

ADAPTING HUMAN RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR STATE USE

Bryan M. Phifer

*Human Resource Development Leader
Federal Extension Service*

There is no more important area to which we, as extension workers, can direct our efforts than the field of human resource development. This is especially true within the areas of education and job training, and of helping people and communities make the adjustments necessary to more successfully meet the challenges of the future.

To emphasize the importance of our efforts in human resource development, let me review some of the more foreboding changes taking place in our economy.

In 1930, 58 percent of our adult population had a grade school education or less, while 31 percent of our total employment was in the unskilled jobs requiring the least education and 25 percent of our total employment was in the semiskilled and service occupations.

It is estimated that in 1970, 8 percent of our adult population will still have only a grade school education or less, while only 4 percent of our job opportunities will call for unskilled labor.

In 1930, some 32 percent of our adult population had a high school education, while 30 percent of the job opportunities were in the skilled, clerical, and semiprofessional jobs for which a high school education would generally suffice.

In contrast, it is anticipated that nearly 51 percent of the skilled, clerical, sales, and semiprofessional jobs which required a high school education in 1930 will require a two-year post-high school technical, business, or community college degree by 1970.

More startling, and challenging, is the explosion in the number of young people entering the labor market. During the decade of the 1950's, their number increased by about 365,000. During the decade of the 1960's, this age group will increase by about 6.2 million. Not all of these young people will be seeking jobs, since many will still be in school and others will marry and take up housekeeping. However, a large majority of those 25 and under will be seeking jobs. This explains why so many young people are having difficulty finding jobs

unless they are adequately qualified.¹ Moreover, this abundant crop of youth entering the labor market as a result of the all-time high in birth rates following World War II will mean an even larger wave of new families and births in the 1970's.

At the same time, automation is rapidly replacing hundreds of thousands of jobs. In the steel industry, for example, 250,000 workers are doing today what 500,000 did twelve years ago. In the coal industry, 400,000 miners have been replaced by machines in ten years. The employment crisis thus created calls for a massive effort in upgrading education, in providing vocational training, and in re-training unemployed workers. I am aware that automation is not the only factor involved in these changes, but it is a major factor. I cite these figures only to point up again our responsibility, as educators and public servants, to help people understand the forces behind the changes in our economy and the alternatives in intelligently preparing for even greater changes in the future.

Let us now take a look at what is being done to utilize the leaflets on "Developing Human Resources for Economic Growth," prepared under the joint sponsorship of North Carolina's Agricultural Policy Institute, the National Committee on Agricultural Policy, the Iowa Center for Agricultural and Economic Development, the Farm Foundation, and the Federal Extension Service. Since publication of the six basic leaflets by the Agricultural Policy Institute in January of 1964, nearly 50,000 sets of the six leaflets have been distributed nationally. Every state extension service received an initial free supply, and many states ordered bulk supplies based on anticipated needs. Several states, of course, have printed their own materials based on the six leaflets and supplemented with local data.

A recent survey indicates that of the twenty states responding: Ten plan to conduct or have conducted educational programs in human resource development.

Of these ten states, eight plan to use, or have used, the materials published by the Agricultural Policy Institute.

Seven of the ten states will supplement the API materials or develop their own. In addition, we know of two other states which have used the API leaflets, supplemented by their own materials, which have not responded to the questionnaire.

¹For a fuller discussion of the impact upon our economy of the tremendous increase in the number of young people entering the labor market during the 1960's, see "Our Manpower Employment Situation" by E. J. Niederfrank, Federal Extension Service, Leaflet No. 2 in the series of six on "Developing Human Resources for Economic Growth."

Four of the twenty states responding have used, or plan to use, the API materials in other ways.

In addition to the above uses, we found from our survey that you are finding a wide variety of uses for the materials. Some examples are:

Use as basic subject matter for formally organized study-discussion groups.

Use with existing organizations.

Use as background information for informal discussions of human resource development needs with lay leaders.

Use with public affairs committees of extension councils as a basis for identifying important social and economic problems.

Use as basic reference material in other county extension program planning efforts.

Use in 4-H career exploration programs.

Use as basic reference material for your own information.

Several states have supplemented the six leaflets with excellent publications dealing with the local situation and presenting local data. In addition, the slide set developed by the Agricultural Policy Institute has been adapted for use by the Southern states. The API also has produced a set of national slides for the Federal Extension Service using national data where appropriate. This set is available for \$9.00 plus \$2.25 for the tape recording designed for use with the slides.

I would like to suggest a rationale for a long-range program in human resource development focusing on occupational education and training needs which could utilize the API and other appropriate educational materials. Among the materials which might be effectively used are the new leaflets on "Occupational Education and Training for Tomorrow's World of Work" produced by the North Central region and the kit of fact sheets on "Federal-State Programs for Developing Human Resources" prepared by the Federal Extension Service.

The rationale for the long-range program I would like to suggest is composed of three distinct but not discrete stages. They are:

Stage 1: An all-out educational effort to acquaint people, especially rural people, with the rapidly changing job market situation and the occupational education and training needed for future employment. Such an effort is mandatory if we are to prepare our youth for their rightful place in the future.

Stage 2: A concentrated effort to acquaint people with the resources available for strengthening, or of providing needed, occupational education and training. These resources include such legislation as MDTA, the Vocational Education Act of 1963, the Higher Education Facilities Act, and others which provide grants and loans for technical and vocational education for all ages, and which greatly expand the opportunities for area vocational schools, technical schools, and community colleges.

Stage 3: Intensive extension effort to provide the organizational and technical assistance necessary to help communities, especially in rural areas, to utilize the federal-state resources at their command for developing needed educational and training opportunities.

Earlier, I mentioned that there seemed to be a great opportunity for public affairs specialists to extend the impact of human resource development work and to increase their own efficiency. This opportunity lies in teaming up with our co-workers in Extension who also have a direct interest in human resource development to plan and carry out joint programs. This can be done in numerous ways. But two of the more obvious are:

To sit down with your 4-H and youth development specialists, home economists, and resource development leaders to acquaint them with the excellent information you have on developing human resources; then to explore with them the ways they can utilize this information in their own areas of responsibility.

To plan joint programs for the existing audiences with whom 4-H, home economics, and resource development specialists work. Most of our resource development leaders would immediately recognize the relevance of your human resource development materials to the needs of local resource development groups, RAD committees, community action organizations, and others with whom they work.

Many RAD and resource development committees have subcommittees on human resource development. These committees form a ready nucleus for launching an educational program. Moreover, they are groping for meaningful information and help in developing educational programs. Likewise, many 4-H and home demonstration clubs would welcome these materials as the basis of a study unit on human resource development; or, in the case of 4-H, a career exploration project. Junior leaders could make a tremendous contribution in helping to acquaint youth with the needs of the future and the preparation required to meet these needs.

All three of these subject matter groups offer a ready audience. Rather than trying to develop new groups for reaching the public and key leaders with this vital information, why not team up with your fellow extension workers to utilize existing groups—4-H and home demonstration clubs, RAD and resource development committees—at least as a starting point. I believe this offers a wonderful opportunity of extending the impact and coverage of these materials and educational programs in human resource development, as well as for increasing your own efficiency.

PART V

*Reports of Regional Public
Affairs Committees*

