

3.6 PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, TRAINING, AND SUPERVISION

Security officers often depend on written instructions because they may not see a supervisor each day. However, written instructions must be reinforced through personal communication. Supervisors should organize their schedules to provide for daily personal contact with officers. Unless a security officer is constantly challenged as to job knowledge and operating proficiency, it is impossible to ensure the adequate protection of a facility. The inspecting supervisor should question the security officer on the details of his assignment as well as the correct responses to incidents. Figures 3-3 and 3-4 show two different approaches on this topic by two noted authors in organizational management.

1. **Principle of Line Loss.** The effectiveness of a communication tends to vary inversely with its extension. The more people are involved with the line of communication, the greater the probability of distortion, delay, and loss of meaning.
2. **Principle of Emotional Appeal.** Appeals to emotion are communicated more readily than appeals to reason. People will listen and understand better if the ideas being introduced relate to their personal interests, desires, families, and jobs.
3. **Principle of Application.** The more a communication is applied, the better it is understood and remembered. People will retain information better if they can put it to use; application converts ideas into action and gets results.

Source: Louis Allen, *The Management Profession* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

FIGURE 3-3

Three Basic Principles of Communication

| A. Relationship between method of instruction and learner recall: | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Method of Instruction | Amount of Information Recalled | |
| | 3 Hours Later | 3 Days Later |
| 1. Telling only | 70% | 10% |
| 2. Showing only | 72% | 20% |
| 3. Combination of show and tell | 85% | 65% |
| B. A learner tends to remember: | | |
| 10% of what is read | | |
| 20% of what is heard | | |
| 30% of what is seen | | |
| 50% of what is seen and heard | | |
| 70% of what is said (for example, repeated instructions) | | |
| 90% of what is said as the described operation is performed | | |

Source: Frank E. Bird, Jr., *Management Guide to Loss Control* (Loganville, GA: International Loss Control Institute, 1974).

FIGURE 3-4

Job Instruction and Learner Recall

The following are brief recommendations for the communication and training process:

- **Base training on needs.** The instructing supervisor should determine any knowledge deficiencies and take appropriate corrective action.
- **Recognize individual differences.** Some of the traits that affect individual learning rates are intelligence, desire to learn, knowledge, aptitudes, interests, motives, attitudes, emotions, and learning ability. It should be possible to establish reasonable standards of performance for all, while realizing that not everyone can perform at the same level. Not everyone learns the same things at the same time of life. A learner may not be able to appreciate or even accept some particular learning at a certain age but may embrace it later. Individualized instruction can help security officers develop to their best at that point in their lives.
- **Maximize motivation.** Supervisors can best motivate people by understanding their drives and desires; by working with them to achieve meaningful performance standards; by showing personal interest in each individual; by providing proper incentives; by setting a good example; by using the positive powers of praise, reward, and recognition; and by instructing clearly and completely.
- **Take the learner's viewpoint.** The best results are obtained when the instructing supervisor places himself or herself in the learner's shoes and orients the instruction accordingly. Asking learners what they feel they need to learn also gets positive results.
- **Provide timely feedback.** All people in a learning process want to know how well they are doing. Providing systematic reports of progress may speed up the learning process considerably.
- **Expect ups and downs.** Learning often progresses unevenly. It may occur rapidly for a while, level off, and then increase again. Reasons may include motivation, effort, physiological conditions, or the method of training.
- **Remember follow-up.** Repetition and summarizing are useful teaching techniques. The supervisor should provide information and then offer a recap of what was just conveyed.
- **Learn to instruct.** A person may know how to do a job well but may not be able to impart that knowledge to others. Good instruction requires preparation, practice, and patience; familiarity with the principles of learning; thorough knowledge of the job to be taught; and application of the fundamentals of instruction.

3.6.1 **CHANGES IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

Many security managers experience problems when shift schedules are changed. Security officers who performed satisfactorily for months or years on one shift may seem unable to adapt to the same post on a different shift. Transfers to other posts, even on the same shift, can produce the same performance problem. Usually, the security officer adapts to the change after a few days.

3.6.2 INTERACTION WITH OTHER EMPLOYEES

Positive interaction between the security officer and other employees must be facilitated on a continuing basis. The security officer may be perceived as a negative entity because he or she is an authority figure. Daily business interactions of a minor but positive nature between a security officer and employees may diminish hostility and alienation.

3.6.3 ENHANCING OBSERVATION CAPABILITIES

A security post should be designed to maximize the security officer's ability to observe the protected area. Alarms and CCTV systems may extend the range of surveillance. Also, the type of glass used in the post is important. Glare from the sun or artificial light is a significant work fatigue factor common to many security officer operations. The problem is often compounded at night when the glare of artificial lighting greatly restricts the security officer's range of observation. High-efficiency anti-reflective coatings essentially eliminate glare as a performance obstacle.

3.6.4 TESTING AND POST-TESTING

Proficiency in a skill does not last unless an officer receives random performance tests and feedback. These tests can be simple or complex. A simple test/post-test routine is shown in Figure 3-5.

Test

1. Test signal is initiated from an external source at random times, but at least once on each shift.
2. The exact time the test signal is transmitted is recorded by the sender.
3. The receiving security officer presses the "acknowledge" button when the signal is received, and this action automatically records the time and date of signal receipt.
4. The security officer either calls a designated in-plant telephone number and reports the alarm test (using a test drill checklist) into a telephone message recording device or places a call directly to the signal sender.

Post-Test

1. The test alarm transmission time is compared to the receiving time recorded on the alarm printer tape.
2. The recorded message left by the security officer in the alarm response sequence is reviewed for accuracy and clarity.
3. The test drill checklist is reviewed for accuracy and completeness.
4. The test results are discussed with the security officer no later than the next scheduled work shift.

FIGURE 3-5
Test/Post-Test Routine