

Sum. 100

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

JANUARY - JUNE 1969

SCOTT DOUGHTY

VISTA VOLUNTEER

As a VISTA Volunteer in Menominee County I felt it within the scope of my role to help hasten the economic development of the county. I began work on a management development program for local persons interested in owning and managing their own businesses.

The objectives of this project were to prepare the people of Menominee County to be self supporting so that they would not need to rely on nearby Shawano for all their needs, thus decreasing the economic drain presently being experienced. I wanted to provide them with an awareness of and an appreciation for the management principles involved in operating a profitable business. I hoped that the lessons would stimulate latent managerial interests in capable people and discourage persons who have managerial desire but lack the capability to manage a business.

Three weeks previous to the first class we began announcements on the radio during a Menominee County information show. Announcements were made in the Menominee Prints news letter, and Shawano Evening Leader, and posters were placed in strategic locations throughout the county. I interviewed people in the county and especially in the court house.

I contacted Mr. Allen Wilson of the Small Business Administration in Madison. His office provided me with instruction materials, movies, and subject handouts as well as much helpful advice.

At the university of Wisconsin at Green Bay I met several interested people who provided me with interesting ideas for conducting the classes. It was suggested that rather than lecture the students it would be more effective to

incorporate the lessons into discussions which they could carry on themselves. The use of a model business as an instructive tool was advised.

The first class met Wednesday March 26, 1969 at the Tepee Restaurant in Keshena. The topic was "Success and failure factors in small business". There was an attendance of 21 people. The majority of the people were women. This remained the case throughout the series. I tried unsuccessfully to get the people involved in a discussion. They did not respond to my questions nor to the model business I attempted to discuss. This problem continued throughout the series. The second and following classes were changed to Monday night due to a meeting conflict with another group. Attendance dropped to 10. The topic for this session was "Records and credit for profitable management."

The next class, April 14, faired a slightly better attendance. Eleven people were present for a lesson on "The sources of information and assistance for small business." The class was little more than a lecture with periodic successes at discussion.

Attendance dropped to eight at the following class in which we discussed "Human factors in small business." I discussed possible reasons for the decreasing attendance with the class. They decided they would like to change back to Wednesday night meetings in an effort to attract more students (the meeting conflict had ended).

The next class was changed to Wednesday, Aprrril 30. Attendance dropped to seven. I lectured on "communication and control" but had little success evoking responses or questions from the group.

I further increased the publicity by hanging new signs and placing articles in the Shawano Evening Leader and Menominee Prints. I contacted most of the original students personally.

This was of no avail. The May 7 class attendance dropped to five. The topic was "what makes customers buy". It was still basically a lecture type class.

I discussed the decreasing attendance problem with my supervisor, Mr. Clyde Atwood. We decided it was because the people were probably losing interest and little or nothing could be done to stem it. Another likelihood was that the dropouts had realized their inability or lack of desire to operate their own business. Mr. Atwood recommended I continue the group as I was and not be overly concerned with the decreasing attendance. I was running out of topics that I felt qualified to speak on so we discussed new class ideas.

May 14 I tried the first of three new class plans. Unfortunately only four people showed up that evening. I planned no topic for this class, I tried to get them involved in a discussion amongst themselves about various problems of managing a business. It was a relatively unsuccessful attempt at increasing class participation. They did not respond to my questions. When they did respond it was in short, often one word answers which did not stimulate further discussion.

I then started a discussion, mostly one sided on the business needs of Menominee County. If they had any ideas, I was unable to bring them out in this discussion. It was suggested to me later that I may have greater success discussing this with them in private. I have not tried this as yet.

In this same meeting I attempted to establish a model business. We chose to establish a model restaurant. I began by asking what we would have to do to establish our restaurant and continued by discussing every important step; ie: get financial aid, determine the number of employees we will need, determine the type of stock we want, locate wholesalers. Unless they seemed stumped, I waited until someone made a reply to each question before

elaborating on them. Basically it remained a question and answer discussion. I was unable to stimulate a class discussion.

May 21 I tried a second new class idea. I arranged with an appliance store owner in Shawano to bring the class to his store for a tour and discussion of his operation. This was a whopping success. The group of eight asked a surprising number of questions. They were very interested and appreciative of this new learning experience. One woman mentioned to me after the class that she had recognized many things he said as having been mentioned in our classes. This was encouraging since it indicated that some of the material I had taught had been absorbed.

May 28 was the final class of the series. I invited the loan officer from a local bank to speak to us about financing. Only five people showed up for the class but those in attendance enjoyed the talk very much. Many questions were asked afterwards, the reason for which I can not explain.

Generally speaking I think the classes were a large success. It demonstrated that there are some Menominees who are interested in operating their own business. It served as an educational tool, promoting an awareness of the difficulties and intricacies of operating a small business. It served as a pilot for a further, more extensive and comprehensive course of business education. It has uncovered some of the difficulties in teaching the Menominees so that greater advances may be made in the future.

It is my belief that the Menominee people are not yet ready to take the reigns of economical development. Any potential entrepreneurs will need experience in the particular field of business they choose and further business education studies if they are to be successful. It could be disastrous for

for them if they attempt a career in their own business on the assumption they will succeed if there are enough customers. Menominee County needs successful businesses if it is to achieve economic security. Business failures will deter that economic growth while no increase in businesses will delay it.



the university of wisconsin-green bay
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• Assistant Chancellor for Extension

June 17, 1969

Mr. Scott Doughty
 Community Action Programs
 Post Office Box 54
 Neopit, Wisconsin 54150

Dear Mr. Doughty:

I appreciated your stopping by for a visit and chat. Also, I appreciated receiving a copy of your report on the "Management Development Project". I am returning the copy and have kept a photocopy for my use.

It appears that the project involved a great deal of work on your part. I am sure the participants benefited from it.

My warm regards.

Sincerely yours,

Raymond D. Vlasin
 Assistant Chancellor for Extension
 University Extension and
 The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

RDV/cmh

Enclosure

cc: ✓ Dr. E. N. Swinerton

Remind me to
 brief you on
 his visit. OK?

Thanks.

VISTA

August 11, 1969

Mr. Arnold Panitch
Senior Field Analyst
VISTA
Great Lakes Region
623 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Dear Mr. Panitch:

Enclosed please find a letter from Myron H. Lowe, Chairman
Wisconsin Winnebago Business Committee.

Would you please reply to Mr. Lowe. I hope that VISTA can
respond favorably to Mr. Lowe's request.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

E. Nelson Swinerton
Director

Enclosure

CC: Myron Lowe

mam