

William B. Castetter

*The Personnel Function in
Educational Administration*

second edition

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PREFACE

This book is concerned with the personnel function in educational administration. It had its genesis in *Administering the School Personnel Program*, which was published in 1962. The sequel to the original text was published in 1971, entitled *The Personnel Function in Educational Administration*. This book is a major revision of the 1971 text, the motivation for which is fourfold. First, the last five years have been witness to dramatic economic, political, legal, sociocultural, and technological changes which affect public employment policies, procedures, and processes. Second, there is a continuing and widening interest in the way educational systems are planned, organized, directed, and controlled. There is increasing concern throughout the world about how to remake organizations and to modify existing administrative practices so that they will contribute better to the welfare of both the individual and the system. Insights provided by systems theory, by the behavioral and quantitative sciences, and by the search for modification of classical management theory are leading to changes in concepts and structures, changes that recognize the importance of human resources in developing effective educational systems.

Third, general restlessness among organization personnel about the relationship between the governors and the governed is gaining momentum in the public sector. Teacher organizations are demanding, and in many instances gaining, the right to share in the development of policies and in the shaping of practices governing the conditions under which they work.

Fourth, many of the issues and topics discussed in the earlier volumes are no longer relevant. Thus, the overlap between this revision and the previous text is not substantial.

This text includes hypotheses, concepts, and practices for resolving human problems in educational systems. Central among these is the idea that the personnel function embraces key activities in administering an organization, and from these various subprocesses are derived. These comprise the substance of the chapters in this book. ✕

Special attention has been devoted to the problems of manpower planning, compensation, collective negotiations, personnel information, and continuity of personnel service. Although these and other current organizational problems have been given emphasis, the main approach to

personnel administration is perceived as achieving organizational purposes by strengthening the individual in his relationships with the system. This is to say that individuals are the most important of organizational components, and that the constant task of those who administer is to look to the motivation and to the satisfaction of the wants and aspirations of their subordinates.

Throughout the preparation of this revision many people have been helpful and must necessarily go unnamed. The author is especially grateful to Dr. Richard S. Heisler for his critical review of the manuscript and for his contributions to the chapters on compensation and manpower planning. I would like also to express my appreciation to Jeffrey Barks, Lisa Ulrich, and Monica Pawluk Hottenstein, students in the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, who assisted in various ways, ranging from editing to persistently tracking down even the most obscure sources.

Special thanks are due my secretaries, Mary Stevenson and Jean Stavely, gifted managers that they are, who devoted hours of effort and made adjustments beyond the call of duty to bring this manuscript from one point to another on schedule and according to plan. To everyone involved, I am grateful.

Ithaca, Pa.

W. B. C.

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PART I

Perspectives on the Personnel Function

School systems

1. Administration of a school system (purpose?)
 - 1.1 Personnel functions (purpose?)
 - 1.1.1 determination of its structure
 - 1.1.2 enhancement of work satisfaction
 - 1.1.3 minimizing of lateness & conditions not conducive to
 - 1.1.4 organizational health
 - 1.2
 - 1.3

Policies
Plans

- 1.4. Procedures
- 1.5. Processes



CHAPTER 1

Human Resources and the Purposive School System

*organizational human impact of
personnel function*

This book deals with personnel administration in public school systems. Its purpose is to bring a broad perspective to the subject matter under consideration—to give insight into the purposes, policies, plans, procedures, and processes of personnel administration.

The present chapter deals first with long-range personnel strategy, in order to illustrate the linkage between human resources and attainment of organizational purposes. Then it examines major forces which affect both the performance of individual members of the school system and the attainment of the purposes for which it exists. This approach is designed to emphasize the purposive nature of a school system; the organizational and human impact of the personnel function; the forces, factors, and conditions that are continually at work to modify both the performance of the individual and the organization; and to set the stage for succeeding chapters, which are concerned with understanding and coping with human problems in an organizational setting.

Let us begin with the observation that in recent years this nation has witnessed an interest in its educational system which is without parallel. Although there has been marked disagreement about educational aims and the methods for achieving these aims, there is general agreement on the need for a superior educational system.

The problems involved in attaining education of fine quality in local school districts are formidable. Purposes must be defined, policies established, programs developed, personnel employed, facilities purchased, revenues obtained, and a host of separate operations coordinated. This work is done by people—professional educators, nonteaching personnel, librarians, physicians, psychiatrists, lawyers, business managers, and laymen.

It is generally conceded that the success of any human endeavor is closely related to the quality of the personnel who perform the tasks necessary to the achievement of purpose, as well as to the conditions that affect their physical and mental well-being. This assumption is as applicable to school systems as it is to any organized human effort. The

extent to which public education succeeds will depend largely upon the quality of the personnel engaged in the educational process and upon the effectiveness with which they discharge individual and group responsibilities. The school plant is important, as are organization purposes. Money, of course, is significant; a well-designed program is essential; and leadership is vital. But the most crucial single element in the educative process is the people charged with the task of effecting desirable changes in children and youth. This, in essence, is the thesis of the textual material that follows.

LONG-RANGE PERSONNEL STRATEGY

A school system is one of the most important purposive social institutions. Although there are contrasting viewpoints as to the school's role as a social institution, a statement by George S. Counts on the goals of education in the United States represents a consensus of purposes of education in a democracy.

Education for individual excellence.

Education for a society of equals.

Education for a government of free men.

Education for an economy of security and plenty.

Education for a civilization of beauty and grandeur. → 8.5-

Education for an enduring civilization.

Education for a world community.¹

If the proposition is accepted that a school system is a purposive organization whose members seek through common effort to attain goals such as those just cited, then it becomes clear that the long-range strategy of personnel administration is to help the school system attract, retain, and develop the kinds of human resources needed to achieve its overall goals. The personnel envisioned here are those who will have the ability, motivation, and creativity to: (1) enable the system to surmount its infirmities; (2) continually adjust the educational program to the needs of individuals living and competing in a dynamic society; (3) provide leadership that shapes the human organization in such a way that there will be congruence between the individual and the system; (4) create conditions and climate conducive to maximum voluntary growth and individual effectiveness; and (5) influence ordinary personnel to perform in an extraordinary fashion.

This kind of personnel strategy calls for a leadership focus that is intent upon achieving the goals of the organization; that provides op-

¹ George S. Counts, *Education and American Civilization* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1952), 311-430.

portunities for its members to bring initiative and creativity to their tasks, which will result in both individual satisfaction and effective position performance; that will mesh administrative processes so that greater congruence between organizational ends and individual efforts becomes a reality.

This focus is on the major human problems of school organizations that affect the learning outcomes of children and youth—including the communications gap; ineffective rewards; inadequate supervision; inequitable compensation; position insecurity; lack of authority; career inflexibility; personnel obsolescence; unproductive recruitment and selection efforts; position discontent; excessive turnover, tardiness, and absenteeism; inequality of employment and promotion opportunities; and strikes.

Modern Organization Theory and the Personnel Function

Our concern in this text is the solution of continuing human problems of school systems through the application of modern organization theory. At the heart of this theory is the systems approach to organization and administration. According to Scott, modern organization theory accepts systems analysis as a starting point. These are among the questions posed by the theory:

- What are the strategic parts of the system?
- What is the nature of their mutual interdependency?
- What are the main processes in the system?
- Which link the parts and facilitate their adjustment to each other?
- What are the goals sought by the system?²

Figure 1.1 has been included to illustrate the significance of these questions when employed as the framework for a conceptual model containing the elements of modern organization theory. The basic parts of an organization, as shown in Figure 1.1, include the individual, the formal organization, the informal organization, leadership styles, and the physical setting. The parts of the system are integrated by three processes: communication, balance, and decision-making. The influence of these various elements on the performance of the individual and the organization will be discussed here.

The concept of an educational institution as a purposive system takes into consideration how the system delivers educational services to its

² William G. Scott and Terence R. Mitchell, *Organization Theory: A Structural and Behavioral Analysis*, Rev. Ed. (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., and The Dorsey Press, 1972), 55.

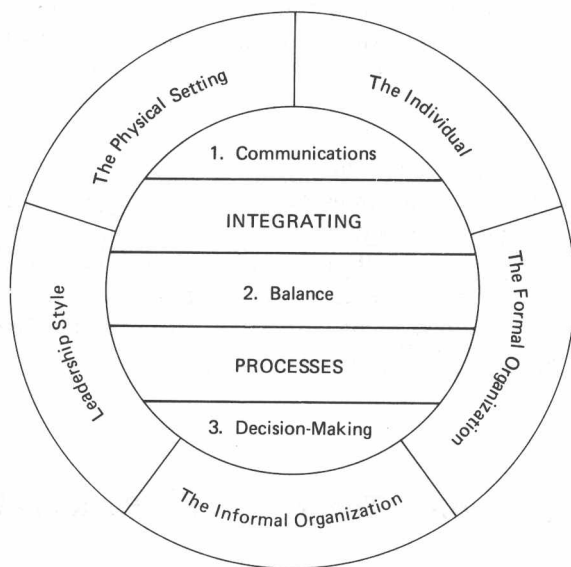


Figure 1.1. Elements of modern organization. Source: Robert G. Murdick and Joel E. Ross, *Information Systems for Modern Management*, p. 106. © 1971. By permission of Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

clients, and how it creates opportunities for members to derive satisfaction from the work they perform. In order to view and to understand the school system (or any human organization) as an entity, systems theory is of considerable significance. Because people are one of the basic elements of the school system, and because their behavior influences its effectiveness, the relationship between the individual and the system constitutes the substance of the remainder of this chapter.

Included in modern school systems are staff members who vary in quantity and quality of educational preparation, work experiences, work expectations, assignments, temperament, attitudes, skills, and values. There are administrators, teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, and operation, maintenance, clerical, food service, security, and transportation personnel. In addition to human agents there are other system components, as identified in Figure 1.1. These elements, when viewed in relation to each other, do not form a system. Administrative arrangements are necessary to cause them to act on each other so that the purposes of the system are achieved. More than a group of individuals is needed to develop a school system. People, as one component of the system, interact with each other (intrapart) in the performance of their roles, as do people and the formal structure or the informal organization (interparts).

The systems aspect of modern organization theory has useful application in the administration of the personnel function. Among the broad observations that can be made about the relevance of the systems concept to the personnel function are the following:

- A school system is a human organization within which a social service is performed. The system is composed of a series of interdependent parts, including the formal organization, informal organization, people, status and role-expectancy patterns, and the physical environment. As illustrated in Figure 1.2, these parts interact with other elements (subsystems) within and outside of organizational boundaries. The animating force of the systems concept is integrative. At its core is a goal structure around which the organization is designed and to which the separate but interrelated components are functionally and operationally united to serve the purposes for which it exists. In the case of a school system, the systems approach focuses upon the transforming of human and nonhuman resources into educational programs and services through the interaction of human and related system elements.
- Educational administration is a social process that takes place within the context of a social system. This process may be examined from

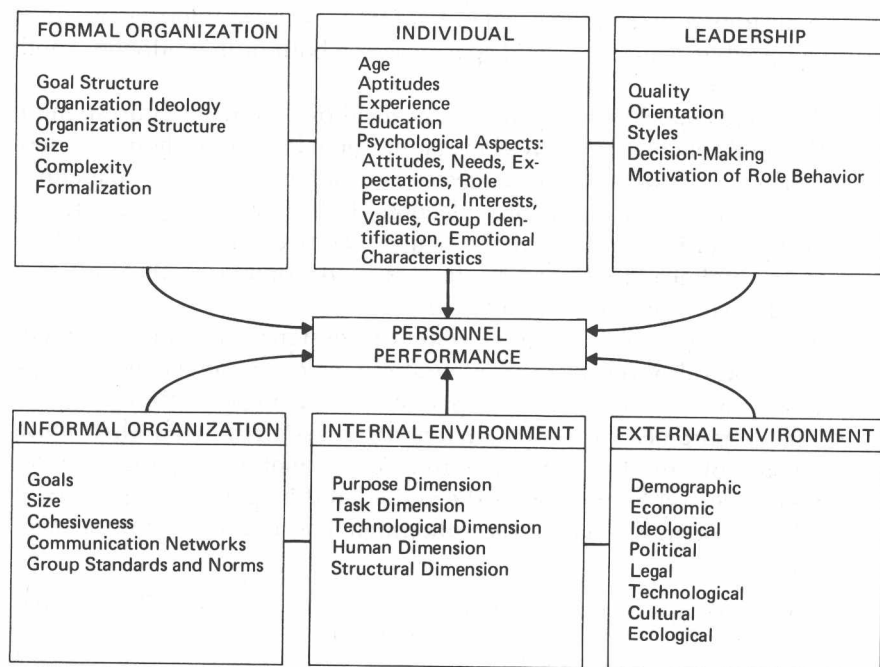


Figure 1.2. Interacting forces impinging on personnel performance.

three points of view. Structurally, administration is seen as the hierarchy of superordinate-subordinate relationships within the social system. Functionally, this hierarchy of relationships is the locus for allocating and integrating roles and facilities in order to achieve the goals of the system. Operationally, the administrative process takes effect in situations involving person-to-person interaction.

- The social system involves two classes of phenomena that are both conceptually independent and phenomenally interactive: (1) the institutions, with certain roles and expectations, that will fulfill the goals of the system; and (2) the individuals, with certain personalities and dispositions inhabiting the system, whose observed interactions comprise what we call social behavior.³
- The component subsystems of social organizations include: (1) a maintenance structure as well as productive and productive-supportive structures concerned with both through-put and system preservation; (2) elaborate, formal role pattern; (3) clear authority structure; and (4) ideology, to provide system norms which buttress the authority structure.⁴
- Each individual in the organization brings to his work certain needs which he seeks to satisfy. When the needs of the individual and the demands of the organization are not compatible, problems arise that affect both the individual and the organization. Unfortunately, organizational expectations and individual needs are seldom completely compatible. Causes of the disparity reside both in the individual and the system.
- The personnel function can be conceived of as a major subsystem of the total school system. Within the personnel function there is a network of interdependent processes, including manpower planning, compensation, recruitment, selection, induction, development, security, and justice. One of the major foci of the personnel function is to minimize those forces, factors, and conditions that are not conducive to organizational health.
- The way in which the total system is designed and implemented, from the subsystems to the integrated whole, can affect the willingness of system members to cooperate in achieving organization goals.
- The importance of people in an organization is such that those responsible for the personnel function cannot ignore the interdependence and interaction of the system and its parts. The practicing administrator, the board, the superintendent, and the administrative

³ Jacob W. Getzels et al., *Educational Administration As a Social Process* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1968), 52-56.

⁴ Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn, *The Social Psychology of Organizations* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1966), 47.

team should understand the impact of the total system and its parts on the individual, as well as the response of the individual to the system.

It can be inferred from what has just been stated that any effort to design the personnel function in a school system should be based upon an understanding of human behavior and its linkage to other parts of the system. The section that follows is aimed at interrelating some basic ideas about the interacting forces that affect personnel performance, as well as the problems they pose and the opportunities they create for personnel administration.

Organization Subsystems and Personnel Performance

If the proposition is accepted that the performance of the individual member of a school system is influenced by its component subsystems, it follows that one of the tasks involved in the personnel function is to design plans that will minimize negative influences of these parts on individual satisfaction, position productivity, and organizational effectiveness. In essence, one of the objectives of the personnel function is to minimize the dysfunctionality between the individual and the system. With this assumption in mind, let us consider these interacting forces, as illustrated in Figure 1.2, beginning with a major component, the formal organization.

THE FORMAL ORGANIZATION

An organization may be defined as a group of persons who interact through a structured process to achieve certain purposes. Formalization of the organization involves plans designed to accomplish the tasks for which it exists. Such plans specify what is to be done (goal structure); the positions to be filled to do the work; who will occupy the positions; how the position-holders will interact; how the work is to be done; and under what conditions it will be performed. In short, formalization structures an organization in terms of goals, roles, activities, and their interrelationships. Another characteristic of formal organizations is variability. School systems, for example, range in size from one-room schools to large urban districts responsible for educating thousands of students. They vary also in purposes, quality and quantity of human and nonhuman resources, location, complexity, and extent of formalization, all of which are related to, but not necessarily equipotential in, organizational effectiveness.

It has been said many times that the satisfaction and dissatisfaction an individual derives from his work depend to a considerable extent on what the formal organization does to engender such experiences. One of the components of the formal organization, as shown in Figure 1.2, and closely intertwined with staff and organizational effectiveness, is the goal structure. Few would disagree with the following notions on the goal structure as an essential element of school organizations:

- A goal structure is indispensable to the efficient and effective operation of a school system.
- American education has long suffered from goal ambiguity.
- One of the major defects of American public schools is the variance between the administration of schools and the self-actualization goals that schools hold for youngsters.⁵
- The nature of the goals has extensive impact on the administration of a school system, ranging from the quantity and quality of manpower to personnel commitment, involvement, and need-satisfaction.⁶

In order to lend specificity to the foregoing statements, let us examine the goal structure of the Goodville school system, as illustrated in Figure 1.3. Not only is there a hierarchy of goals within the structure, but the nature of the work to be carried out at each planning level is specified, the support programs essential to the goals are indicated, and the anatomy of a PPBS (planning, programming, budgeting system) are identified.

Goals and Human Resources. Modern thought, in personnel administration, emphasizes the human-resources approach as well as the human-relations approach to the solution of human problems.⁷ This approach includes, among other values, careful attention by the organization to goal formulation, clarification, adherence, and internalization, as well as careful attention to plans within the personnel function for improving interpersonal relationships, for seeking better methods of resolving conflict, and for increased mutual understanding among system personnel.

⁵ For a useful summary of goals and objectives in education, see Thomas J. Sergiovanni and Fred D. Carver, *The New School Executive: A Theory of Administration* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1973), 33-45.

⁶ Goals and personnel commitment to them are discussed extensively in Amitai Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations* (New York: The Free Press, 1961), 12-74.

⁷ For a discussion of the human resources approach to personnel administration, see Leon C. Megginson, *Personnel: A Behavioral Approach to Administration*, Rev. Ed. (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1972), Part One.