

# Yardsticks

By William B. Given, Jr.  
President, American Brake Shoe Company



Here are some random thoughts taken from a clever booklet recently published by the American Brake Shoe Company, of which Ramapo Ajax is a Division.

Says Brake Shoe Vice-President, M. N. Trainer, in introducing the booklet: "Success depends to a large degree upon the right kind of 'human relations' . . . Through the years, William B. Given, Jr., President, has provided us with the yardsticks in this book . . . Stimulating and helpful, they have come to be used instinctively as a guide in measuring day-to-day decisions."

Here are some of these yardsticks:

Give yourself time to think. There is too much mental rushing around, as well as physical, and it is more damaging!

When you ask advice, listen to it.

Think of your man's family difficulties and disappointments in terms of *your* family.



What is your greatest peeve in life? Mine is people who are "too busy."

Ask yourself, "Do mistakes of men under me make me as ashamed as my mistakes?" They should.

When trouble comes accept its challenge and enjoy the contest. These are the thrilling moments in work just as zero hour is in war.

Giving the other fellow credit when due, instead of taking it yourself, usually does most for you.

Sincere praise never hurts even the most conceited. It's a valuable habit praising where praise is deserved. When you insincerely praise, you



usually hurt the man, yourself and the company. Just don't do it—no matter how strong the temptation.

When possible make the decisions now, even if action is in the future. A reviewed decision usually is better than one reached at the last moment.

If you're not sure give him the benefit of your doubt.

Lots of the best ideas are lost by the lack of an immediate note. It is so easy to forget.

It is amazing the quantities and quantities of time of subordinates wasted by their superiors. Even more amazing is how few of the bosses realize this.

Don't let yesterday use up too much of today.

Unless you have given it careful and cold consideration, never seriously criticize any man in the presence of others.

The company owes employees a square deal and that's all an employee owes the company. Some bosses forget the latter.

Get the habit of telling when you find you've been wrong. Report your mistakes and do it promptly.

When you find that instead of you pushing the job, the job is pushing you, it's time for some careful thinking.

Welcome sincere criticism. Often when criticism has stopped, interest in *you* has stopped.

Always back a boss, but don't be a damn fool about it.

If a man isn't quite fair and square, his customers know it. That goes double for the men under him.

Do the hard ones first. That is both the easier and the more effective schedule.

Watch your step when you immediately know the one way to do anything. Nine times out of ten, there are several better ways.



Try your best to make him understand the why of your disagreement. At times it does take patience. Also the trying may change your mind.

# Modern Communication

(Continued from page 444)

If you are a grumbler, don't mind it in your men. Their own faults in others annoy bosses more than anything else.

There are few, if any, jobs in which ability alone is sufficient. You need loyalty, sincerity, enthusiasm and team play.



Don't have any bosses under you who are not the kind of people you like to work under.

Always remember your man's failure is your failure.

It is hard to consistently practice what you believe in but it's worth the effort.

The routine of any job can swamp you if you let it. If it does, the fault is yours. It's better to take papers home than to let them accumulate dust on your desk and window sills.



The best place to criticize your boss is to his face.

Details often kill initiative, but there have been few successful men who weren't good at details. Don't ignore details. Lick them.

Minor decisions often turn out to have been major ones.

We should more often ask ourselves, "What else can I do to strengthen this company?" Yes, and do it. We are all lazy.

along information on a group of cars for a certain destination. We take the cards, put them in the machine for tape perforation and send the list of them simultaneously, by Teletype, to all interested points. The entire operation is only a matter of minutes rather than hours or days.

Since the most of us send consist reports to the trace bureau, the next yard in advance, and the district freight offices within an hour after the train is dispatched, the work in the trace bureau can be consummated in a short period of time and our car records are accurate and complete within one to two hours. How much better this recently developed system is when we consider the old method of mailing in consist reports to the trace bureau, or as later was done, telegraph them in, laboriously picking off the cars and transferring to passing reports, printing sufficient copies of the passing report, and then mailing out to the interested offices, where they arrived anywhere from a day to three days later. No wonder our patrons were not satisfied when we couldn't tell them, when they called, where the car was, or how it was moving, so that they could make their plans at their plant or store. It is most exasperating for any of us who have to wait for such information and that is doubly true of the industrial or business man who is dependent on car tracing information to plan his business. Not only do we keep our records right up to date, but we do so at much less cost, when the work with the new equipment is done automatically for us. The equipment even presents the possibility of the elimination of the freight and weigh bill, by having the billing agent cut the card at origin, have the card travel with the car to the first assembly and dispatching yard, and card is used to automatically send consist reports and have the car record cards produced at the central point.

We can find no instance where this whole scheme has actually been tried, or is in effect, but it has possibilities and is being seriously considered. This one card would serve for transportation handling of the car, accounting purposes, car record, car tracing, and per diem records. The potentialities are great but far from fully developed. This equipment deserves the serious consideration which is now being given to it.

Modern communication facilities can do more to increase the efficiency of our job than any particular thing

in railroad operation today. We should all take advantage of the facilities available and urge for continued improvement and development.

No money can be better spent, nor investment made, to assure the continued successful operation of the nation's railroads. Don't sell communication facilities short. Television is just coming into the picture and who knows but that it will be developed to the extent that we can sit in our office, turn on a set beamed to a certain point or yard and see for ourselves how the work is progressing without requiring someone to tell us all about it over the telephone. Why shouldn't we therefore keep improved communication our No. 1 consideration.

## Illustrated Discussions

As a continuation of this committee report, two illustrated discussions were presented—one by W. R. Triem, general superintendent of telegraph, Pennsylvania, and the other by R. F. McCall, of the Motorola, Inc.

Mr. Triem cited the need for the simplification of operating rules to coincide with present day conditions wherein a "telephone blanket"—employing the common wire phone, inductive phone systems and space radio—provides almost constant contact between the operators and the engineers and conductors of trains on the road. The concept of some of the rules, he said, based on the assumption that a train is "lost" from one open station to the next, is no longer applicable where modern communications are in use, and, under those rules, automatic block signals can serve no function other than the spacing of trains. Describing the favorable results the Pennsylvania has obtained from the use of inductive train phones in locomotives, cabin cars, and at wayside stations, Mr. Triem disclosed that in a recent three-day check on each of 700 individual installations, there had been an average of 600 calls, almost 300 of which had resulted in better train movement or the prevention of tie-ups.

Mr. McCall described the application of train phones in specific road and yard installations. He stated that it is entirely possible to start end-to-end train phones on a small scale, perhaps applying the equipment to only a few individual trains, using that initial installation as a base for eventual expansion to all engines, cabooses and wayside facilities in a territory.