

Book Reviews

The Effective Executive. By Peter Drucker, 1967. Available from Harper and Row, Publishers, New York, N.Y. 10016. 174 pp. \$4.95.

In bringing to the reader a composite of the top-notch executive, Drucker exposes the many things an executive must be and the talents he must develop. Yet, throughout his book, the author infers that the effective executive is not really a super-human—something that few people are destined to be—but rather he is a person who has achieved effectiveness because he has made it a practice. This philosophy must be considered one of the more outstanding attributes of Drucker's book.

Beginning on the premises that, first, the executive's job is simply to be effective, and second, that effectiveness can be learned, the author convincingly explains that effectiveness is a habit. From this point, he discusses several pertinent skills and attitudes needed for effectiveness. He devotes the last chapters to the decision-making process.

Drucker's treatment of his subject is unique in several aspects. Unlike the average "executive handbook," his approach is not always positive. The author wisely points out several realities which daily hinder the executive's actions, serve to compete with his attempts to be effective, and indeed tend to push him away from effectiveness.

The major portion of the book is devoted to what the author calls the five basic practices of all effective executives. The reader will find them all significant, but perhaps his two most meaningful selections are: (1) those dealing with time—the most precious of resources—here the reader is presented with a suggested scheme to systematically account for time and to consolidate more of it for doing important things; and (2) the comments concerned with "accentuating the positive" of people—"building on strengths," as the author puts it. The people the executive works with, under, and over can all make a positive contribution. "What can a man do well?" Drucker asks. The effective executive will make an effort to discover this and then build upon it.

The author uses an in-depth approach when he comments on effective decision making. Again he deviates considerably from the popular "handbook" formula. His treatment seems more "open-ended" and this is a factor which adds meaning to his presentation. The effective executive starts with classifying the situation, and does this more often than not with opinions rather than facts.

We are told that there is no "effective personality," but that effective

executives differ among each other in the same ways that ineffective ones do. He does say that the effective ones have one thing in common—the ability to get the right things done.

“Live” examples of executives at work in all walks of life are used throughout the book to punctuate the author’s ideas and opinions.

The executive is found anywhere there are people charged with performing a task while remaining within a prescribed organizational framework. Clearly, this includes the educational administrator, for he too must make decisions, budget his time wisely, and deal with people. This book would be a valuable addition to the professional’s library regardless of his calling.

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Problems of Youth. Edited by Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn Sherif. 1965. Available from Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois 60606. 329 pp. \$8.95.

Currently Extension personnel are seeking to understand more about youth problems related to varied class settings. They want to learn how to conduct effective youth programs with new clientele groups. Accordingly, this volume will be helpful to Extension youth workers at all levels. The book is based on the conviction that an adequate theory of youth behavior must seek the causes of youth problems in all the major influences that affect behavior.

The book was written by 15 contributors whose backgrounds and research experiences have centered on the anthropological, psychological, or sociological aspects of youth problems. All too often, theories about youth problems have been developed by representatives of one discipline as though the aspects and facts known to them in their specialization were all that was necessary. In contrast, this interdisciplinary volume provides a much-needed, unified presentation. It should be as helpful for those Extension workers who have had formal training in the behavioral sciences as for those who have not.

Part I concerns traditional problems of importance in youth study. The authors discuss adolescent attitudes and goals, the similarities and differences of prevailing youth values in varied sociocultural and class settings, and the problem of youth attitudes with reference to the family.

Part II focuses on youth problems which vary according to socioeconomic backgrounds of development and behavior. Special attention is given to the interplay of culture, class, and residence in generating the value patterns of youth. The authors undertake a critical appraisal of

some educational and social schemes which have been formulated to prevent the loss of human talent in lives of poverty.

Youth officially designated by society as being "in trouble" provide the focal point for Part III. The authors summarize research showing the differential behaviors between adults and youth in different patterned relationships. They also explain delinquency by offering a penetrating insight into current sociological concepts of social class and group processes.

The chapters in Part IV represent attempts to specify, through research procedures and measurements, the major influences affecting youthful behavior. The authors show how a detailed description of the ecological setting can clarify our understanding of individual behavior. They suggest that through research procedures and measurements we can gain realistic leads for preventive and ameliorative programs to aid youth in progressing toward adulthood. The last chapter of the book summarizes representative findings of a research program which studied groups of adolescents in low, middle, and high ranking neighborhoods.

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Introducing Culture. By Ernest L. Schusky and T. Patrick Culbert, 1967. Available from Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. 152 pp. \$2.95 paperback.

To the change agent the concept of culture is omnipresent. Not only is the term constantly discussed in the mass media, but the agent's training and the very philosophy of his field of specialization requires that he function within some understanding of the culture of his clients. Yet very often the concept of culture remains only a vague notion to him.

In this book Schusky and Culbert present a simple exposition of the concept of culture—defined as that complex whole "which includes the knowledge, beliefs and customs of all men, whether they be educated or uneducated." The authors designed their book to introduce the basic concepts of anthropology and to show how these concepts relate to culture.

The first part of the book is devoted to a study of the biological nature of man. A short discussion of the evolution process leading to the appearance of man on earth seeks to establish the biological and evolutionary relationships between man and other animal forms. Culture is introduced as the most important single factor that separates man from other animals, and that which enabled him to become a dominant force in the animal kingdom.

An important purpose of the authors is to illustrate the great diversity

of cultural behavior. "We must be careful . . . to avoid assuming that our way of doing things is the only 'practical' or 'right' way." Numerous cases are used from a wide cross-section of the peoples of the world to illustrate the general characteristics of culture, and to show how culture determines man's relationship to environment, to other people, and to the supernatural. Many pictorial and diagrammatic illustrations support and help explain such topics as environmental determinism and adaptation, family life and kinship, sacred and secular differentiation, and cultural diffusion.

The book is written primarily as an introductory text in anthropology for "a one-quarter or one-semester course at the freshman or sophomore level." Each chapter is followed by a list of suggested readings. However, the Extension educator or other development agent who wants a greater insight of the concept of culture and the layman interested in the story of human development ("from the earliest days of human existence until the present") will find that this book makes very stimulating and provocative reading.

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IN THIS world of ours, that which matters most is not what happens to the outside of things, but what happens to the inside of people.
—WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE