

New management job: the integrator

*Study findings provide clues for managers
on how to achieve a unified effort
in complex R&D-intensive organizations*

Foreword

While the advances of science and technology are increasing the tempo of change in some complex business organizations, the requirements for regularity and standardization remain in others. This continuously increases the need both for greater specialization (differentiation) and for tighter coordination (integration). However, complications arise, since these two needs are essentially antagonistic, and one can usually be achieved only at the expense of the other. In this article, the authors report on a comparative

study of ten organizations in three industries. Their findings point to the emergence of a new management function to help achieve high differentiation and high integration simultaneously. Paul R. Lawrence is Professor and Area Chairman of Organizational Behavior at the Harvard Business School. Jay W. Lorsch is Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior at HBS. They are the coauthors of *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration* (Division of Research, HBS, 1967).

What will be new and unique about organizational structures and management practices of business enterprises that are their industries' competitive leaders a decade from now? Because of the rapid rate of market and technological change, with the accompanying strains and stresses on existing organizational forms, managers are becoming increasingly concerned with the difficulty of reconciling the need for specialization with the need for integration of effort.

Consequently, the purpose here is to explore this problem and to suggest that one of the critical organizational innovations will be the establishment of management positions, and even formal departments, charged with the task of achieving integration. Moreover, the integrative function will be on a par with such tradition-

al functions as production, sales, research, and others.

That may seem to be a startling statement, particularly since we know of no organization which has yet established a department—even a small one—formally labeled “integration.”

However, before we can evaluate our prediction, we first need to define what we mean by the term *integration*. As used in this article, integration is the achievement of unity of effort among the major functional specialists in a business. The integrator's role involves handling the nonroutine, unprogrammed problems that arise among the traditional functions as each strives to do its own job. It involves resolving interdepartmental conflicts and facilitating decisions, including not only such major decisions as large capital investment but also the thou-

sands of smaller ones regarding product features, quality standards, output, cost targets, schedules, and so on. Our definition reads much like the customary job description of any company general manager or divisional manager who has "line" authority over all the major functional departments.

Although the need for organizational integration is not new, the traditional method of using the "shared boss" as the integrator is rapidly breaking down, and a radically new approach is becoming necessary. The increasingly dynamic nature of many organizational environments is making the integrating job so important and so complex that it cannot be handled by a single general manager, no matter how capable he may be.

Substance can be added to our definition of integration by identifying some of the diverse titles under which this activity is currently being performed. In recent years there has been a rapid proliferation of such roles as product manager, brand manager, program coordinator, project leader, business manager, planning director, systems designer, task force chairman, and so forth. The fine print in the descriptions of these various management positions almost invariably describes the core function as that of integration, as we define it.

These new integrative assignments are joining some older ones, such as those carried on by production control people in resolving schedule conflicts between production and sales, and by budget officers in addressing interdepartmental conflicts around the allocation of capital and operating funds.

The emergence of these integrating jobs in considerable numbers now makes it practical to turn the spotlight of systematic research on them to learn how to manage them effectively. This article largely reports on the findings from our recent study, which answer four key questions about the management of the integrating function:

1. *How should integrators be oriented and motivated?*
2. *What patterns of conflict resolution and influence should they employ?*
3. *What authority should they have, and how do they get it?*
4. *Who are the most qualified people for these positions?*

To find answers to these questions, we have identified the characteristics of both the organi-

zations and the people who are performing the integration task more effectively than others.¹ But before turning directly to these questions, we first want to shed more light on the reasons for the present emergence of the integrative function.

Emerging need

When modern large-scale corporations appeared in considerable numbers in the first two decades of this century, they developed around such basic production technologies as oil-refining, iron-steel conversion, and automobile assembly. At first, engineers and other production specialists played a dominant role. Since the very productivity of these firms generated a need for a predictable and controllable distribution system, in the 1920's and 1930's marketing experts came to the fore. Channels of distribution were built up in each industry, and the entire mix of product design, promotion, advertising, pricing, and so on, was elaborated. The boundaries between industries were still relatively clear, and the markets were reasonably predictable.

However, once the effects of the depression abated, the very success of the marketers helped provide consumers with an abundance of standard products that led to a demand for product differentiation. This demand, combined with the stimulus of the post-World War II period, force-fed the widespread emergence in the late 1940's and 1950's of research and development as a major industrial function.

Crucial activity

Industrial R&D technology has already broken down the existing boundaries between industries. Once-stable markets and distribution channels are now in a state of flux. Product differentiation has parlayed into a welter of choices at every stage of the sequence from basic raw materials to ultimate consumer items. The industrial environment is turbulent and increasingly difficult to predict. Many complex facts about markets, production methods and costs, and scientific potentials for product and process improvement are relevant to investment decisions about these myriad product varieties.

All of these factors have combined to produce a king-size managerial headache: there are just

1. For a complete report of our study, see *Organization and Environment* (Division of Research, Harvard Business School, 1967).

too many crucial decisions to have them all processed and resolved through the regular line hierarchy at the top of the organization; they must be integrated in some other way.

The current importance of R&D groups in modern organizations is making the integrator's role crucial for another reason. Research has introduced into the corporation an entirely new set of people—namely, the scientists—who have their own unique way of being productive. They are specialists who work by a different clock and in a different style from hard-nosed production managers or outward-oriented sales managers. Management has learned, by and large, that these differences are necessary if each type of specialist is to do his job well. But, as these specialists diverge in their working styles, it becomes increasingly difficult to achieve the necessary integration. New roles have to be introduced to get the integration job done. Company after company is committing more and more managerial manpower, under any guise or rubric, to achieve collaboration between highly specialized people spread throughout all organizational functions and levels.

Survey findings

To this point in the discussion, we have demonstrated that integrative roles are needed and are being developed in many companies. In fact, our study of ten organizations in three distinctly different industries—plastics, consumer foods, and containers—provides dramatic evidence of the importance of effective integration in any industry. This is because our research reveals a close correlation between the effectiveness of integration among functional departments and company growth and profits. However, separate integrating roles or departments are not the solution for all organizations. While formal integrative roles are highly important in R&D-intensive industries, such as plastics and consumer food products, in a comparatively stable industry, such as containers, integration can often be achieved through the management hierarchy.

The important point is that in the future more organizations will be operating in rapidly changing environments, and the problem for managers will be to make certain that this integrative function is effectively carried out. In order to do this, they will need to learn how to select,

train, organize, supervise, and control these new integrators.

Organization structure

Two questions arise when we think of designing the structure of the organization to facilitate the work of integrators:

1. *Is it better to establish a formal integration department, or simply to set up integrating positions independent of one another?*

2. *If individual integrating positions are set up, how should they be related to the larger structure?*

In considering these issues it should first be pointed out that if an organization needs integrators at all, it is preferable to legitimize these roles by formal titles and missions rather than to leave them in an informal status. We derive the primary evidence on this point from an intensive study of an electronics company, where the limitations of using informal integrators are clearly revealed.² This research demonstrates that the effectiveness of the informal integrators is severely circumscribed when it comes to dealing with difficult interdepartmental relationships. Consider:

□ In this organization the boundaries between the production and engineering departments were not well established, and there was intense competition and conflict between these two groups. The informal integrators were unable to achieve effective collaboration, at least in part because their roles were not clearly defined. Therefore, their integrative attempts were often seen as inappropriate infringements on the domains of other departments.

For example, an engineering supervisor, whose own inclinations and interests led him to play a coordinating role between the two departments, was frequently rebuffed by the production personnel because he was seen as intruding into their activities. Without a clearly defined role, his integration efforts were limited to exchanging information across the interface of the two departments.

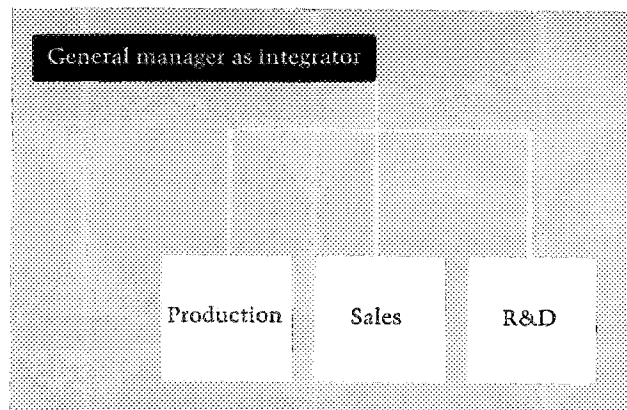
These data indicate that the more intense the problem of interdepartmental collaboration is, the more need there is for the integrative roles to be formally identified so that such activities are seen as legitimate.

The question of whether to establish independent integrative roles or to create a formal

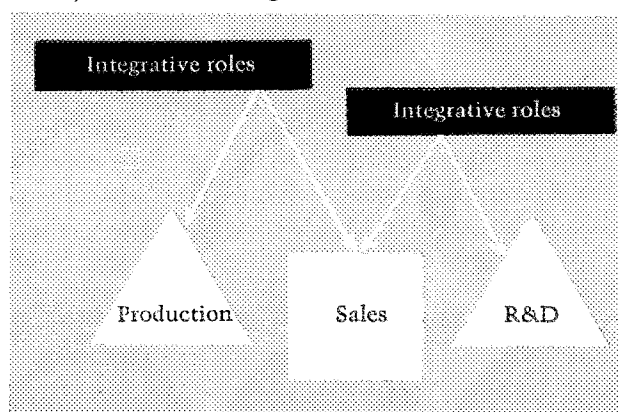
2. Unpublished study conducted by John Seiler and Robert Katz for the Division of Research, Harvard Business School.

Exhibit I. Structural solutions to the organizational integration problem

Stable and homogeneous environment



Semidynamic and heterogeneous environment



industry the company with the best integration record has no formal integrators of any kind; it relies entirely on its regular line organization to do the coordinating. By contrast, a second container company, employing a full-fledged integrating department, has experienced considerable integrating difficulties. This suggests not only that the department is redundant, but that it actually impedes the coordination process.

All of this evidence indicates that the elaborateness of the integrating function should vary both with the complexity of the problems and with the size of the gap that specialization creates between the basic departments. Moreover, management should keep in mind that it is pos-

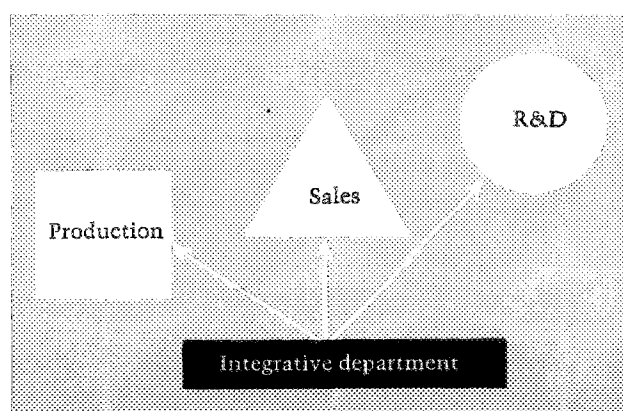
department is illuminated to a considerable extent by our data. Consider:

□ In the plastics industry, which has the fastest rate of technical change of the three industries we studied, the basic departments (production, sales, and research) are the most highly specialized and differentiated. Five of the six plastics companies studied, including the one with the best integration record, have what could be called "full-scale integrating departments," although they are not formally labeled as such. (See *Exhibit I* for suggested structural solutions to the integration problem.)

□ In the consumer foods industry, which has both a medium rate of technical change and a medium degree of difference between basic departments, one of the two companies studied uses a full-scale "integrating department"; the other—with the better integration record—simply utilizes a set of scattered integration roles.

□ The container industry has the most stable technology, and thus only slight differences are perceptible between basic departments. In this

Highly dynamic and heterogeneous environment



sible to get too many integrators into the act as well as too few.

Behavior characteristics

Our research enables us to identify four important characteristics about the behavior of effec-

tive integrators, as well as the organizational practices that contribute to their effectiveness:

1. Integrators need to be seen as contributing to important decisions on the basis of their competence and knowledge, rather than on their positional authority.

2. Integrators must have balanced orientations and behavior patterns.

3. Integrators need to feel they are being rewarded for their total product responsibility, not solely on the basis of their performance as individuals.

4. Integrators must have a capacity for resolving interdepartmental conflicts and disputes.

Since these findings offer some important prescriptions about the behavior of effective integrators, let us examine each of these characteristics more closely.

Decision contribution

One of the major and most frequently expressed dilemmas facing managers in integrating positions is whether they are able to contribute to important decisions. An integrator interviewed in our study expressed this common concern:

"My key frustration is that I do not have the authority over the people I must deal with. I cannot yell at the research guy. I have to try to influence him by being persuasive. My major tool is strictly my personality."

Although this integrator, like many of his colleagues, complains that he does not have formal authority over the other groups with whom he works, our measures of actual influence on decisions in the organizations studied indicate that all integrators, except for those in the less well-integrated container company, have a larger voice in interdepartmental decisions than their peers in functional departments. And their influence is essential in industries requiring highly specialized and well-integrated organizations, where the integrator must often initiate activities for managers in other departments.

Personal competence: There is another important factor related to influence that distinguishes the integrators in effective organizations from those in less effective ones. In the more effective, the integrators are influential because of their knowledge and expertise, while in less effective organizations they are influential only because of the formal authority of their positions.

In the well-integrated organizations, the functional managers described the influence of the integrators (although, again, they did not always call them integrators) in comments such as these:

"He [the integrator] has a powerful job if he can get the people to work for him. A good man in that job has everybody's ear open to him. A good coordinator has to be thoroughly oriented to his market or to his process. Whichever area he is working in, he has to be able to make good value judgments."

"They [the integrators] are the kingpins. They have a good feel for our [research] ability, and they know the needs of the market. They will work back and forth with us and the others."

"They [the integrators] are on the border of research, so we work closely together. They are just a step away from the customer, so when I make a change in a material, I let them know, because they may have a customer who can use it. The good thing about our situation is that they are close enough to sales to know what they are doing and close enough to research to know what we are doing."

These and similar comments indicate that the managers in effectively integrated organizations view the integrators as persons who have knowledge of and expertise in solving organizational problems. This personal competence appears to be the foundation on which their large voice in interdepartmental decisions rests.

Positional power: In the organizations that were having difficulty in achieving integration, the tone of the functional managers' commentaries on the influence of the integrators was quite different:

"We [in research] have to go by what they [the integrators] say. They have the upper hand. And if we can't get their approval, we have to shut up."

"Nobody wants to pull the wool over his [the integrator's] eyes, since he reports to the general manager. That would be disastrous. . . I don't think anybody could be in that role and have many friends. You have to be too aggressive."

"He [the integrator] is supposed to know the field, and he may think our product isn't any good. This is fine if you have confidence in him, but we have had bad experiences with some of them. As the knowledge of chemistry grows, his [the integrator's] knowledge of the market must grow. I guess I would appraise the situa-

tion this way: just because they [the integrators] have had twenty years' experience doesn't mean they have twenty years of knowledge."

Comments like these suggest that the integrators in organizations having integration problems were influential only because of the formal authority given to them by the top management and because of their proximity to top management. Other responses stressed that generally the integrators in these companies were considered less knowledgeable about industry conditions. Moreover, the specialist managers frequently volunteered disparaging remarks about the integrators' abilities and knowledge.

Other factors: In planning for these integrating positions, attention must be given to placing them at levels in the organization where the incumbents will have ready access to the knowledge and information relevant to decisions. In the well-integrated organizations we studied, for example, this level was usually at the middle of the management hierarchy. Since these organizations were in dynamic, rapidly changing industries where knowledge was complex and uncertain, only those middle managers with specific problem experience had been able to master the required knowledge.

If the integrator selected has had prior work experience in two or more of the several functional departments, the specialist managers will regard him as competent because of the knowledge that his experience has provided. While persons with these ideal qualifications may be extremely scarce, it is important to recognize the necessity of finding integrators with broad knowledge to fill these crucial positions. One common failing of the less well-integrated organizations is their tendency to assign young managers lacking sufficient experience in all facets of the business to these positions. Although this may provide a useful learning experience for the young managers, our evidence suggests that it really does not lead to effective integration.

Balanced orientation

The second important characteristic of effective integrators is that their orientations and ways of thinking strike a good balance between the extremes of the members of the specialized departments whose efforts they are integrating. For instance, our study shows that:

□ Research scientists think about long-term projects and issues and about solutions to scientific and technical problems.

□ Production managers and engineers, on the other hand, are concerned with shorter term problems, especially those that relate to an efficient and timely plant operation.

□ Sales personnel are also concerned with shorter term issues, but for them the important problems are those that deal with the market—that is, how to meet sales objectives, what to do about competitors' product changes, what characteristics a new product must have to meet the needs of customers, and so forth.

These differences in ways of thinking are, of course, part of what makes it difficult for these groups to collaborate effectively.

The fact that the effective integrators have balanced orientations means that they share more ways of thinking and more behavior patterns with the functional managers than those managers normally do with each other. In a sense, effective integrators speak the language of each of the specialist groups, and thus they are able to work at resolving interdepartmental conflicts. When integrators do not have balanced orientations, their ability to facilitate joint decision making between functional managers suffers. For example:

□ In several of the organizations studied the integrators did not have a balanced time orientation. Typically, because they were overly concerned with immediate, short-term problems, it was difficult for them to work effectively with the more long-term-oriented scientists. Several comments from the scientists illustrate this difficulty:

"I am no coordinator, but I can see that one of our troubles is that the [integrative] people are so tied up in day-to-day matters they can't look to the future. They are still concerned with 1967 materials when they should be concerned with 1968 markets."

"We get lots of reports from them [the integrators] and we talk to them frequently. The trouble is that all they present to us [in research] are the short-term needs. These aren't the long-range things we are interested in."

"They [the integrators] only find out about problems when they learn that somebody has quit buying our material and is buying somebody else's, and this keeps you on the defense. A lot of our work is catch-up. We would like more future-oriented work from them."

Similarly, there were complaints from production and research personnel when the integrators were so preoccupied with marketing problems that they did not seem to understand technical or production issues:

"Our relations with them [integrators] are good, but not as good as with research. They are not as cost conscious as the laboratory men. They are concerned with the customer."

"He [the integrator] is under a lot of pressure to work with the salesmen on existing products. What he should be, and often tries to act like, is a liaison person, but in reality he is not. He is too concerned with sales problems."

Our research also reveals that effective integrators tend to use an interpersonal style of behavior that falls between the two characteristic behavior orientations of specialized departments. At one extreme, sales personnel are most concerned with maintaining sound personal relationships with their colleagues in other departments. At the other extreme, production managers (and research scientists to a lesser extent) are primarily concerned with getting on with the job, even if this causes the disruption of some established relationships. Our evidence indicates that, to be effective, an integrator needs to think and act in ways which evenly balance the highly social and the highly task-oriented behavior patterns of the units he is attempting to link.

Our research further reveals that entire integrating departments are much more effective when they are intermediate in their degree of structure in relation to the specialized departments they are linking. To analyze the formalization of structure, we examined the degree to which formal rules are utilized, the average span of control, the frequency and specificity of both departmental and individual performance reviews, and the number of levels in the hierarchy.

We found, for example, that most of the formally integrated companies were in an industry where specialized departments had to develop distinctly different organizational practices to perform their respective tasks. Thus, at one extreme, the production units needed highly formalized organizational practices to perform their more routinized tasks. At the other extreme, researchers with problem-solving tasks were more effective in units that had less formalized structures. Between these extremes, the sales personnel operated most effectively with intermediate organizational practices.

When the integrators worked within an intermediate structure, they developed behavior patterns not too unlike those of the different specialists they were linking, and thus they were able to work effectively with all of them.

While our data on the need for intermediate orientations and structures are drawn from a study of integrators attempting to link research, sales, and production units, the same conclusions would seem to hold for integrators linking other functional units.

Performance recognition

The third important characteristic of effective integrators is the basis on which they see themselves being evaluated and rewarded. For example, in organizations where the integrators were highly effective, they reported that the most important basis for their superior's evaluation was the overall performance of the products on which they were working. Where the integrators were less effective, the superior's evaluation was more on the basis of their individual performance.

This indicates that if integrators are to perform effectively in coordinating the many facets of complex decisions, they need to feel they are being evaluated and rewarded for the total results of their efforts. When they feel they are judged only on the basis of their performance as individuals, they may become so concerned with making decisions to please their superiors or to avoid rocking the boat that they will easily overlook what is desirable from the point of view of their total product responsibility.

Conflict resolution

The final characteristic of effective integrators is the mode of behavior they utilize to resolve interdepartmental conflict. It seems inevitable that such conflicts will arise in any complex organization from time to time. So, rather than being concerned with the essentially impossible goal of preventing conflict, we are more interested in finding ways for integrators and their colleagues to handle it. Our analysis identifies three modes of behavior for resolving conflict.

Confrontation technique: The first method, *confrontation*, involves placing all relevant facts before the disputants and then discussing the basis of disagreement until some alternative is found that provides the best solution for the

total organization. Confrontation often involves extended discussion. Consider this typical comment from a manager who utilizes this technique:

“Our problems get thrashed out in our committee, at our level. We work them over until everybody agrees this is the best effort we can make. We may decide this isn’t good enough. Then we may decide to ask for more plant, more people, or something else. We all have to be realistic and take a modification sometimes, and say this is the best we can do.”

Smoothing approach: The second technique for dealing with conflict, *smoothing*, essentially emphasizes the maintenance of friendly relations and avoids conflict as a danger that could disrupt these relations. Managers using this approach are, in effect, indicating anxiety about facing the consequences of their conflicting points of view. Such action, they feel, might not only threaten their continuing friendly relations, but even their jobs. So they smooth over their differences, perhaps by using superficial banter and kidding, and thus sidestep conflict. One manager described this method as follows:

“I said what I thought in the meeting, but it didn’t bother anybody. Perhaps I should have been harsher. I could have said, ‘I won’t do it unless you do it my way.’ If I had said this, they couldn’t have backed off. I guess I didn’t have the guts to push it that far because our relations are wonderful. We are friendly and happy as larks. We kid one another and go about our business. I’ve never run into more cooperative people. I think they think I am cooperative too, but nothing happens.”

Forcing method: The final approach, *forcing*, entails the straightforward use of power in resolving conflict. The disputing parties bring to bear whatever power or influence they have to achieve a resolution favoring their own point of view. This mode of behavior often results in a “win-lose” struggle. Unfortunately, it is often the objectives of the total organization that suffer the greatest loss. One manager described how he and his colleagues sometimes force the decisions they desire:

“We have lots of meetings that consist of only two members of our four-man team. They get together and discuss things because they think the other two members won’t agree. Then,

they try to force their decision on the others. Well, this obviously isn’t acting as a team. It’s our weak spot.”

Our data indicate that there is a close relationship between the effectiveness of integration in an organization and the reliance of its members on confrontation as a way to resolve interdepartmental conflict.

While confrontation showed up as a common mode of resolving conflict in all of the ten organizations we studied, the integrators and functional managers in the six most effectively integrated organizations did significantly more confronting of conflict than their counterparts in the four less well-integrated organizations. Similarly, the managers and integrators in the two organizations that had achieved a medium degree of integration were confronting conflict more often than the managers in the least effectively integrated organizations.

There is one other point worth considering: in the highly integrated organizations, we also found that the functional managers were using more forcing, and/or less smoothing, behavior than their counterparts in the less effective organizations. This suggests that, while confrontation of conflict must be the primary basis for resolving interdepartmental issues, it is also important to have a backup mode of some forcing behavior to ensure that the issue will at least be addressed and discussed, and not avoided.

Personality traits

The foregoing findings offer some significant clues about the behavior of effective integrators, but they leave unanswered one important question: What type of person makes an effective integrator? It is important, as we suggested earlier, that effective integrators have a combination of broad work experience and education. But it is also important that they have certain personality traits.

Underlying motives

To learn about these predispositions, an exploratory study was made of nearly 20 integrators in one company, half of whom were highly effective in the judgment of their superiors and half of whom were less so.³ Specifically, we were interested in measuring their underlying motives and preferred behavioral styles.

3. The data were collected and analyzed in collaboration with Professor George Litwin of the Harvard Business School.

Affiliation need: Looking first at underlying motives, we find that the only significant difference between the highly effective integrators and their less effective colleagues is in the *need for affiliation*. The effective integrators are higher in this need than their less effective associates—that is, they pay more attention to others and to their feelings; they try harder to establish friendly relationships in meetings; and they take on more assignments that offer opportunities for interaction.

Achievement need: There is no statistically significant difference between effective and less effective integrators, or between effective integrators and functional managers, in the *need for achievement* motive. However, there is a tendency for effective integrators to be slightly lower in this motive than less effective integrators. This is worth pointing out, even though the difference is not large, because it seems to run counter to the findings of several managerial studies, which report that managers with a higher need for achievement generally tend to be more successful.⁴

Our exploratory research suggests that to be effective, integrators must have achievement needs that are near the norm of managers in general, but are not especially high. On the one hand, integrators should set high personal goals, do well in competitive situations, have an entrepreneurial view of work, and seek managerial positions of high responsibility. But, on the other hand, they should not be any higher in their need for achievement than the average manager in the organization. In fact, if integrators are too high in this motive, it may reduce their effectiveness in achieving collaboration and resolving conflict, perhaps because they will see interdepartmental conflict as a competitive rather than a collaborative challenge.

Power need: Both effective and less effective integrators are very similar in their *need for power* and are also close to the norm of managers in general. While we cannot distinguish between the two sets of integrators on this dimension, we can at least conclude that effective integrators *should* try to influence others by persuasive arguments or by taking leadership roles in group activities. In addition, they *should* aspire to

managerial positions that allow exercise of power, influence, and control.

Preferred styles

In addition to measuring the integrators' motives, their preferred behavioral styles were investigated, with certain interesting results:

□ Effective integrators prefer to take significantly more initiative and leadership; they are aggressive, confident, persuasive, and verbally fluent. In contrast, less effective integrators are retiring, inhibited, and silent, and they avoid situations that involve tension and decisions.

□ Effective integrators seek status to a greater extent; they are ambitious, active, forceful, effective in communication, and have personal scope and breadth of interests. Less effective integrators are restricted in outlook and interests, and are uneasy and awkward in new or unfamiliar social situations.

□ Effective integrators have significantly more social poise; they are more clever, enthusiastic, imaginative, spontaneous, and talkative. Less effective integrators are more deliberate, moderate, and patient.

□ Effective integrators prefer more flexible ways of acting; they are adventurous, humorous, and assertive. Less effective integrators are more industrious, guarded, methodical, and rigid.

We should stress one point about these personality traits of effective integrators compared with managers in general. In other managerial studies, as indicated earlier, high need for achievement has been associated with success. Furthermore, this drive for achievement has led to the behavioral styles of initiative leadership, capacity for status, and social poise. But while effective integrators prefer these same styles, their underlying drive is only a moderately high achievement need and—most importantly—a high affiliation need. If these motives in turn lead to relatively high initiative, capacity for status, social poise, and flexibility, then the integrators can be effective in meeting the requirements and demands of their jobs.

The reader probably has already recognized the connection between these personality traits and the behavior characteristics described earlier. Since effective integrators are predisposed to take the initiative, it is not surprising that they have high influence in their organizations. Similarly, it is to be expected that these indi-

4. David McClelland, *The Achieving Society* (Princeton, D. Van Nostrand, 1961), Chapters 6 and 7; "Business Drive and National Achievement," HBR July-August 1962, p. 99; and "Achievement Motivation Can Be Developed" (Thinking Ahead), HBR November-December 1965, p. 6.

viduals who prefer to take the initiative, who have social poise, and who are relatively flexible, are effective in helping to resolve conflicts.

This description of the effective integrator's behavior and personality perhaps dispels one widespread management myth—namely, that the word "integrator" is somehow associated with a passive, unassertive role, rather than with the role of an active "leader."

Conclusion

While American industry still needs many types of organizations, as the trend continues for more and more industries to be characterized by rapid rates of technological and market change, more

organizations will be like the R&D-intensive firms described here. These firms will require both high differentiation between specialist managers in functional units and tight integration among these units. Although differentiation and integration are essentially antagonistic, effective integrators can help organizations obtain both and thus contribute to economic success. This article has described the characteristics of effective integrators—how they should be rewarded, and where they should be placed in the organization. Organizations in dynamic industries that want to achieve a competitive advantage will have to give careful attention to the planning of their integrating jobs and to the selection and development of the people who fill them.

'Interpretive' quality of the administrator

This function of the administrator goes far beyond being a likable personality, or applying correct principles of organization, or being skillful in the so-called techniques of human relations. I am convinced that the difficulties which so many executives have with supervisory relationships cannot be remedied by cultivation of the so-called human relations skills. These difficulties spring rather from one's conception of his function or role as a boss, his notion about the origin and nature of his authority over others, the assumptions he makes about people and their worth, and his view of what he and his people are trying to accomplish together. . . .

He interprets or crystallizes the values and objectives for his group. He sets the climate within which these values either *do* or *do not* become working realities. He must define the goals and purposes of his group in larger and more meaningful perspective. He integrates the smaller, selfish goals of individuals into larger, more social and spiritual objectives for the group. He provides the vision without which the people perish. Conflicts are resolved by relating the immediate to the long-range and more enduring values. In fact, we might say this *integrative function* is the core of the administrator's contribution.

The good ones have the mental equipment to understand the business and set sound long-term objectives, but the best ones have in addition the philosophical and character values which help them to relate the over-all goals of the enterprise to eternal values. This is precisely the point at which deep-seated religious convictions can serve an integrative function since they represent the most long-range of all possible goals. Most really great leaders in all fields of human endeavor have been peculiarly sensitive to their historic role in human destiny. Their responsibility and loyalty are to some distant vision which gives calm perspective to the hot issues of the day.

O.A. Ohmann,
"Skyhooks" (With Special
Implications for Monday Through
Friday), HBR May-June 1955, p. 38.

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