELA are not mutually exclusive. There is no reason why SEA personnel could not be appraised and then participate in discussions of the exercises and related training activities. In fact, this two-pronged approach might be the best use of ELA.

Whatever way ELA is used, it is important that it be used properly. ERC has been very careful to maintain quality control of its public school ELA system and is committed to the same high standards for the SEA system. We believe there are two basic ways to ensure the proper use of the system. First, ERC professionals who are totally familiar with the system could perform all of the appraisals and conduct all of the training. While this approach may be reasonable for some states -- for example, those who do not plan to use ELA regularly -- it probably is more expensive and does not turn over to the states the skills needed to administer ELA.

The second approach, therefore, is for ERC or some other organization to train various SEA personnel in the uses of ELA. Briefly, an organization would develop manuals and conduct training sessions to teach trainees how to appraise others and how to use ELA as a training device. At the end of the training program, those personnel would be certified who had successfully completed the training program and, therefore, were judged competent to use ELA properly. Not necessarily all who were trained would successfully meet standards for certification. Some individual states might have three or four people trained. Other states, however, might choose a regional approach, where one state would have some personnel trained in the use of ELA and then, upon request, administer ELA to participants from several neighboring states. In short, there are several possibilities regarding both the uses and users of ELA, but a primary concern is that, in all cases, ELA be used properly.

#### Summary

Educational Research Corporation created an ELA system, consisting of eight performance-based exercises, geared to the role of a middle manager in a State Education Agency. Results of a pilot test of the exercises in Rhode Island, revealed the need for minor revisions in the exercises but in general were quite encouraging. This revised ELA system appears to have the potential to contribute greatly to the staff development needs of SEAs, both with respect to identifying training needs and to providing some training itself.

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF DIMENSIONS

## Dimensions of Leadership

A dimension is a descriptive heading under which specific human behavior can be rationally grouped and reliably classified. The list of dimensions that form the basis for ELA is not intended to be inclusive of all the characteristics of an educational leader. Moreover no one would be expected to be high on all dimensions. Two outstanding performers may have markedly different combinations of dimension strengths and weaknesses. The dimensions are merely common areas of concern which job analysis studies have identified as being important to success or failure in particular positions.

The following list presents brief, suggestive definitions of the ELA leadership dimensions. Please note that these dimensions have been organized under larger headings just for the purpose of convenience. The groupings are to be seen neither as exclusive categories nor as the sole focus of the appraisal process.

### MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

#### Planning and Organizing

Effectiveness in planning and organizing one's own activities and those of one's staff.

#### Management Control

The appreciation of need for controls and the ability to exercise maintenance of control over processes.

#### Use of Delegation

The ability to use effectively subordinates, colleagues and superiors; and to understand where a decision can best be made.

### COMMUNICATION

#### Written Communication Skills

The ability to write a readable, persuasive document that conceptualizes issues and problems, is complete, and is appropriate for the intended audience.

#### Oral Communication Skills

The ability to respond to questions in public; think clearly on one's feet; think behind questions; be articulate in defense of programs; define missions; explain complex issues; deal with a problem in public without preparation; and relate to all levels of audiences.

## PROBLEM SOLVING

### Problem Analysis

The ability to read or listen and pick out critical information or issues underlying the material; to seek out pertinent data; to weigh alternatives and their consequences.

### Judgment

The ability to evaluate situations and persons and to reach logical conclusions based on evidence at hand.

### Political Behavior

The ability to identify what can be accomplished and how it can be accomplished, and to use resources and control the situation so that it is accomplished; sensitivity to the political implications of various acts.

### Decisiveness

Readiness to make decisions and to render judgment..

### Risk Taking

The extent to which calculated risks are taken based on sound judgment.

### Creativity

The ability to come up with imaginative solutions in management situations.

### Educational Perspective

The extent of knowledge and understanding of fundamental, as well as current, educational principles and issues and their interrelationships with educational and non-educational issues.

## TASK ORIENTATION

### Persistence

The tendency to stay with a problem or line of thought until the matter is settled.

### Initiative

Active efforts to influence events rather than passive acceptance.

### Stress Tolerance

Stability of performance under conditions of pressure, opposition, and uncertainty.



Group Leadership

Effectiveness in bringing a group to accomplish a task and in getting new ideas accepted.

Individual Leadership

Ability to motivate individuals on a one-to-one basis to accomplish a task.

Adaptability

The ability to modify behavioral style and management approach to reach a goal.

INTERPERSONAL QUALITIES

Flexibility

Being receptive to new ideas or arguments.

Considerateness

Showing concern for others and appreciation for their work; treating others with respect and politeness; thoughtful toward others.

APPENDIX B

SEA JOB ANALYSIS JOB INTERVIEW FORM

SEA Job Analysis Interview

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Years with SEA \_\_\_\_\_

If group interview:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Years with SEA</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Part I: Introduction and Overview of Interview Format

Topics for Coverage

1. Personal introduction
2. ERC affiliation
  - a. brief description of organization
  - b. definition of ELA
3. Work with CCSSO
  - a. Wisconsin preliminary work
  - b. forthcoming R. I. assessment
4. R. I. state department involvement
  - a. purpose of interviewing
  - b. outline of day's activities
    - (1) general question and job discussion
    - (2) explanation of specific tasks

Part II: General Job Description

1. Would you describe the duties and responsibilities of your job? (Obtain a copy of any available written job-description.)

2. How would you prioritize the duties and responsibilities you just described? (In terms of time commitment, department goals, personal preference, etc.)
  
3. Would you describe your working relationship with (1) your immediate superior(s) and (2) those you directly supervise?
  
4. Are there other individuals or groups that you work with, both inside and outside the department, on a more or less continuous basis? If so, who are they and what is your working relationship with them?
  
5. Do you anticipate that your activities for today will be more or less typical of a routine work day? If no, how do they differ?

### Part III: Review of Tasks

I would now like to talk with you about specific activities of your job. To assist in this process it is most helpful if we look at some of the specific tasks you do on a routine work day.

1. Review day's mail.
2. Review other materials on desk.
3. Discuss phone call.
4. Note visitors - who? why?
5. Review calendar
6. Review other office materials - books, reports, charts.
7. Tour environment

**Part IV: Wind-up**

(Toward the end of the interview review the dimension list to be sure that you have a good idea of the level of skill needed in each area.)

Planning & Organizing

Management Control

Use of Delegation

Written Communication Skills

Oral Communication Skills

Problem Analysis

Political Behavior

Judgment

Risk Taking

Creativity

Educational Perspective

Persistence

Initiative

Stress Tolerance

Group Leadership

Individual Leadership

Adaptability

Decisiveness

Flexibility

Considerateness

APPENDIX C

Financial Report

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	<u>Amount Expended</u>
Salaries	
Director.....	\$56,162.95
Secretary.....	10,047.00
Fringe Benefits.....	10,080.26
Task Force Travel.....	27,457.57
Project Director Travel.....	4,551.48
Needs Assessment Analysis.....	9,859.29
Resource Identification.....	4,889.69
Prototype Design.....	11,991.94
Field-Testing Design.....	5,110.00
Pilot Program.....	10,000.00
Technical Assistance.....	3,500.00
Project Report, Mailing, Exercise Reproduction.....	1,976.45
Supplies and Materials.....	2,002.24
Communications.....	3,603.30
Duplication and Reproduction.....	2,153.47
Office Furniture and Equipment.....	1,856.98*
Rent.....	4,414.38
Indirect Charges.....	25,890.00
Total Expenditures	<u>\$195,547.00</u>
Total Allocation	194,890.00
Earned Interest	657.00
Total Receipts	195,547.00
Balance	\$ .00

\*This expenditure is far less than anticipated due to gifts of office furniture from the project director.



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