1.

Small Group Discussions

THIS TECHNIQUE may be defined as face-to-face mutual interchange of ideas and opinions between members of a relatively small group (usually five to twenty). It is more than the random, desultory, or unstructured conversation which occurs whenever small groups congregate; it has method and structure, but it can still be informal and democratic in every sense. The occurrence of a small group discussion implies a common concern regarding a desire for information, a problem to be solved, or a decision to be made.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It permits maximum interaction and interstimulation between members.
2. It can place responsibility on all members to participate and to be prepared with facts and ideas.

3. It can teach members to think as a group and develop a sense of equality.
4. It sets up situations from which leadership may emerge.
5. By it all members may broaden their viewpoints, gain understanding, and crystallize their thinking.
6. By it members are encouraged to listen carefully, to reason, to reflect, to participate and to contribute.
7. It permits leadership responsibility to be shared by all who contribute.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To identify and/or explore mutual concerns, issues, or problems.
2. To increase awareness, appreciation, and understanding of mutual concerns, issues, or problems.
3. To generate interest in ideas, issues, and problems.
4. To supply and diffuse information and knowledge.
5. To motivate a group to action.
6. To involve members in the problem-solving process.
7. To get members to crystallize their own thinking.
8. To form group opinion or concensus.
9. To assist members to express their ideas in a group.
10. To create awareness of issues and problems.
11. To encourage and stimulate members to learn more about problems and ideas.
12. To develop a core group of people for leadership purposes.
13. To develop an informal and permissive group atmosphere.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the group is small enough for everyone to be involved in discussion.
2. When the members have enough interest in the prob-

lem and want to know more about it or solve it through overt participation.

3. When the group members are willing to listen to all sides of a problem and work for agreement, understanding, and/or solution.

4. When the group standards are such that members of the group are willing to exchange ideas and points of view and to explore deeply into a problem.

5. When there is a willingness and skill on the part of the members to communicate with each other.

6. When the level of human relation skills of members is adequate to facilitate good discussion.

7. When there is enough difference or heterogeneity of opinion and understanding to make discussion productive.

8. When the group atmosphere is such that permissiveness and good feeling prevails.

9. When the participation is to be distributed throughout the group and not leader-centered.

10. When there is need for some members to strengthen their identity with the group.

11. When members have some understanding of functional unit act roles.
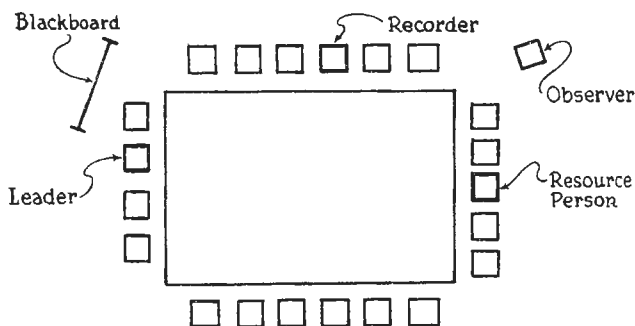
A suggested setup for a small group discussion.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have the group objective clearly in mind and the meeting, or segment of a meeting, in which the technique is to be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish the objective.
3. Make sure the group has a problem, idea, concern, or issue that is worthy of discussion.
4. Select or provide for the selection of a chairman who can think rapidly and clearly, who can ask pertinent questions and not take sides, who can stimulate thinking, and who can summarize well.
5. Select a meeting place appropriate to the size of the group.
6. Arrange the group in a circle or square so each person can see every other person.
7. Provide table space if convenient for the entire group.
8. Keep it informal by having all members, including the leader, stay seated during the discussion.
9. Have proper equipment, such as blackboard, chalk, and paper, available.
10. Appoint a discussion recorder.
11. Give everyone a chance to talk but agree there will be no "speech-making."
12. Encourage ease, informality, good humor, and friendly disagreement.
13. Keep the discussion directed and on the track — but let the group lay its own track.

Give everybody a chance to talk, but don't tolerate "speech-making."

14. Take time at appropriate intervals, at least every 10 or 15 minutes, to summarize and draw loose ends together.
15. Keep the group conscious of accomplishment and of the objective by frequent statements of progress by the chairman and/or recorder.
16. Discuss with fairness and objectivity, and avoid fault-finding, bias, and cynicism.

The Group Leader Should:

1. Meet with other members of the leadership team and discuss the functions and operations of the team.
2. Assist the group to define clearly their problem or objective.
3. Aid the group in establishing the necessary structure to accomplish their objective.
4. Encourage the expression of ideas by all members of the group.
5. Refer questions back to the group.
6. See that facts are made available when needed.
7. Ask questions and make summaries without letting personal views intrude.
8. See that all aspects of the question or problem under discussion are explored.
9. Help the group to distinguish facts and sound argument from prejudice and opinions.
10. Call for frequent statements of progress from the discussion recorder.
11. Establish and maintain an informal, cooperative, and permissive group climate.
12. Help the recorder by drawing summary statements from the group "for the record."
13. Keep the discussion on the subject and keep it progressing toward the objective established by the group.
14. Make suggestions instead of giving directions.
15. Stimulate and maintain a spontaneous exchange of ideas and of thinking.

When necessary bring in humor to enliven the atmosphere — but this kind isn't recommended.

16. When necessary bring in appropriate humor to enliven the atmosphere.
17. Translate poorly worded statements into clear statements that communicate.

Good Members Will:

1. Prepare for the discussion in advance of the meeting if possible.
2. Contribute to the discussion and assume any role the group needs to have filled.
3. Help the group define its discussion goal or purpose.
4. Encourage participation and help keep the atmosphere permissive.
5. Supply or seek facts and opinions when needed by the group.
6. Put personally centered roles aside and admit error if the situation demands.
7. Try to understand what other members say and also what they mean.
8. Encourage the group and consciously try to build a feeling of "we-ness."
9. Assume leadership responsibility when necessary.
10. Accept the conclusions of the group if arrived at by democratic processes.
11. Confine remarks to short periods of time. Two to three minutes is the maximum time for a contribution.
12. Express views and ideas without waiting to be prodded by the leader or other members.

A Good Recorder Will:

1. Meet with the leader and other members of the discussion leadership team in advance and discuss the function of the team and particularly the recorder in the group.
2. Record the sense of the discussion, not every word that is spoken.
3. Note the issues and questions discussed, the decisions reached, the proportion of the group in agreement, and significant minority opinions. Ask for clarification of ideas, decisions, etc., for the record.
4. Ask the leader to poll the group if in doubt whether an idea or statement should be recorded. Make sure agreements, disagreements, or decisions actually exist or are made.
5. Remind the group when they get off the subject. This assists the leader in keeping discussion "on the beam."
6. Report on discussion progress during a discussion period when called upon by the leader or group members. Make a summary of main points, agreements, disagreements, and decisions at the close of the meeting.
7. Work with the discussion leader, the observer, and the resource personnel as a member of a team.
8. Edit and prepare a copy of the discussion notes for the record as soon as possible.

The Observer Will:

1. Serve on the leadership team with the special assignment of viewing the group in action and reporting his findings.
2. Meet with the other members of the discussion leadership team and discuss the function and operation of each member of the team.

3. Observe what is happening during the discussion and report this to the group.
4. Examine objectively the group's method of procedure and operation — how the group works rather than what it does.
5. Help the group function more effectively by supplying insights into the operations of the group process.
6. Keep removed from participation in the discussion.
7. Describe for the group the process being used as it works.
8. Make an oral report to the group, describing and summarizing how the group is operating (how the dynamics of the group are being utilized). The decision on how and when this should be done should be reached with the leader.
9. Stimulate the group to evaluate its patterns of operation and to work toward more efficient operation.

The Consultant Will:

1. Contribute relevant facts, points of view, and experiences to the group when and as they are needed.
2. State facts and views as contributions to the discussion, rather than as final thought on the ideas under discussion.
3. As a general rule contribute when requested to do so by the leader or other members of the group.
4. Volunteer when confident the contribution will help move the group toward its objective.
5. Help the group at the close of a discussion to supplement the results and record of their discussion.
6. Be prepared at the close of a discussion to suggest further steps for the group to take in their discussions or in applying their conclusions in follow-up action.

7. Work closely with the discussion leader, observe, and record as a member of the leadership team.
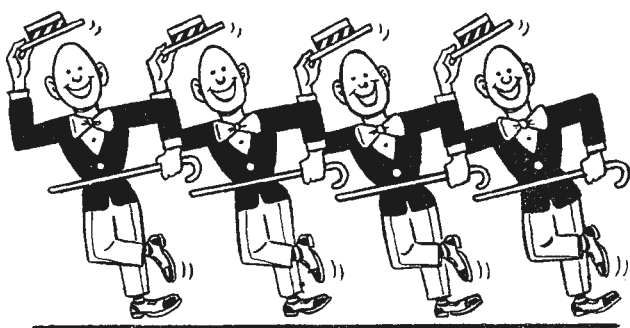
Work closely with the discussion leader, observer, and recorder as a member of the team.

CAUTIONS

1. There must be a problem to be solved or interrelationships to be found.
2. The results or accomplishments of discussion are related directly to the preparation of the group members with facts, general information, and ideas about the problem being discussed.
3. A discussion group is no place to keep ideas a secret; each member must be willing to share information.
4. Good discussion is based on and requires objective thinking.
5. Discussion that follows the steps of problem solving and decision making is more effective than unorganized and random discussion.
6. Listening is vital to discussion; each member must

hear every other member and do some thinking about what he hears.

7. Good discussion depends upon individual contributions.

8. The designated leader must be qualified and have the necessary experience and training to lead a group discussion successfully.

9. The domination of discussion by one or more persons will limit the effectiveness and use of this technique.

2.

The "Huddle" Method
(Discussion 66 or Phillips 66)

THIS DEVICE for breaking down a large group into small units to facilitate discussion was described and popularized by J. Donald Phillips, of Michigan State University. The alternative names are derived from the idea of six persons discussing a subject for six minutes. Essentially it consists of a division of any group into small groups of four to six members for discussion purposes.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It allows for the creation of an informal atmosphere no matter how large the group.
2. It permits participation of all those present.
3. It stimulates pooling of ideas within the small group and by means of the reporting to the large group facilitates over-all communication and participation.
4. It encourages a division of labor and responsibility.

5. It secures maximum total individual identification with the subject-problem at hand.
6. It is a rapid method of obtaining consensus.
7. It encourages the development of individual confidence in the democratic process.
8. It makes it very difficult for discussion and recommendations to be controlled by authoritarian leaders or by small vociferous minorities.
9. It helps to free individuals of their inhibitions against participation by identifying their ideas with a small group which then may become the protagonist.
10. The method often provides welcome relief from fatigue, boredom and monotony as large meetings seem to bog down.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To obtain information *from* the group, as to their interests, needs, problems, desires, and suggestions to be used in the planning of programs, activities, evaluation procedures, and policies.
2. To arouse audience interest at the outset of a program. Group interest, concern, and identification can be rapidly built up by this method and a mental set for listening and learning may be established. The results of such discussions may or may not be communicated to the speakers.
3. To increase involvement subsequent to various types of presentation. This may take the form of requests for clarification or further information, for attempts to apply general principles to specific situations or to other ways of internalizing the subject matter. It often leads to useful suggestions for action or final solutions.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When there is a desire to broaden the base of communication and participation.

2. When it is desired to tap the total resources of the group membership in relation to the subject-problem.
3. When there is a need to analyze a complicated problem which can be logically broken into component parts and segments assigned to various huddle groups.
4. When it seems desirable to broaden responsibility by securing participation of every member. This can be expanded in scope by the assignment of separate segments to various groups and the assignment of specific roles to various individuals within each group.
5. When it seems important to create an informal, permissive, democratic atmosphere.
6. When the rapid pooling of ideas from a large group is needed.
7. When there is a desire to obtain consensus, or to determine if consensus exists.
8. When it is desirable to create individual identity with the group or its problem.
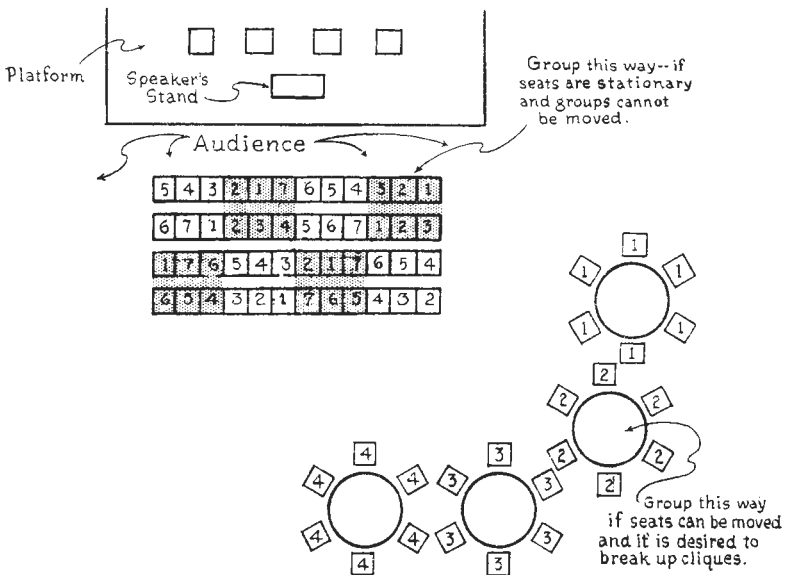
If you plan to use the "huddle," try to utilize your meeting space something like this.
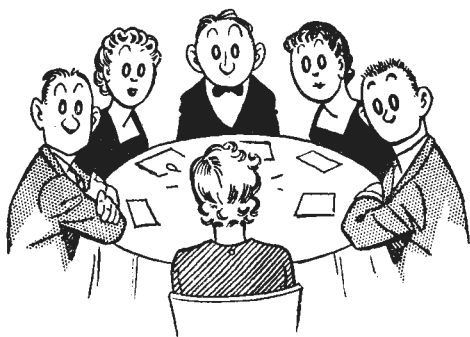
It is difficult to remain anonymous in a group of six.

9. When it seems worthwhile to try to develop individual security and confidence in problem solving and the democratic process. Such confidence gained in the huddle situation may extend to his participation in the total group situation. It is difficult to remain anonymous in a group of six.

10. When it is desired that the democratic process be bolstered in relation to possible authoritarian control.

11. When it seems advisable to stimulate motivation by a change of techniques.

12. When it appears that individual needs and interests are not being well expressed or met in the larger group situation.

13. When group standards and social controls are inadequate in the larger group and it is difficult to maintain thought and discussion at a suitable level. The huddle is a "forcing" situation for thought and discussion.

14. When one wishes to take full advantage of the heterogeneity of the group. Those with varying levels of experience, knowledge or background are much more willing to speak up in the small group; to express minority ideas.

15. When communication and human relations skills are obviously not well distributed within the larger group.

16. When subject matter is of such nature as to make it more easily discussed in a small group.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objectives of the meeting and the segment of the meeting in which the technique will be appropriate.
2. Consider any alternate means which might produce equally good results.
3. Thoroughly think through the purposes for which the method is to be used.
4. Have the questions to be asked of the huddle groups prepared in advance; written on cards if need be.

The Group Leader Should . . .

1. Explain the procedure to the entire group — why it is being used, the mechanics involved, the time to be allowed, the expectations from the method.
2. Make the division into the huddle groups. Often this can be done by prior seating arrangements, but at times a "counting off" or other method may be necessary. This is an efficient way to break up cliques.
3. Give such general instructions as: Get acquainted with each other. Select a chairman to encourage interaction within the huddle. Select a recorder-spokesman to keep a record and to report back to the general meeting. Allow about two minutes for carrying out these procedures.
4. Ask the chairman and the spokesman to identify themselves to make sure this instruction has been carried out.
5. Preferably hand out written copies of the questions to be discussed.
6. Repeat the time allowance and suggest that some comment be obtained from each member. Ask for and answer any questions which have arisen.
7. Move among the groups so as to be available for clari-

fication and to determine progress being made. If it seems desirable the time may be extended, but a one minute warning should be given before calling time.

8. If the number of huddles, or lack of time, precludes a complete report back, ask the groups to take two minutes to rank their ideas in order of importance and pertinence.

9. Collect the reports from each group (written or verbal), classify them and prepare a summary. The procedure at this point develops infinite variety as a result of size of meeting, types of questions discussed, use to be made of them, etc.

10. Make an attempt to see that all significant points of view are brought before the general body in one form or another.

CAUTIONS

1. This method has little value in disseminating information except as it taps the knowledge and experience of the individual group members.

2. The method tends to be overused by those who have experienced success with it. Like any other technique, it is useful only for certain purposes and under certain conditions.

3. The mechanical problems involved are formidable; rigorous prior planning is called for to minimize them.

4. Huddle groups cannot produce above the level of knowledge and experience possessed by the individuals. It is well to be realistic regarding results expected.

5. Time limitation and reporting back are essential features of the technique, but too much emphasis on them may hamper discussion.

6. Failure to make adequate use of the material obtained may create frustration among those who worked hard to produce it.

3.

The "Buzz Group" Method

AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD of breaking a large group into small segments to facilitate discussion is called the "buzz group" technique. Although the term is sometimes used interchangeably with "huddles" or "discussion 66" it is reserved in this instance for *two-person* discussion groups. Since many of the characteristics and basic elements of this method are identical with those of the "huddle," only the exceptions and the relatively unique aspects will be noted.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It is an extremely informal device.
2. It virtually guarantees total participation.
3. It has even greater potential for total individual involvement than the huddle method.

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4. It is usually practicable for groups of fifty or less.
5. It is extremely easy to set up.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To provide maximum opportunity for individual participation in an informal setting.
2. To consider many separate aspects of a subject-problem.
3. To provide limited support to individuals for the purpose of facilitating their participation in the total group process.
4. To give opportunity for the widest possible expression of the heterogeneous characteristics of the members with respect to background, knowledge, or point of view.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD

1. A simple "count off" procedure is usually all that is needed to set up the groups. No movement of people is ordinarily involved.
2. There need be no chairman, but agree on who is to report the results of the discussion.
3. Instructions and procedure can be greatly simplified as compared to the huddle technique.

CAUTIONS

1. Because a large number of persons may be talking at once a high noise level may develop. It may prove necessary to warn against this or even to alter the physical setting.
2. Group standards and the levels of social controls are usually not as high in this informal setting.
3. There is always the possibility that one of the two members of the buzz group will dominate the other

and completely submerge any contribution which he might make.

4. There may be wide variations in the time required to cover a subject between the various buzz groups. The time allowance can usually be somewhat shorter than when six persons must air their views.

This way in small groups   This way in large groups
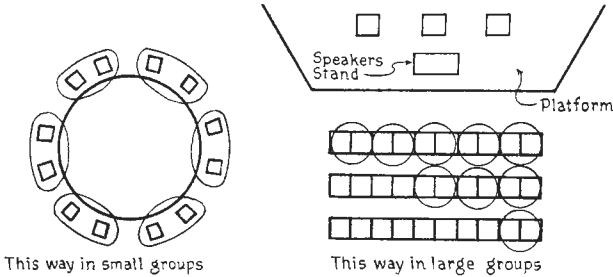
The "buzz group" method may be used by both large and small groups.

4.

The Symposium

A GROUP OF TALKS, speeches, or lectures presented by several individuals on the various phases of a single subject-problem is called a symposium. A moderator often controls time and subject matter. Properly used, the talks should be limited to not more than twenty minutes and the total time of the symposium should not exceed one hour.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. This is a relatively formal method of presentation and is comparatively easy to organize.
2. It allows for a systematic and relatively complete expression of ideas in an uninterrupted fashion.
3. By it, complex subjects and problems may be divided readily into logical component parts.

4. Structuring of the presentation may be obtained readily by agreement among the participants prior to the symposium.
5. There should be a minimum of duplication and repetition and time allotments should lead to precise, logical presentations.
6. Excellent control of the subject matter, as well as of the length of the symposium, may be attained by mutual agreements among the participants made prior to the symposium.
7. It must depend upon empathy with the speaker or subject matter, or upon competitive points of view, to develop audience interest and involvement. Hence, it has limited usefulness in this respect.
8. There is a minimum of interaction between the participants.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To present basic information — facts or points of view.
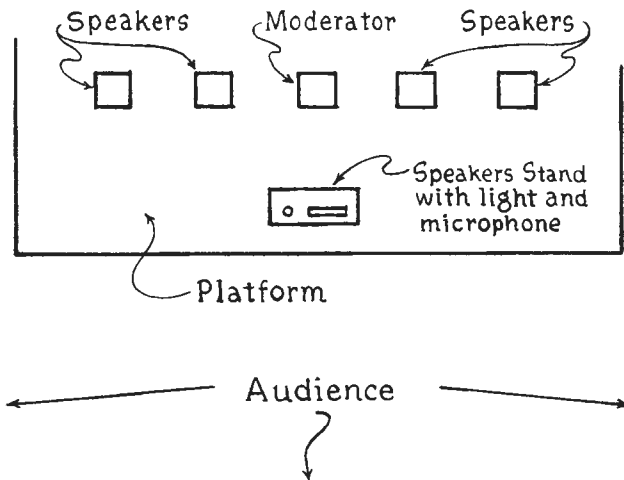
A suggested platform arrangement for the symposium.

2. To present a relatively complete and systematic expression of ideas without interruption.
3. To break down a relatively complex subject-problem on the basis of:
   a. its logical component parts
   b. different points of view or special interests
   c. alternative proposed solutions and their consequences.
4. When there needs to be a relatively high degree of control over logical breakdown of the subject-problem, the subject matter discussed and the timing.
5. To bring together and focus different points of view within a logical, more generalized framework or context.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When group objectives, or objective of the specific meeting or meeting segment, can be accurately communicated to the speakers.
2. When the group standards, social control, and identity are such that the more formal means of presentation — the symposium technique — is acceptable to the group.
3. When formality in presentation is not a major hindrance to group listening and learning.
4. When one is relatively sure that the level of communication used by the speakers will be understandable to the group.
5. When group members have the ability and skills to take related ideas presented in different speech segments, by different people, and integrate them into a meaningful whole.
6. When the presentation of different points of view represented in a heterogeneous group is thought to be necessary.
7. When interaction among participants is not thought to be necessary.

8. When it is believed that the group is not mature enough to handle differences in opinions and/or conflict situations which may arise in open discussion of the subject-problem among group members.
9. When the size of the group is too large to allow for total group involvement and there is a desire to present different points of view.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objectives of the meeting and the particular segment of the meeting in which this technique might be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish this objective.
3. Decide in general terms how the subject-problem should be analyzed.

The Moderator or Chairman Should:

1. Meet with the symposium speakers well before the meeting and secure agreement on the logical breakdown of the subject-problem, outline the general areas to be covered by each symposium member, agree on sequence of appearance, and decide on time allowances.
2. Meet with the symposium speakers immediately before the meeting to review above points.
3. At the meeting give the general setting of the subject-problem to be discussed and point out its significance. Describe the logical breakdown of the problem into the component parts to be discussed by each symposium speaker. Set an atmosphere for attentive listening and thinking by the total group.
4. Briefly introduce symposium speakers.
5. Inform the group of the procedure to be followed, including the role of the symposium speakers and the role of the group during and after the formal symposium.

6. Introduce each speaker more in detail as his turn comes on the symposium and establish the qualification of the speakers to speak on the subject assigned. Make needed transitional statements to "carry" the audience logically from one speaker to the next.
7. Perform additional functions depending on what procedure has been set up to follow the formal symposium, including summarization or any of these alternative follow-up techniques:
    a. Give each speaker time for a short statement of clarification and/or rebuttal.
    b. Allow each speaker to ask one or two questions of any of the other speakers.
    c. Convert the formal symposium group into a panel for additional discussion.
    d. Involve the audience in direct questioning from the floor or in a forum discussion.

Symposium Speakers Should:

1. Attend the planning meetings indicated above.
2. Prepare concise, well-organized presentations that can be given within the time allotted.
3. Present prepared material clearly and concisely in the allotted time.

CAUTIONS

1. Use special care in choosing the subject-problem and breaking the topic down into its meaningful and manageable component parts.
2. Careful selection is important in naming the moderator and the symposium speakers. Unbiased members who can approach their assignment logically and make their presentation without over-emotional involvement are important. The moderator is just that — not a speech maker, rebuttalist, or interpreter of symposium speeches.

3. In preplanning, limit the time of the speeches and set a method for enforcing the time limitation. Symposiums tend to run on and on.

4. While logical, precise presentations are the key to good symposiums, the interest of the larger group must be stimulated and maintained if the symposium is to fulfill its objective.

5.

The Panel Discussion

A DISCUSSION before an audience by a selected group of persons (usually three to six) under a moderator is called a panel discussion. It might be described as an informal committee discussion overheard by an audience. The form of discussion is conversational — no speeches by members or by the moderator should be permitted.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. The atmosphere can be informal or formal.
2. Limited control of the scope and direction of discussion can be maintained by prior discussion among the panelists, defining the discussion framework to the audience just before introduction of the panel, or by the activities of the moderator.
3. There can be no complete control by the moderator since the panel members can ignore questions and directions.

4. It can expose and focus on different points of view, different facts, and different attitudes on a subject-problem.
5. It allows for maximum interaction and interstimulation between panel members.
6. It often increases the interest of an audience in the subject because of the active and dramatic presentation of the subject matter, differences of opinion, competition, etc.
7. It is a useful method of defining points of agreement, areas of disagreement, and of approaching consensus.
8. It divides responsibility by requiring some pre-meeting thought and fact gathering from individual panel members.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To create an informal atmosphere for communication with the group.
2. To identify the problem or issues to be considered and to explore them.
3. To give the audience an understanding of the component parts of the problem.
4. To get different facts and points of view brought into a discussion framework.
5. To weigh the advantages and disadvantages of a course or courses of action.

There can be no complete control by the moderator since the panel members can ignore questions and directions.

6. To supply facts and opinions about problems and issues.
7. To create audience interest in problems and issues.
8. To motivate the larger group to constructive thought or action.
9. To determine areas of agreement, discuss areas of disagreement and to strive for consensus.
10. To force a group to face a controversial issue and to stimulate them to join in the problem-solving process.
11. To aid a group confronted with a very controversial issue which no one wants to defend or attack — the panel spreads responsibility.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the group is too large for all to be involved.
2. When the group has an interest in the subject and wants to know more about it, but general overt participation is not a primary objective.
3. When the level of group standards is such that the members are willing to listen to both sides of a problem and work for agreement or consensus.
4. When the level of group standards is such that the members are willing to exchange ideas and points of view with other members and to probe deeply into a problem.
5. When the members impanelled are willing and able to communicate with each other and the remainder of the group.
6. When social controls are strong enough that the panel will abide by the rules laid down as to area of discussion, methods of procedure, and the role of the moderator and panel members.
7. When the level of human relations and communication skills of panel members is adequate to facilitate good discussion.

8. When the roles of the moderator, panel members and other group members are within the limits of the general role definitions by the group.

9. When the panel members and/or the moderator have the ability to play unit act roles expected to be needed in the panel discussion.

10. When it is judged there is, or can be created, enough heterogeneity of interests and opinion to make the discussion worthwhile.

11. When heterogeneity in the group makes it advisable to present different points of view or facts in relation to a subject-problem.

12. When conditions exist that make it difficult or impossible for the group as a whole to discuss a controversial issue rationally. There may be members in the group who can bring the discussion to a more rational level when placed on a panel.
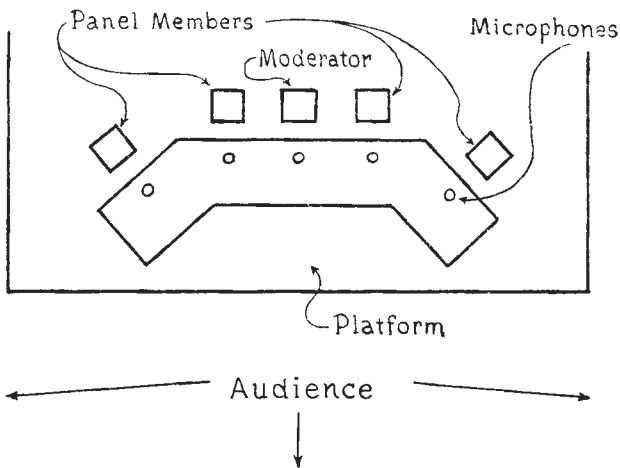
A suggested setup for a panel discussion.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objectives of the meeting and the particular segment of the meeting in which this technique might be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish this objective.
3. Make sure the group selects a timely and significant topic that lends itself to panel discussion.
4. Select panel members with care. If possible, people should be chosen who are interested in the problem or issue, have facts and/or opinions, represent different views, and have had different experiences. They should be cooperative and willing to express themselves before a group.
5. Select a chairman or moderator who has the respect of the panel, who will not take sides, who can think rapidly and clearly, ask pertinent, reflective questions, and can summarize well.
6. Select panel members and the moderator far enough in advance to give them an opportunity for study and thought before the presentation.
7. Seat panel members around a table in such a way that they can look at and talk with one another and yet easily see and be seen by the audience.

The Chairman Should:

1. Plan the meeting and make all necessary arrangements.
2. Open the meeting and welcome the group.
3. Introduce the moderator.
4. Close the meeting.
5. The chairman may double as moderator.

The Moderator Should:

1. Meet with the panel members before the meeting and coordinate the prospective program — agree upon the scope of the discussion; divide the general problem into discussible areas; assign rough time limits for each phase of the proposed discussion; assign special, individual responsibilities where necessary; and prepare some form of group outline or discussion plan. Often two meetings will be required.
2. Make sure that the seating arrangement is the best. Do not seat members with similar views together. Seat lively speakers at the ends and quiet ones in the middle so that they may be drawn in.
3. Introduce panel members to the group.
4. Introduce the subject-problem to the general group, secure the interest of the group, and prepare the way for the discussion to follow. Explain the procedure to be followed in the meeting, indicating whether and in what way the full group will have an opportunity to participate.
5. Open the discussion with a question or statement that will immediately focus attention on the central point of interest.

Seat lively speakers at the ends and quiet ones in the middle . . . .

6. Draw the entire panel into informal, conversational discussion.
7. Enter the discussion to (1) ask clarifying questions, (2) interpret uncertain meanings, (3) bring discussion back on the track, (4) summarize, (5) close off areas of discussion and move ahead, (6) ask "next step" questions, and (7) interrupt speechmakers. The moderator does not express his opinion.
8. Ask reflective thought questions — not yes or no questions.
9. Work toward basic understanding but also probe for points of disagreement for additional discussion.
10. Let participation be as free and spontaneous as possible. Address questions to the panel as a whole or to a part of it, not to individual members, except for clarification of statements already made or to bring special facts or points of view into the discussion.
11. Present a final summary.
12. Turn the meeting back to the chairman if a chairman is used, or close the meeting himself.

The Panel Member Should:

1. Prepare material and organize thoughts on the discussion topic.
2. Set an example of careful, reflective, and rational thinking.
3. Listen thoughtfully to the comments of the other panel members and strive to get their viewpoints and what lies back of them.
4. Express views and ideas vigorously, clearly, concisely.
5. Watch for the right moment to present his viewpoint.
6. Change his views if logic or data prove his position in error.
7. Speak only on the topic under consideration.

8. Confine remarks to short periods of time. Two or three minutes is considered to be the *maximum* time for each contribution.
9. Keep the atmosphere of the discussion informal and conversational.
10. Contribute to the clarity and unity of the discussion by restating others' views more clearly, reducing over-statements, pointing out unanimity when it exists, recognizing the presence or absence of substantiation for any point, and shifting the direction of discussion in case of an impasse.
11. Help the leader draw in other members of the panel.

CAUTIONS

1. The success of this technique depends in a large measure on the moderator and the panel members — they must be carefully selected.
2. The discussion must not be monopolized by one or two members.
3. Pre-meeting planning is an absolute necessity for success but—
4. There should be no preliminary "dry-run" discussion of the subject. If this is done the public discussion often becomes an anticlimax — stale and stagey. Prepare a simple, short outline of the points to cover.
5. Allow enough time — panels shorter than 30 minutes seldom succeed — but conclude while general group interest is still high.

6.

The Interrogator Panel

THIS METHOD is an interrogation-discussion interchange between a small group of knowledgeable individuals (the panel) and one or more other persons (the interrogators), often under the direction of a moderator. This variation on the usual panel technique is a most effective method of making use of experts and resource personnel. Ordinarily the panel consists of three to five members and a single interrogator is used to propound questions to them. The interchange is at the conversational level, but the answers are expected to be as precise as possible. It is a highly effective method for obtaining specific information on a specific topic. It is obviously more of an informational or educational technique than one designed to lead directly to action.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. Many questions can be covered in a short period.
2. The interaction between the interrogator and the panel should lead to the full development of a subject.
3. Limited control of the direction and scope of the discussion may be maintained. Preliminary agreement as to the general areas to be covered may involve the interrogator, the panel, a committee, or an entire group. Further control can be obtained by the use of a moderator.
4. Control can never be complete, since all participants must have freedom to act.
5. A high interest level is usually obtained as a result of the implied competitive atmosphere created.
6. Specificity of questions and answers is probably higher under this technique than any other.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To make use of the superior knowledge or experience of certain individuals.
2. To explore many facets of a complex problem.
3. To stimulate interest in the details of a current problem.
4. To obtain detailed facts from the experts.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the group is too large to permit general questioning of a panel.
2. When a group is interested enough to explore a subject in greater depth than their own resources permit.
3. When the group is amenable to hearing a variety of viewpoints.
4. When consultants can be obtained who will receive general acceptance by the group.

5. When competent interrogators, moderators, or panel members are available within the group and are acceptable to the group.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
### The Group Should:

1. Determine what objectives may be accomplished by the method and at what point it should be used.
2. In terms of the other known techniques, decide if this one has the most potential for achieving the intended goal or goals.
3. Delineate the general area in which answers will be sought.
4. Choose the interrogator(s) with care. They should be able to ask questions in such a way that panel members will have no doubt that they are straight information-seeking remarks with no intent to build logical traps or clinch debators' points. The interrogators must have the ability to adequately and accurately phrase questions which will bring forth the information that they are seeking.
5. Choose panel members who can think rapidly and say precisely what they think. The good resource people are not readily flustered by rapid interchanges of ideas. Panel members on the same resource unit should not vary widely in ability to communicate or in level of knowledge. In such situations the superior individual will either "under perform" in deference to

Choose panel members who . . . can command the language to say precisely what they think.

his counterpart or go at his regular pace and cause embarrassment by invidious comparisons being made. The inferior individual, in protecting his ego, may engage in diverting tactics which makes the attainment of the interrogators' goals difficult. Thus impact can be lost.

6. Choose a moderator who understands the technique and who is willing to accept the role.
7. Select all panel personnel far enough in advance of the meeting to give them a chance to determine what answers are needed to help the group toward its goals and to get these answers.
8. Create an adequate physical setting. Panel should sit so that they can see the audience, the interrogator, and the moderator. A commonly used arrangement is to place tables so that they form a wedge pointing toward the rear of the platform. The moderator sits
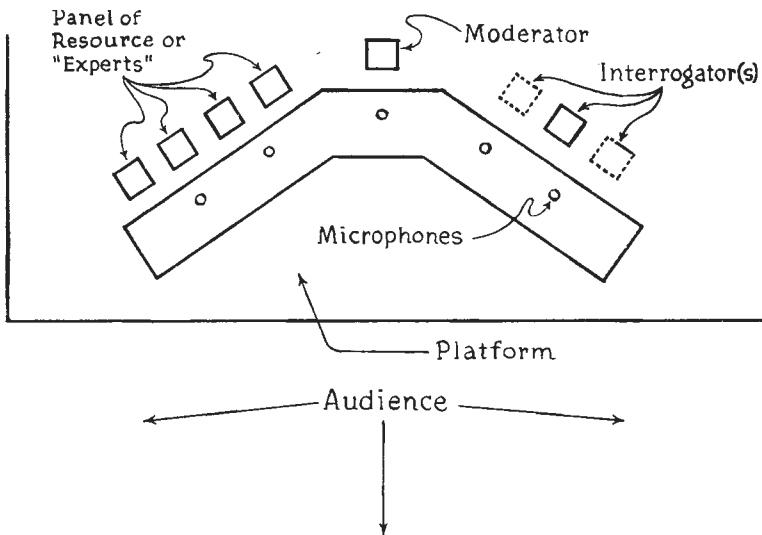
The interrogator panel may be seated in the above manner.

at the point of the wedge and has the interrogator(s) on one wing and the panel members on the other. (Figure 7).

9. Select a chairman to plan the meeting (with committee if needed) and make all the necessary mechanical arrangements such as seeing that tables are ordered, lighting is adequate, etc. He will also call meeting to order, introduce the general topic and the moderator, and close the meeting.

The Moderator Should:

1. Meet with the interrogators(s) and the chairman, and in some cases panel members, to determine how the line of questioning will be established. One alternative is to accept the definition of the problem by the chairman, moderator, and the interrogator(s). Another alternative is to use some group technique such as buzz, huddle, or more commonly, a request for individual submission of questions. The latter may be done at the same meeting or it may be done at a preceding meeting. If it is done at the same meeting the panel has little time to organize the questions, but the group is already involved and the members are mentally set to hear answers.

2. Introduce the interrogator(s) and panel members to the group as a whole.

3. Introduce the subject matter in enough detail to establish the position into which the interrogator panel fits in relation to the total goal orientation of the group. A good introduction is like a bathing suit — it covers the essentials but is brief enough to cause interest.

4. Explain the procedure to be followed so that the panel and the group as a whole do not get lost in the mechanics of the technique.

5. Open the discussion by posing a general question which starts the discussion and the subsequent questioning of the panel.

6. Decide who shall have precedence if two interrogators are attempting to ask questions at once, taking into consideration the pertinence of the questions and the relative dominance of the questioners.
7. Intervene when needed to: (a) seek further clarification of a point under discussion, (b) press for further interpretation if he thinks it is necessary, (c) rule out a question because of its irrelevance to the issue, (d) stop the response of the panel members if the response is obviously irrelevant, (e) ask for repetition of a question or answer if the interrogator and panel members appear to be "talking by" each other, (f) close off areas of discussion to move ahead, (g) interrupt the interrogator if he makes speeches or otherwise misinterprets his role, (h) interrupt a panel member if the answer appears redundant or too lengthy for the question which sought it.
8. Close off the questioning, present a final summary, and thank the participants for their cooperation.
9. Turn the meeting back to chairman.

A Good Interrogator Should:

1. Organize questions which will bring out the points and clarifications desired from the panel.

A good introduction is like a bathing suit — enough to cover the essentials but brief enough so as not to cause interest to wane.
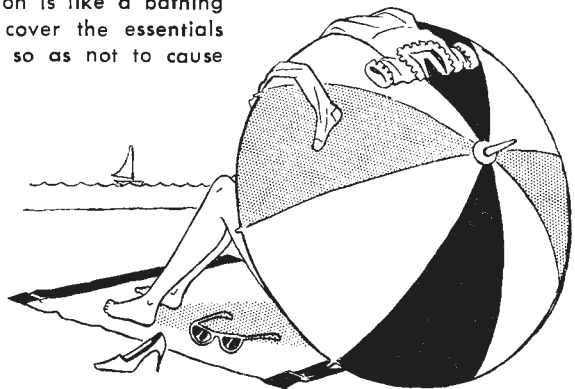
2. Conduct himself in such a manner that the panel members will feel free to give frank and straightforward answers to questions.
3. Exercise the usual good manners of conventional discussion.
4. Listen carefully to answers of panel members in order to avoid duplication and waste of time.
5. Express questions in clear, concise and friendly manner without the use of techniques which will distract the group as a whole or the panel members.
6. Represent the interests of the group in seeking answers to as many questions as possible.
7. Remember that in this technique he has the primary responsibility while the technique is in process for the direction and effectiveness of the outcome, i.e. the learning experiences of the group. The moderator can give guidance only by interrupting and redirecting. The panel members have the responsibility only to answer the questions posed them.
8. Observe the panel process and make certain that the key questions which were discussed in the group prior to its access to the panel get asked.

The Panel Members (Experts) Should:

1. Learn the area of questioning which will be covered and also whether the group wants facts, opinions, or both.
2. Clearly indicate to the group when they are dealing with facts and when with opinions.
3. Be prepared to do the job expected or decline the invitation to appear on the program.
4. Give answers in precise, clear terms and as briefly as possible.
5. Carefully stick to giving answers to the questions asked and not use the situation as an opportunity to expound a personal "pet project."

CAUTIONS

1. For maximum value, use the technique in conjunction with other techniques which involve the total group in devising questions or lines of questioning to be used.
2. The technique, while it provides for details on a problem and gets answers to specific questions of the group, is quite time consuming.
3. Use panel members (resource people) who have a high level of human relations skills and an ability to shift their patterns of thought rapidly in line with the nature of the questioning.
4. The successful use of this method depends heavily upon the ability of the interrogator(s). The moderator has limited control of direction, but the interrogator, by his questions, gives major direction to the discussion.
5. Premeeting planning is a necessity for success. It is desirable for the moderator to meet with both the interrogator and the panel. With the interrogator he makes certain that there is an understanding of the area in which questions will be asked and the kinds of specific questions to which the group wants answers. With the panel members he explains the areas in which questions will be asked and how much time is available. He urges them to be brief and definite.
6. A "dry-run" of the discussion is never desirable.
7. The interchange will be stimulated if the interrogator is given a few minutes to visit with the panel prior to the meeting, and if the moderator goes over the ground rules informally with them before going on the platform.

7.

The Committee Hearing

THE QUESTIONING of an individual by several persons constitutes the group technique known as the committee hearing. In its formal style, as practiced by various committees of Congress, it has been made familiar to nearly everyone through the medium of television. It can be used much less formally as a group method by setting up a committee of members to obtain information from a consultant for the benefit of the entire group. Such a committee forms a bridge between the group and the expert.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It is essentially a formal method.
2. It permits rather flexible control of the situation by the committee.
3. Interest is usually high because of the verbal interplay

between questioners and expert. This can be further
increased to the point of deep psychological involve-
ment by means of establishing a competitive atmos-
phere.
4. As compared to the interview, which it resembles, the
    committee hearing makes much greater use of varia-
    tions in knowledge, skills, and abilities of the ques-
    tioners.
5. Good questioning is often obtained because of the mu-
    tual support and sharing of responsibility afforded the
    committee members.
6. It encourages cooperative thinking and questioning.
7. Each questioner has time to consider his questions
    while another has the floor.

An atmosphere of "closeness" . . . can
be created between the group
and the speaker.
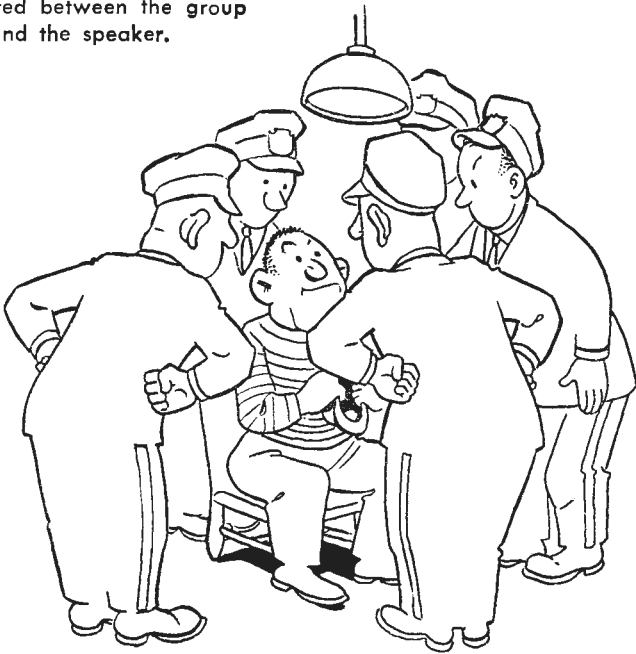
THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To stimulate interest or obtain information, facts, opinions, or policy pronouncements in a total group setting and in context meaningful to the group. Especially when there is a desire to probe deeply in certain areas, this technique can be used for many purposes varying from informal gathering of experience information to questioning "hostile witnesses" regarding administrative policy or stands on political issues.

2. To create a psychological bridge between the speaker or resource person and the group — the questioning committee from the group can often perform this function. An atmosphere of "closeness" or group representation can be created between the group and the questioners.

3. To help make better use of a speaker or consultant who:
   a. Has difficulty expressing himself before a group in a lecture setting.
   b. Tends to be verbose and rambling — has difficulty organizing his presentation.
   c. Has difficulty speaking to the level of the group.
   d. Tends to be evasive, develops his points too rapidly for the group, or is superficial on certain critical points of information or opinion.
   e. Has difficulty judging the interest and concern areas of the group.
   f. Is so clever with words or argumentative techniques that he would be difficult for any one member of the group to handle in an interview situation.

4. To question in a logical organized fashion. A questioning committee will probably come closer to meeting this criterion than the entire group would.

5. To conserve time in the meeting.

6. To conserve time for preparation — the questioning

committee can meet together and then meet with the consultant to organize the presentation.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the objectives of the group or of the particular meeting are difficult to explain to an outside speaker or resource person.
2. When the more conventional methods of the speaker, a lecturer, or general discussion do not appear to be the best means.
3. When there is need for the role of a psychological bridge between the speaker or resource person and the group.
4. When group standards and social control in the group are not at a level so the group as a whole will obtain the desired information from the speaker or resource person.
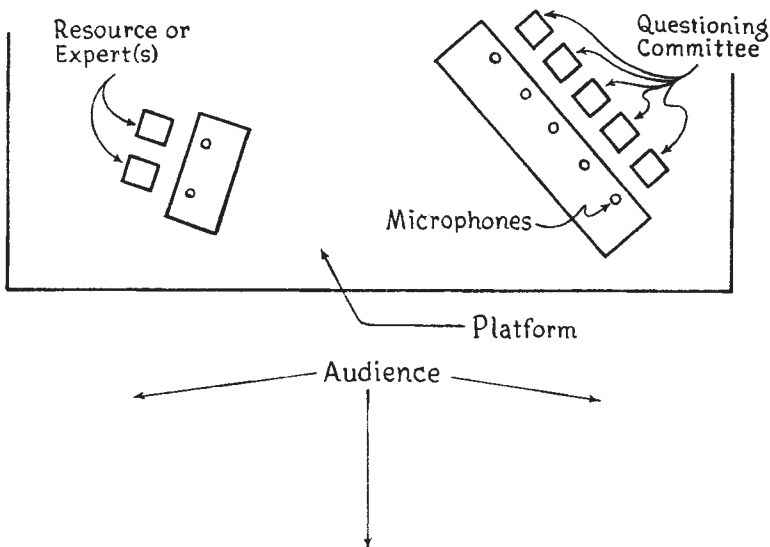
Seating for a committee hearing may be arranged in this manner.

5. When an individual member of the group or the group as a whole does not have the human relations and communications skills to obtain the desired information from a speaker or resource person, it is possible that a small group of members (the questioning committee) would possess the needed skills.

6. When it is desirable to establish a permissive atmosphere and communication pattern with the speaker or resource person that will lead to greater participation by group members in subsequent questioning and discussion.

7. When the size of the group is too large for effective group questioning of the speaker or resource person, but where there is a desire to involve directly several people in a direct participation role (questioning committee).

8. When it is believed that each individual, or the questioning committee as a group, have greater skills than does the group as a whole at playing unit act roles that will lead to more effective use of the speaker or resource person.

9. When there is some degree of heterogeneity of interests or points of view in the group and there is a desire to represent several of them in the questioning.

10. When group standards are such that all group members will not assume the responsibility for thinking through a line of questioning to be used with the speaker or resource person. This responsibility can be given to the questioning committee.

11. When the individual group members feel insecure in the position of the role of questioning an expert. There may be certain group members that will feel secure in this role and can be used as the questioning committee. In some cases individual members may feel insecure and not perform the questioning function if the group as a whole is to ask questions, but.

if given the assignment by the group will attempt to perform the questioning function.

12. When it may be desirable to avoid feelings of aggression and projection against the expert. To keep these at a minimum it may be decided to choose a questioning committee that will probably be rational in their questioning.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objective(s) of the meeting and the particular segment of the meeting in which this technique might be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish this objective.
3. Secure a qualified subject-problem expert. Such a person will usually come from outside the group but may be a member of the group.
4. Secure a questioning committee — capable as secure individuals in human relations and communication skills and subject matter. Usually they will be members of the group. However, in some cases it may be well to have one or more of the questioning committee be people from outside the group if they have specific questioning abilities or subject or authority competence needed by the group.
5. The questioning committee should meet and think through the important aspects of the problem, the framework for questioning, the important areas for questioning, the level of questioning, the procedure, and timing. The questioning committee may wish to involve the entire group in suggesting significant areas for questioning.
6. The expert and the questioning committee should usually meet in advance of the meeting and decide the general framework for questioning, the major

areas of questioning, the procedure to be followed, and timing. This should enable the expert to refresh his memory, secure additional information, and organize his thinking. It may open up new avenues of questioning for the questioning committee.

7. Definite assignments should be made on who is to: introduce the expert and the committee, give the background on the area to be discussed, set the framework and procedure for listening, and define the role of the remainder of the group during and following the hearing.

8. In some cases, the expert may be allowed to make a brief formal statement at the beginning of the hearing.

9. The qualifications of the expert should be established in the introduction or early in the committee hearing.

10. The questioning committee should always keep in mind, and in fact may want to assign specific tasks to committee members, the unit act roles that need to be performed if the hearing is going to be most meaningful to the group — orienter, clarifier, integrator, energizer, harmonizer, summarizer, etc.

11. There may be need to assign someone the specific role of final summarizer. It may be a member of the questioning committee, the chairman, or a group member given the specific assignment of determining significant facts, opinions, agreements, or differences of opinions and reporting them to the group for discussion or acceptance.

12. The questioning committee should strive to establish themselves with the entire group as their representatives in the committee hearing situation.

13. Attention should be given to the physical setting of the meeting. The arrangement should be such that everyone can see and hear. Different psychological effects can be obtained by the relative placing of the

expert, the questioning committee, and the remainder of the group. For instance, it is possible to create the impression of committee dominance by placing the committee on a raised platform which allows its members to look down to the person being questioned. Place the remainder of the group in a semicircle so that they can see both the expert and the questioning committee. For a more permissive atmosphere place the expert among the questioning committee members with the remainder of the group distributed in an informal arrangement around them.

CAUTIONS

1. Select the expert with care. A reluctant or insecure expert may contribute little to the meeting.
2. The questioning committee should carefully plan their questioning. Unorganized questioning will probably not produce much significant information. This does not mean that the committee should not be flexible in following up significant leads.
3. Beware of the dominant position that the questioning committee may have over the individual expert. Depending on the objective of using the committee hearing technique the degree to which this potential dominance is used should be kept in mind.
4. The questioning committee should always remember that they are representing the group as a whole. Thus questioning should be in line with the groups' interests and concerns and at a level and at the speed of idea development understandable to the group.

8.

The Dialogue

A DISCUSSION carried on in front of a group by two knowledgeable people capable of thoughtful communicative discourse on a specific subject is called a dialogue. It is less formal than a lecture or a panel discussion and has many unique dynamics of its own.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It can be very informal and conversational.
2. It allows direct and easy communication of information and points of view by the dialogue members, usually experts.
3. It allows for mutual support and sharing of responsibility between two people.
4. It allows for interpersonal stimulation.
5. It aids unskilled speakers in presenting their ideas.

6. It usually creates great interest among other members of the group.
7. It is simple in form and easy to plan and carry out.
8. It allows for clarification, logic, validation, and consistency as the discussion develops; and permits expression of two points of view.
9. It allows for control of the framework of the discussion but also permits flexibility as the discussion progresses — cues from group reaction may be "picked up" by the participants.
10. Responsibility can be given to at least two group members for thought and fact gathering before a meeting.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To present facts, opinions, or points of view in an informal, conversational manner.
2. To create interest in a subject.
3. To focus attention on an issue or problem.
4. To explore in detail different points of view or obtain agreement on two or more points of view.
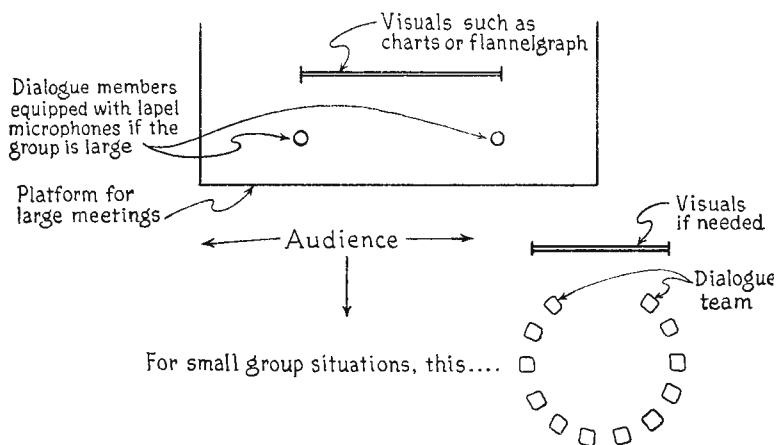
The dialogue method may be used before both large and small groups.

5. To create a desire and motivation for reflective think-ing.

6. To rapidly set a framework for thought and discussion and give basic facts preparatory to general group dis-cussion — a dialogue can often remove a controversial issue from the emotional group discussion setting and thus enable the group to approach the subject-problem on a more rational basis.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When group standards, identity, and social controls are such that there will be group attention to the dialogue and identity with the participants.

2. When knowledgeable people have the skills to play unit act roles to a sufficient degree to produce a good discussion. In some situations certain people have status and capabilities that lead the group to better thinking and group productivity.

3. When the appearance of group members or outsiders in the role of dialogue discussants is acceptable to the group.

4. When knowledgeable people are available who are roughly comparable in knowledge of the subject-problem, in their ability to communicate in a reflective, stimulating manner, and who are able to work together as a team.

5. When groups have a low level of participation it is often chosen to stimulate thought, create a discussion atmosphere, and lead to participation.

6. When there is a group atmosphere favorable to accept-ance of ideas or stimulation from persons isolated from a total group discussion.

7. When working with a smaller group than might be a desirable size for a symposium or panel, but also use-ful for very large groups.

8. When knowledgeable people do not have the degree of security or necessary skills to give a lecture or lead a discussion.

9. When the group identifies well with the problem and/or members of the dialogue team.

10. When it seems desirable to motivate able members in order to facilitate a higher level of interest, thought, and participation on their part — there is usually a high degree of interstimulation between the dialogue team members.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Select a timely and significant topic with which at least two group members (or outside resource people) are familiar.

2. Select dialogue team members. They should be able to work as a team, share leadership, guide the conversation, integrate, summarize, and provide transitions and timing.

3. Decide on the person — perhaps the chairman of the meeting — to introduce the dialogue, to take responsibility for receiving questions after the dialogue, and to lead the discussion.

The Participants Should:

1. Arrange a meeting (or meetings, if needed) before the presentation at which an agreement should be reached on:

   a. The framework for discussion and the general area to be covered with a tentative outline;

   b. How the subject will be introduced and how the framework for discussion set;

   c. Tentative timing by major points;

   d. Responsibilities for summarizing and integrating and transitions from point to point.

2. Arrange the physical setting so that all group members can see, hear, and feel a part of the dialogue situation — try to create an air of "eavesdropping."
3. Fulfill the designated roles objectively and without over-emotional involvement.
4. Return the meeting to the chairman for clarifying questions and summarization.

CAUTIONS

1. The topic should be one in which the group is interested — not only the dialogue participants.
2. Keep the discussion at a level that can be understood by the group — experts may discuss at a level too far above the group.
3. Do not develop the discussion too rapidly. The dialogue participants know more about the subject and have been over it in some detail in their planning meeting — the group members have not.
4. Avoid making "speeches" and reading written material.
5. Share the responsibility; if not, the dialogue may end up as an interview or a series of lengthy speeches.
6. Although the major interaction is between the dialogue participants, they should not get so enamored with each other and their ideas that they forget they must communicate to other group members.

Dialogue participants should not get so enamored with each other that they forget. . . other group members.
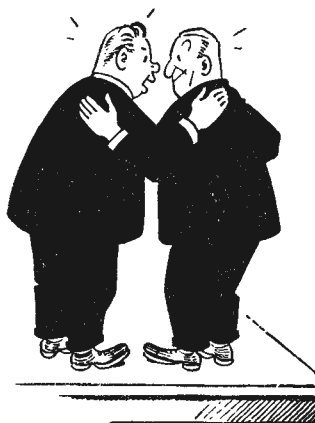
9.

The Interview

THE QUESTIONING of an expert on a given subject by an interviewer, who represents the group, is called an interview. The expert is usually, but not necessarily, one from outside the group. The interviewer (questioner) is usually a member of the group. Everyone is familiar with the "interview" as it is heard or seen on radio and television. It has a great potential for use in the formal groups under discussion also.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It is less formal than a lecture or a speech, more formal than a dialogue.
2. There is usually mutual support and sharing of responsibility between the expert and interviewer.

3. The interviewer becomes a bridge between the group and the expert.
4. It allows for flexible control by the interviewer, since he sets the level of discussion, the speed with which areas are developed, and the direction of development. It is more difficult for the expert to evade points of interest or concern to the group if the interviewer continues to question in those areas.
5. Verbal interaction usually stimulates the interest of group members. It is possible to set up a competitive situation between the expert and the group figure which can lead to group stimulation and deeper psychological involvement.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To stimulate interest or obtain information, facts, opinions, or policy pronouncements, in a context meaningful to the group.
2. To develop one line of thought in a consistent manner. Usually one questioner can better accomplish this goal than general group questioning.
3. To create a psychological bridge between the speaker or resource person and the group — a questioner from the group can often perform this function. An atmosphere of "closeness" can be created between the group and the speaker.
4. To help make better use of a speaker or resource person who feels ill at ease alone before a group, who tends to be evasive on certain critical points of information or opinion, or has difficulty judging the interest and concern areas of the group.
5. To save time in the meeting structuring.
6. To save group time in preparations — an individual from the group can meet with the speaker or resource person to organize the presentation.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the objectives of the group or of the particular meeting are difficult to explain to an outside speaker or resource person.
2. When the more conventional methods do not appear to be the best means — as when group standards and social control in the group are not at such a level that the group will obtain the desired information from a lecture.
3. When there is need for the role of a psychological bridge between the speaker or resource person and the group.
4. When the group members as a whole do not have the human relations or communication skills to get the desired information from the speaker or resource person.
5. When the size of the group is too large for effective group questioning of a resource person or speaker.
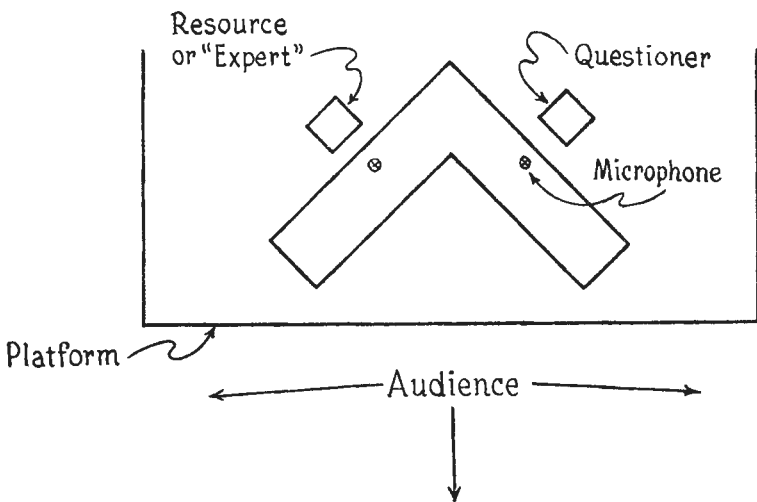
A simple arrangement may be used in staging an interview.

6. When an individual group member is relatively secure and has skills apt to lead to more effective use of a speaker or resource person than do other group members.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objective of the meeting and the particular segment of the meeting in which this technique might be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish this objective.
3. Secure an expert (usually from outside the group, but such a person may be a member of the group) on the subject-problem of concern.
4. Secure a capable questioner (usually from within the group, but he may be from outside the group).
5. Decide before the meeting time who is going to introduce the expert, the interviewer, and the interview technique and set the scene for the interview and plans for total group involvement following the interview. These functions can be performed by the chairman, the questioner, or some other group member.
6. Attention should be given to the physical setting of the meeting. Make sure all group members can see and hear. Create an air of eavesdropping if possible.

A Good Interviewer Should:

1. Consider the level of questioning, the important aspects of the problem, the framework for discussion, the important areas to be discussed, the procedure, and the timing.
2. Meet with the consultant and decide on the general framework for questioning, the major areas of questioning, the procedure to be followed, and the timing.

3. Keep in mind the unit act roles needed to make the interview meaningful to the group — orienter, clarifier, integrator, summarizer, etc.
4. Strive to establish himself as a representative of the group; to perceive his role as a connector between the expert and the group.

CAUTIONS

1. Keep the interview flexible and conversational.
2. Questions should be reflective — those with a yes or no answer quickly kill interest.
3. Keep questions at the level of the group's ability to understand and develop ideas at a suitable pace.
4. Any speaker may feel that certain questions are inappropriate, or "too hot to handle." Even though the purpose of the interview is to obtain detailed or difficult information, the consultant should be allowed the privilege of refusing to answer.
5. In any interview there must always be a compromise between deep probing on a few points and more superficial coverage of broader interests. It is possible to err in either direction.

10.

The Lecture

EVERYONE is familiar with the group situation in which a qualified speaker delivers a lecture, or a speech, to an audience. It is probably the most commonly used group technique — and is also probably the most over-used. This does not imply that it is inherently a poor technique, but that it is often used when another would serve the purpose better. The fact that the lecture is an easy method to arrange should not sway groups to its use if a more desirable alternative exists.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It is an extremely formal technique; the lecture permits only one-way communication.
2. It allows for complete and detailed presentations without the distraction of interruptions.

3. It is a very rapid method of conveying information to a group.
4. Control can be rigid, since it is entirely in the hands of the speaker and chairman.
5. It is an abstract form of group interaction, and hence calls for a high degree of competence on the part of the speaker and a high level of audience cooperation.
6. Group members and group leadership can exert little control over content and approach. Irresponsible speakers may state half truths, distort facts, or make highly emotional appeals.
7. It is difficult to measure the effect of a speech on the group in any objective way.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To present information in a formal and direct manner.
2. To supply expert information, with continuity.
3. To identify a problem, or a general problem area.
4. To explore certain limited facets of a problem.
5. To explore one or several solutions to a problem.
6. To stimulate the group to additional reading and/or discussion.
7. To inspire the group.
8. To divert or entertain a group by use of a very skilled or very experienced speaker.
9. To help the group share the experiences of another person vicariously.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When group standards, identity, and social controls are such that group member attention and interest will be maintained in a one-way communication situation.

A speech is a group situation in which a qualified speaker delivers a prepared discourse.

2. When the group has resource people at its disposal, who have information of importance and who have the skill and desire to prepare a speech to impart such information.
3. When the group members have the abilities to deal with the more abstract one-way verbal communication.
4. When overt verbal participation is not considered essential to group member listening and learning.
5. When the more passive "listener" role is acceptable to group members.
6. When the group members wish to share vicariously in the experiences of another person.
7. When there exists a high degree of group identity with the problem and/or person making the presentation.
8. When the group is so large as to make overt total group participation difficult to attain.
9. When there is an atmosphere in which the group will accept ideas or stimulation from "outsiders."
10. When there is not time in the meeting structuring to allow for entire group or subgroup participation.
11. When there is limited group time for preparation — the chairman and speaker can organize the presentation.

## HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objective(s) of the meeting and the particular segment of the meeting in which this technique might be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish this objective. (Remembering that the speech is one of the more over-used techniques.)
3. Inform the potential speaker of the subject it wishes presented and obtain his consent to speak on that subject.

4. Provide a situation in which group members can be physically comfortable and such seating arrangements that all members can both clearly see and hear the speaker.
5. Determine with the speaker the need for amplifying equipment, projector, and other aids.

A Good Chairman Should:

1. Decide, in consultation with group members, on the topic or problem to be presented.
2. Make sure the speaker chosen is qualified.
3. Contact the speaker as far in advance of the meeting as is possible (or appoint a committee to do so).
4. Inform the potential speaker of the topic upon which he will be expected to speak, the length of time he has, and in a general way what the group hopes to get from listening to him.
5. Inform the speaker prior to the meeting night of the size of the audience expected.
6. Inform the speaker on how his speech will fit into the over-all activities of the group.
7. See that all necessary arrangements are made for the meeting.
8. Call the meeting to order and set the general framework for the speaker.
9. Introduce the speaker to the audience as concisely as possible; give only enough background information

Determine the speaker's preferences on amplifying equipment.
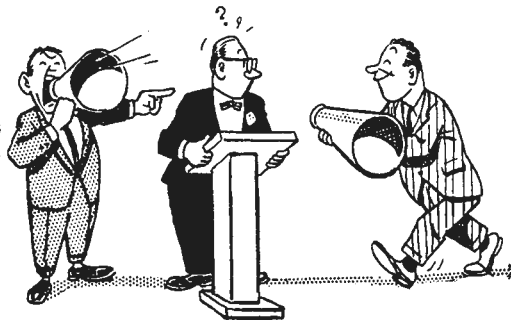
to indicate his qualifications to speak on the topic, no more. Personal puffery and "pedigree reading" usually embarrasses the speaker and bores the group.

10. Thank the speaker for his contribution to the assembled members and proceed with the next part of the meeting or adjourn it if the speech is the entire content of the meeting.

A Good Speaker Will:

1. Accept a speaking engagement only if qualified and willing to prepare an organized speech.
2. Organize the lecture to fit the needs of the group as he knows it from communication with group representatives.
3. Respect the wishes of the chairman and group by keeping within allotted time.

Good Group Members Should:

1. Prepare themselves so that they may obtain as much as possible from the speaker. This may involve reading up on the subject, discussing the subject with other group members, or individual thought on the subject.
2. Come to the meeting with an open mind and willingness to listen to the points made by the speaker.
3. Listen attentively.
4. Think during and after the speech and attempt to integrate any new factual or logical ideas presented with existing ideas.
5. Extend all common courtesies to the speaker.

CAUTIONS

1. Do not over-use this method.
2. The lecture is inferior to the symposium for bringing out divergent points of view upon a subject.
3. It is inferior to the huddle or buzz groups in moving a group toward consensus or action.

4. It is inferior to the panel for bringing about a resolution of differences of opinion among a group.

5. It is inferior to an interrogator panel in getting answers to specific questions a group may want to have answered.

6. It is inferior to the interview in bringing the most interesting (to the group) unique experiences of a traveler or other person to a group. This is particularly true if some technique such as huddle or buzz is used to get interview format set up.

7. It is inferior to role playing in getting group members to see the point of view of others in a controversial situation.

8. A major defect of the speech or lecture is that it is "the easiest way out" for the chairman or others who have formal responsibility for group meetings. It is deceptively easy, for while it may be relatively easy to line up a speaker, the freedom he has and will exercise may mean that he may divert the group so that they will have difficulty getting back on the track of reaching their own goals. In many cases the speech may be interesting or informative but not really related to the specified goals of the group.

9. The technique demands a high level of ability on the part of the speakers and the audience in dealing with abstractions.

10. Unless a group definitely wishes to learn, it will respond poorly to being lectured.

TECHNIQUE

11.

Brainstorming

BRAINSTORMING is a type of small group interaction designed to encourage the free introduction of ideas on an unrestricted basis and without any limitations as to feasibility. Brainstorming makes it possible for a group to consider alternative solutions to problems unhampered by organizational, institutional, or financial restrictions, or by limitations of skills or abilities. All ideas are accepted without challenge, except as they may conflict with any ground rules previously laid down.

Brainstorming is often relatively unrestricted, but it is possible to limit it to a single problem, or to solutions for a single problem. Sometimes a brainstorming session on a broad problem area may be followed by a session on some more restricted aspect of the problem.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It is completely informal.
2. It permits discussion of a problem without consideration of any of the usual restrictions or inhibitions.
3. It gives the group an opportunity to consider many alternatives, not just those which fall within their perceived range of abilities.
4. It provides maximum opportunity for interstimulation and creativity among members.
5. Because of the easy exchange of ideas and opinions inherent in the method it often has value in the building of group morale and esprit de corps.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To allow for maximum creativity and interstimulation.
2. To make a clean break from traditional objectives, means, and activities and to explore new possibilities.
3. To make possible a look at all courses of action.
4. To make certain that no aspects of a problem have been overlooked.

Brainstorming provides maximum opportunity for interstimulation and creativity among group members.

5. To set an atmosphere of thought and communication that allows for the consideration of major changes in existing group policies.
6. To secure, through the release from restrictions, new and dynamic ideas, some of which may be very useful.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the group is composed of relatively mature individuals and when group members know each other well enough to express themselves freely.
2. When the atmosphere can be created in which complete freedom of expression is acceptable.
3. When the specific role expectation and status patterns in the group can be minimized so that the creation of ideas rather than who suggests the ideas becomes the important thing.
4. When individual group members have the degree of flexibility to create new ideas outside the usual patterns of expectations, and can let other people create ideas without challenging them on the basis of resources, tradition, logic, etc.
5. When the group is small enough or when the physical situation will allow the group to break up into smaller units. No more than 10–15 people make a suitable sized brainstorming group.
6. When there is adequate time for a rather deliberate, relaxed approach and definitive action-oriented results are not immediately needed.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Determine that the problem under consideration has alternative aspects or solutions.
2. Be aware of the specific area in which they are to think and the nature of answers which are to come forth —

objectives, alternative means, activities, promotion ideas, etc.

3. Decide how much time they have to discuss the problem.
4. Establish an informal physical setting to help relieve any inhibitions.

A Good Chairman Should:

1. Set up the technique with the group by spelling out the area of thought with which the group will cope.
2. Make sure some person has the responsibility of making a record of the ideas produced.
3. Help set up and enforce the rules of the brainstorming session, which should cover:
   a. The point that ideas are to be expressed without any concern for possible limitations to be placed on the implementation of the idea.
   b. The point that ideas are not to be challenged on any basis other than that they are unrelated to the subject under discussion. They may be expanded and elaborated but not subjected to restrictive discussion.
4. Set the time limit of the discussion.
5. Assign priorities when two or more people wish to speak at the same time, and attempt to draw out those who are not participating.
6. Strive to develop the atmosphere and frame of reference for discussion by encouraging divergent ideas.

. . . makes sure some person has the responsibility of making a record of the ideas produced.

7. Take the lead in closing off the "pure brainstorming session" and move the group to a consideration of the more significant ideas obtained in the light of limitations which actually exist.

Group Members Should:

1. Drop the usual restrictions placed on idea creation.
2. Abide by the group decisions on time of discussion, topic of discussion, and rules about challenging the ideas of others.
3. Avoid any tendency to deprecate in any way the contributions of others.

CAUTIONS

1. Brainstorming is useful to get out divergence of ideas and to bring out creativity, but it slows down the process of narrowing the alternative choices.
2. It is effective when the group is relatively homogeneous.
3. Can be used most effectively when both members and the group are relatively mature and have the ability to be creative.
4. Some group members may be unable to "throw off" usual restrictions and have difficulty projecting themselves into the discussion.
5. Some group members may attempt to use the session as a situation in which to attempt to gain status by exploiting the ridiculous or humorous aspects of the subject under discussion.

12.

Role Playing

THE DRAMATIZATION of a problem or situation in the general area of human relations is called role playing. The acting out of various roles is one of the oldest forms of human communication, but the structured and contrived use of this device as a group technique introduces many new elements. Role playing is one of the most effective means known by which to communicate with and motivate a group. At the same time it is often one of the most difficult and hazardous techniques to apply.

Usually two or more persons act out a brief human relations "scene" from a hypothetical situation, performing their roles as they think a real situation would develop. An immediate and highly pertinent set of data are thus developed for the performers, observers, and total group to consider. The role players, usually from the group, may become deeply psychologically involved in their roles and this

involvement is commonly transferred to the group by the vigor of the dramatization. The method should be used with great respect by most formal groups because of the difficulty in containing, or limiting this degree of personal psychological involvement.

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS METHOD

1. It creates informality.
2. It is flexible, permissive, and permits experimentation.
3. It establishes a "common experience" which can be used as a basis for discussion.
4. It encourages and provides psychological involvement of the individual and the group, thus enhancing participation.
5. It releases inhibitions, thereby creating great freedom of expression as the player presents his feelings, attitudes, and beliefs in the guise of another person.
6. It is relatively easy to plan, but calls for great skill in the actual application.

THIS METHOD MIGHT BE CHOSEN . . .

1. To provide immediate, empirical, human relations data common to the entire group which may be used for analysis and discussion.
2. To probe more deeply into a subject-problem than more conventional methods permit.
3. To secure maximum psychological involvement in and identity with a problem in order to increase participation. It usually sets a good emotional climate.
4. To focus dramatically upon a single, concrete facet of any problem.
5. To facilitate communication by "showing" rather than by "telling." A good salesman might feel much more secure in demonstrating his methods than in describing them.
6. To depersonalize a problem situation within a group.

When presented as a drama, removed from the personalities involved, there will be greater freedom for discussion.

7. To free discussion from being "leader centered" (dominated) and to slant it toward being "situation centered" (task oriented).

8. To test postulated suggestions or solutions as a hypothetical case which can be made to closely resemble a real life situation.

9. To carry a group logically through a series of stages in a complex human relations problem.

10. To create a group atmosphere of experimentation and potential creativity.

11. To enable members or cliques within a group to "work off steam," thus relieving tensions and cross currents.

12. To teach understanding and skill outside of real life situations by "reality type practice." Assuming there is a "correct" way to handle human relations problems, these can be acted out in contrast to less desirable methods. Some suggestions are: how to contact new members, how to ask for donations, how to disagree without antagonizing, and how to cope with the talkative member tactfully.
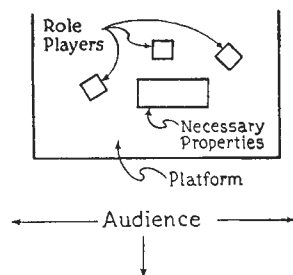
This way for large groups.
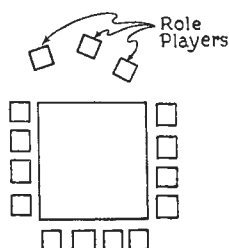
This way for small groups.

Role playing is done with a minimum of properties.

13. To dramatize alternative solutions to a problem. "Should teen-age discipline be authoritarian or relatively permissive?" After contrasting scenes have been played on such a topic, the group may discuss the pros and cons of each approach with a chance of reaching some kind of consensus as to which approach is best under the stated conditions.

14. To provide opportunity for individuals to develop insights as they place themselves in another's shoes. Discrimination might be graphically dramatized by the appearance of a group member in a role in which he is discriminated against. Reversing the real life roles of parent and teen-ager has been successfully used for this purpose.

15. To provide opportunity for individuals to "act out" their personal problems. Those who cannot recognize or verbalize their problems may gain great understanding as they present them in the more dramatic form. The member who recognizes that he often "rubs people the wrong way" may learn ways of coping with his problem as it is portrayed to the group.

THIS METHOD IS USEFUL . . .

1. When the group and its individual members demonstrate a degree of maturity which will permit them to become deeply involved psychologically and still remain relatively objective.

2. When members are reluctant to express their true feelings, attitudes, opinions, and prejudices. These frequently "come out" freely in the guise of a character being portrayed.

3. When individuals within the group recognize the need to probe deeply into their motives, basic drives, blocks, and adjustments in order to increase their effectiveness as group members.

4. When the individuals in the group, especially the role players, feel relatively secure in the group so that they are willing to "expose" themselves before the group — "expose" their feelings, attitudes, problems, frustrations, abilities, and skills.
5. When there is need to provide emotional release for group members. Many hidden frustrations and adjustments can be brought out in the open in a depersonalized manner.
6. When the heterogeneity of the group makes it difficult to focus on a common situation that is meaningful to all group members. The concrete role playing situation will provide a common experience for the group from which to start discussion.
7. When group standards and social control are such that comments and discussion will be maintained at a level that will not seriously embarrass or psychologically affect individuals.
8. When role players are available who have a relatively high level of human relations and communication skills.
9. When evaluation needs to be introduced into the group to make it more productive.

HOW TO USE THIS METHOD
The Group Should:

1. Have clearly in mind the objective of the meeting and the particular segment of the meeting in which this technique would be used.
2. Consider alternative means that might be used to accomplish this objective.
3. Recognize that role playing can vary from a definitely preplanned situation to a completely spontaneous one. It can be decided ahead of time that the discussion is going to be opened with a role playing situation or that

at a specific point in the meeting role playing will be used. On the other hand there may be no prior planning in relation to the use of role playing, but as a particular situation or problem arises role playing can be used spontaneously.

4. Recognize that role playing may vary from a relatively tightly structured device to a very loosely structured one. The situation may be precisely defined and the instructions to the role players as to the type of roles they are supposed to play may be very specific. In a more loosely structured role playing scene the general situation is defined and players create their own roles as they play the scene. All conceivable variations and combinations within the general structure of role playing may be used.

5. Decide if role playing should be used. A group sensitized to the need for using role playing might well delegate its further responsibilities to certain leaders or to a committee, but may choose to make the following decisions as a group.

6. Define the problem. It must be a problem that lends itself to role playing. It must be clear and not too complex, at least in the first few times role playing is used. It is usually at this step that there is agreement on what the role of the audience will be during and following the role playing scene.

7. Define the situation. Within the general problem context a specific human relations situation to be played must be agreed upon. For example, the problem is teen-age discipline, and the situation might be defined somewhat as follows: daughter stayed out until 2 o'clock on a 10 o'clock night; she did not call home; this is the third time she has done this; her marks are low in school; she is going with a boy of questionable character; daughter is just coming down to breakfast the following morning, etc.

8. Decide on the role players needed in the situation. In the teen-age discipline example it might be decided that there is need for a father, mother, teen-age daughter, and "kid brother."

9. Decide whether the roles to be played can be tightly structured or loosely structured. A relatively tightly structured role definition in the example might be: father, 55 years old, authoritarian, abrupt, puritanical, suspicious, "head of the house," busy — wants to get to work, etc.; mother, discipline is father's job, agrees with father, condescending, emotional, etc.; teenager, 17 years old, sleepy, independent, resents authority, "don't see what difference it makes" attitude, "all the other kids stay out" attitude, etc.; kid brother, sees opportunity to "get in the act," is a "pain" to the older sister, "keeps pot boiling."

   A loosely structured role situation would simply designate the four characters and let them develop their own roles.

   Obviously there can be many degrees of structuring between these two divergent examples. If role structuring is desired, it can be done by the leader, individual members of the group, the group as a whole, or by the role players chosen. If the players plan their own roles, they may either tell or not tell the group the roles they are going to play.

10. Choose the role players. Caution should be exercised if some of the roles are deprecating. It is usually better to let people who have status in the group play the deprecating roles. Care should be used in most cases to not too closely "type cast" roles. If there is a relatively low level of maturity in an individual or in the group, it may be dangerous to put a person who is relatively insecure in a role playing situation that emphasizes his insecurity. On the other hand it might be decided that the way to really make the "playboy" see himself is to force him to "bare" himself before the group.

The Director, Narrator, or Chairman Should:

1. "Set the stage" properly. Very few stage "props" are usually used — chairs and a table if need be. The situation setting depends more on verbal description than on the physical attributes of stage setting. The names of the characters may be pinned on the individuals — for example, Father, Mother, Teen-ager, and Brother.

2. Move the role players into the setting and encourage them by creating a permissive and relaxed atmosphere.

3. Allow the role players a brief time to internalize their roles. It is sometimes well to have each role player briefly state his understanding of the characteristics of the role he is to play. This helps him to work out the characterization and improves the cooperation of the group. Such "warming up" sessions should not be in the nature of a rehearsal.

4. Let the scene unfold. It should be interrupted only if the audience cannot hear, when the scene is being played out of context, or is being broken up by laughter.

5. Cut the scene. Where and when the scene should end will depend upon the purposes for which it is being used, on the development in terms of useful data provided, on the degree of emotional involvement, and upon optimum conditions of audience interest. The scene should run long enough to supply adequate data for discussion, but will seldom be permitted to run to

The setting depends more on the descriptive words of the person setting up the situation than on the physical attributes . . .

its logical conclusion. It is a common error to let the scene run too long.

6. Open discussion after the scene is played. It is often good practice to let the actors themselves react first to the scene. This gives them an opportunity to give a rationale for their actions and to protect their egos before the group as a whole comments — often a group is extremely critical of role players.

7. Extend the reaction to the entire audience. Bring all the methods of good discussion leading into play. Usually group involvement is no problem with role playing, but it may be strengthened if desired. Letting the group participate in choosing the problem, the situation, the roles, and the players helps. A specific framework for observing can be designed making use of huddles, clue sheets, etc. In any post-role playing discussion it is well to include: (a) general agreement as to what actually happened; (b) a fairly deep probing for explanations; and (c) a request for suggestions that might change or improve the process.

ADDITIONAL ROLE PLAYING ALTERNATIVES

1. Replay of a scene subsequent to discussion and incorporation of ideas and suggestions may provide much new material for a study in depth. The same players may be used, or some or all of them may be changed. It is often useful to ask the severest critic to show how he would have played the role.

2. When involved with a complex problem several scenes may be played sequentially, usually with discussion intervening.

3. Role reversals are a useful device to get at feelings and attitudes. In the example used above, it might be profitable to replay the scene with the father and daughter in reversed roles. Discussion might then begin by asking each player how it felt to be "in the other

person's shoes." Surprisingly enough, most groups contain members quite capable of projecting themselves into diametrically opposed roles.

4. A variation includes the use of a narrator, or commentator, who breaks off a scene at any time to ask for explanations or to point out significant actions.
5. Another variation provides for "asides" by the players in which they soliloquize regarding their attitudes or actions.
6. An alter ego may be provided for each player to make pertinent comments as the scene unfolds.

CAUTIONS

1. Begin role playing with relatively simple situations. It is important that the objectives are clear and the situation is well defined.
2. Role playing is a means to an end. Groups which become enamored of the technique may turn into an amateur theatrical society, playing the scenes for the enjoyment they receive rather than for a distinct task oriented purpose.
3. Spontaneity is a most important element. Structuring too tightly, writing parts, or rehearsals often spoil the effect.
4. Role playing often invades deeply into the individual's feelings and personal problems. Immature groups must be cautious in setting up a situation with regard to the depth of the anticipated emotional involvement. Skill in the extrication of a group from such an over-involvement is a most valuable tool.
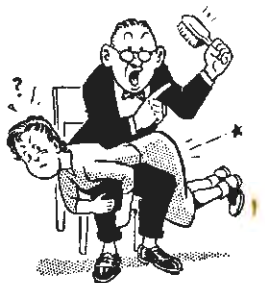
The role player stops the scene and tells why he acted as he did.

13.

Recreational Activities

IN THE CONSIDERATION of group techniques attention has been given a number of well known methods which have specific uses directed at informing a group or of leading it to action toward some goal. There are many techniques which are not specifically goal-oriented and which exert their effect mainly in a roundabout or indirect fashion. These devices may nevertheless be useful, important, and pertinent to group process. Typical of these are the food and drink which are adjuncts to so many group activities. It would be unrealistic to attempt a discussion of all of these various means, so recreation has been selected to represent the large body of auxilliary techniques.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Recreation, with specific reference to music, games, stunts, etc., is a laudable enterprise in its own right. Groups may choose to operate with their major objectives in the

realm of providing recreation; many do. Groups devoted to music, to amateur theatricals, to dancing, or to some athletic pastime are prevalent. Recreation will not be considered here in this context, but in relation to its potential as a useful adjunct to the process of groups which have other definitive objectives — perhaps more serious purposes. If the major goal of a group is physical fitness, then some athletic recreation might become a major technique. At an annual picnic of a Farm Bureau group or union local, the softball game may be a very minor technique, though it could be a valuable one.

Recreational activities can increase the productivity of almost any group when properly chosen, properly timed, and properly led. Nearly everyone likes to have a "good time," and enjoying oneself in group activities may demand something more than assiduous devotion to duty. Wise group leaders try to mix in a certain portion of recreational activity with the normal procedures of the group. There are literally thousands of possibilities available and a number of books have been compiled telling when and how to use these techniques. A list is included in the bibliography. The purpose here will be to discuss some of the more general aspects of recreational methods as an adjunct to group process without expanding into the unlimited field of specific devices.

Recreational activities have great potential for developing the individual. They can help him feel more secure in the group, provide opportunity for recognition, response, and new experience. Blocks, negative adjustments such as tension and aggression, frustrations, and dissatisfactions may all be alleviated by the beneficent effect of properly chosen recreational means. They are a great aid in getting acquainted and in providing opportunity for sociability as well as bringing relief from boredom and fatigue.

From the group standpoint, games can help create a

favorable atmosphere, increase participation, facilitate communication, set group standards, and develop leadership. Restrictions due to large size, heterogeneity, and status differentials can be favorably modified. Games can exert social controls and create group solidarity and identity. Their use in reducing tensions and conflict should be apparent.

WHEN TO USE RECREATIONAL TECHNIQUES

As with any technique, it is important that the group makes sure that the purpose for which it is being used is clear. For that reason a brief expansion of informational and illustrative material is presented under a series of selected headings which classify some of these objectives.

Getting Acquainted

A newly formed group, a large and very formal group, or a group with a high membership turnover often has many members who do not know each other. A natural reserve and diffidence keeps many from initiating "getting acquainted" measures. It is important to group process for members to really know each other as people rather than as "the plump woman in the green hat." Security, response, and recognition will not come to individuals under circumstances of restraint. Communication is more difficult in regard to goals, activities, role expectations, and group standards. Identity and participation are almost impossible among strangers.

Formal introductions may suffice in some instances. Many groups ask a new member to give a brief autobiography. There are also many game-type activities which more or less force the reluctant one to come out of his shell. Wise leadership will have an armamentarium of such devices with which to break the ice and help group members become acquainted.

Mixers

Regardless of the age of a group, or of how well the members know each other, there is bound to be some grouping into cliques. Congenial members will arrive together, talk together, sit together, and leave together. Instead of a unified group we now have an aggregate of small cluster groups. Certain less attractive people always get left out entirely in such a situation. Some of the cliques will have high status, others little or none. All this breaks down communication and makes unified action very difficult. Certain individuals quickly lose security under these circumstances, though others may use attachment to a subgroup as a source of personal security. It is obviously desirable to integrate everyone into the main stream of the group's activities.

"Mixers" especially designed to break up clusters are available. Some are formal, others of a pure nonsense nature, but properly used they can contribute much to good group process.

Premeeting Involvers

A critical time in setting the atmosphere of a meeting is the interval between the arrival of the first members and the actual start of the meeting. Good leadership has something planned, possibly related to the subject problem, but more often in the nature of a recreational icebreaker. All the recreation books contain material of this kind.

Relaxers

Some members are naturally tense; others develop tensions as fatigue and boredom invade the atmosphere of even the most productive group. There is often a need to alleviate the physical, mental, and emotional strain of a meeting. Relaxing games, music, or musical games are

often used to afford temporary relief from the project at hand. Large sitting-listening groups are the most in need of such relaxers and if the conditions are crowded it is well if the relaxer chosen will produce some physical activity.

Properly used, these methods have a potential for stimulating many other facets of group dynamics, communication, solidarity, and emotional release. Any well selected relaxing technique will provide some element of common experience to the members from which new feelings of identity may emerge.

Transitions

Another useful purpose to which recreation can be applied involves rapid movement from one part of a meeting to another. To shift from a general "gab session" to a more structured portion of the meeting is often difficult. At times a planned relaxing break fails to relax because the members remain too engrossed in the business at hand. The chairman's gavel which calls a meeting to order is perhaps the best known form of transitions, but everyone has seen skilled group leaders apply more subtle techniques. A riot at a football game can be quelled by playing the national anthem and on a less dramatic level there are many musical stunts to alter the immediate atmosphere. Games and stunts are also available to carry out this function.

Solidarity Builders

Many groups have no feeling of loyalty or solidarity. There may be great attachment to a subgroup or other unit, but little to the group as a whole. It has long been recognized that sharing common experiences will do more than any other factor to create the kind of identity and solidarity desired. It is often forgotten, however, that such common experiences may be just as effective if they are fun — pure-

ly recreational. Human nature varies widely; there will be some members who identify with the group only because they have a good time there, not because of the accomplishments. A wise leader gets the most from the group when he provides something for everyone.

Almost any appropriately selected game or stunt will be of value in this area. Singing has long been recognized as one of the most effective solidarity builders. Many churches have made excellent use of this technique. Soldiers march to music. Service clubs, fraternities, and many others derive a great deal of their "we-feeling" from the common experience of singing together. Simple informal ritual, stunts, etc. may also help develop solidarity.

Some groups do not consider using these techniques because they believe they do not have highly skilled leaders for these activities. However, experience suggests that groups fail to make use of this technique adequately often because they have failed to see its importance. Recognizing the need for a solidarity builder and selecting and using one appropriate to the group is important. Most groups have members with these skills or can help develop them.

Status Modifiers

Giving or taking away status is a touchy area. One of the key desires of most people is for status, but sharp variations in status may ruin the activities of a group. Sometimes it becomes necessary to "de-status" certain individuals or subgroups, and again it may be desirable to try to raise the status of others. Status differentials within the group may result in poor communication, poor identification, and much insecurity. Even marked aggressions and overt hostility may develop. Good leadership anticipates such situations and prevents them. The further they have developed the greater the problem in modifying status divergences.

If status results from activities within the group it will be accepted with much better grace than when it appears

as a carry-over from some outside situation. Certain professions, such as law, medicine, and banking bring a sort of automatic status to their members as do certain records of achievement, say in politics, business, research, or almost any favorably regarded area. If this automatically given status is accompanied by excessive dignity, formality, puritanical attitude, etc., the member may be labelled a "stuffed shirt." Perhaps the "stuffed shirt" wanted to be "one of the boys" all along but was excessively inhibited. Proving the essential "humanness" of a high status individual may reduce status barriers for those who have been somewhat in awe of him. It hardly need be mentioned that great skill is needed in choosing and using these activities.

A good group leader knows his group. Persons with little status within the group often possess outstanding skills in one area or another. Arranging activities so that these people can use these skills may enhance their status and enable them to become more productive group members.

Interest Getters

Sometimes it is necessary to create interest in a subject or topic in order to involve the group seriously. Quite often

Costumed skits are often good "interest getters."

games or stunts can accomplish this better than a serious approach. Quizzes, especially if they contain an element of humor, may be an ideal way to introduce a new subject. Skits may be used to create group interest in the tasks at hand.

Tension Relievers

Occasionally there is need to relieve a disruptive tension situation. Good group activity requires a rather high degree of personal discipline. However, most people can take only so much frustration and can absorb only so much aggressive behavior without reacting in an emotional manner. Many times an alert leader can help relieve group tensions by the appropriate use of humor. Sometimes, the introduction of a recreational break into the ongoing group activity will provide an outlet for tension release.

A RECREATIONAL CHECK LIST

A few general rules for leadership in recreational activities may be used as a check list in applying them to certain situations.

1. Always have a definite objective in mind.
2. Consider alternatives carefully.
3. Know the technique; do not omit important details.
4. Be enthusiastic; create an air of expectancy.
5. Be sure all the group can see the leader.
6. If rearrangement of the group is needed this should precede the introduction.
7. Introduce and explain, clearly, logically, specifically, and enthusiastically.
8. Demonstrate if necessary, but involve everyone as rapidly as possible.
9. Play the role of encourager.

10. Enforce the rules, but do not demand a level of precision which destroys the fun.
11. Do not "boss" or encourage ridicule.
12. Stop the activity while interest is still high.

As with any method, certain cautions in its use should be observed. Briefly some of them are:

1. In the context of this discussion, recreation games, stunts, music, etc., are a means to an ends, not an end in themselves.
2. It is easy to overuse these techniques.
3. Effective use calls for considerable skill in selection, instruction and application. Repetitious use of any method may destroy its value.
4. Choice of technique should be appropriate to the group. Indian wrestling might be fine for a group
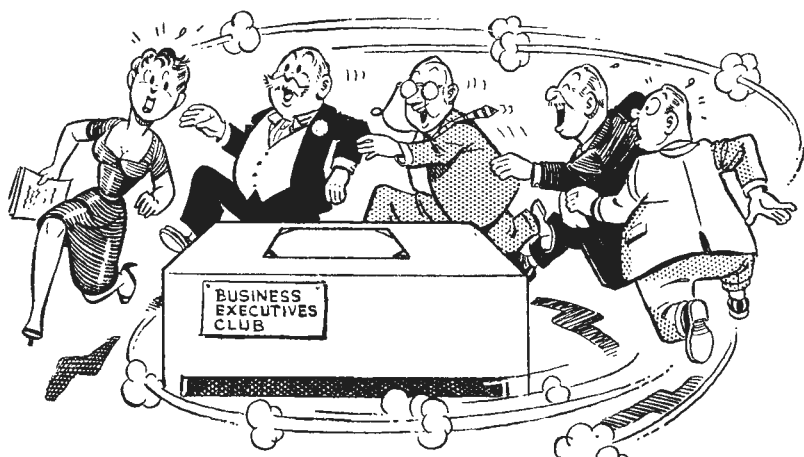
It is very important to choose the proper games in terms of individual characteristics and the dynamics of the group.

of Boy Scouts, but ridiculous at a meeting of a church board.

5. Techniques aimed at de-statusing, or at any other invasion of individual egos, must be used with extreme skill and discretion. In general such methods should never appear to be directed toward anyone, but should apply to all alike.

14.

Working With
Large Groups

GROUP TECHNIQUES have been defined as the means or procedures used by a group in attempting to reach its goals. It was suggested that a technique or combination of techniques is the vehicle that moves a group along toward its goals.

Groups often meet for the purpose of working toward several different objectives or goals. It is also customary for a group to come together for a series of meetings. In any of these situations it becomes necessary to think not of *a* technique, but rather a combination of techniques. Often this is true whether the group is large or small.

Thus far, we have been concerned with the nature and use of specific techniques. Let us now think about direct application and use of these specific techniques in the larger meetings, workshops, conferences, and institutes. The schedule of activities in most communities includes many

different groups. All of them create situations in which it is appropriate to use various combinations of techniques.

The treatment of each kind of activity will be brief and only suggestive of some of the things to keep in mind in planning and conducting them. This section will briefly discuss some of these activities from the standpoint of pointing out many alternative techniques and how they might be combined in order to help a group achieve greater productivity. The discussion of the two types, large meetings and workshops, will be brief and suggestive — only a minimum to set a framework for additional thinking and reading. Entire books have been written about these techniques and should be read and understood by those planning to use such general approaches in their organizations.

LARGE MEETINGS

Think of the meetings going on in your community this week. It would be interesting to know how many man-hours are devoted to large group meetings every year. The large meeting is usually limited to one session and held in one room. This week it might be a community meeting to discuss rezoning of an area from residential to commercial. Seventy-five or perhaps several hundred or more will be present for this meeting. Next week it could be a state or national meeting of an organization with several hundred or even thousand people congregating.

Too high a percentage of one-session meetings are boring and unproductive. People leave such meetings and forget all about them — but surprisingly enough, many show up again at the next meeting. Effort to improve these meetings is an effort to increase the returns from a tremendously large investment in manpower. Any meeting so large that a high-percentage participation of the audience cannot be obtained by ordinary discussion will be considered a large meeting for the purposes of this discussion.

Are large meetings serving their purposes efficiently?

What are the weaknesses which keep large meetings from achieving the results hoped for by the planners and by those attending? Large group meetings *can* serve many functions in our communities and public life. A large meeting properly designed is one of the best ways to get people informed, committed, or recommitted to the activities of their community or organizations. Public issues and problems can often be clarified in a well-planned and well-conducted large meeting. In fact, such meetings are indispensable in public decision-making and in channeling relevant information to people.

WHO PARTICIPATES IN LARGE MEETINGS?

Two principal groups of people participate in large meetings — the audience and the platform personnel. The function of the platform personnel is to present material to the audience. The function of the audience is to receive communication from the platform and to work on the ideas or material in such a way as to accomplish the purpose of the meeting. Hence, success of a large meeting hinges upon platform and audience coordination in their efforts toward common goals. Both should understand and accept the

The large meeting you will attend this week might be a community meeting to discuss rezoning of an area from residential to commercial.

goals. Both should also understand their special responsibility and understand the methods being used in the meeting.

A third group is involved in connection with any large meeting — the planners. Their job is to think through the meeting problems very carefully before the platform personnel and the audience are involved directly. They have the responsibility for preparing the audience and the platform personnel for their particular responsibilities both before and during the actual meeting. Large group meetings succeed to the degree that the three groups — audience, planners, and platform — learn to perform their special functions and to coordinate their special jobs in the over-all design of the meeting.

Speeches, panels, forums, and symposiums are familiar methods of conducting large meetings. These are effective techniques in themselves, but they have often been poorly used or misused. Large group meetings have typically been evaluated on such non-objective criteria as the reputation or charm of the speaker, the emotional or inspirational "uplift" conveyed, or the skill displayed in platform performance. Since evaluations of these meetings are seldom made in relation to their purposes, little effort has been made to create more varied techniques for conducting them.

Some of the defects of the "typical" large meeting are: (1) audience members become passive, they listen rather than participate; (2) each individual in the audience remains an individual, not a group member, resulting in little involvement and identification and correspondingly lit-

. . . each individual in the audience remains an anonymous individual . . .
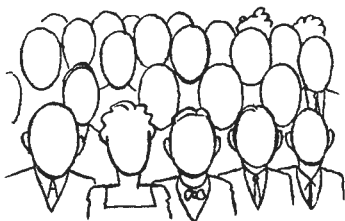
tle action; (3) audience members may identify with the speakers but fail to think about action to be taken by themselves; (4) audience members are not given an opportunity to participate, which leads to the feeling that knowledge resides on the platform and ignorance in the audience. These characteristics of large meetings are prevalent when the planners assume that their job is done when they have secured some platform talent. The purposes of a meeting are seldom met when too much attention is given to the platform and too little to audience members.

Large meetings like small meetings call for adequate objective setting, good choices of resource persons and techniques, good communication, participation, consensus, evaluation, and atmosphere. If these requirements are to be met, a variety of approaches must be used for different meeting situations. Participation by audience members in large meetings needs to become an accepted and common practice. Such participation may take the form of getting audience reaction to an issue or point of view, involving the audience in decision-making, or in getting questions framed and asked of those on the platform. Some techniques used to increase audience participation in large meetings are: buzz groups, question cards, listening teams, audience reaction teams, observing teams, role playing scenes, and subgroup meetings. Some of these have been developed in detail in previous sections of this book, and many have been described elsewhere.[1]

LISTENING TEAMS. The audience is divided into teams prior to the platform presentation. This is easily done by sectioning on the basis of rows or by marking the auditorium into right, center, and left sections. Before the presentation, each team is asked to listen for a different point, such as questions for further clarification, points of disagreement, etc. Contributions may be written down by each audience member and passed to a team chairman at the end of the presentation.

[1] Adult Leadership, "Improving Large Meetings," Vol. I, No. 7, December, 1952.

The team chairman can synthesize contributions and report them to the platform. Or each section may be divided into small groups who are given a few minutes after the presentation to perform this synthesis and appoint a reporter to report group findings to the total meeting during the discussion period. This method is especially applicable to very large gatherings. It requires, however, that the audience be clearly instructed before the presentation so that it understands its role.

OBSERVING TEAMS. Where a situation is being presented, a conflict dramatized, or a skill demonstrated, audience members are placed in the role of observers during the presentation. Where there are advantages to observing the presentation through several different pairs of mental glasses, the audience may be divided into a number of sections and each instructed to observe from a different viewpoint. The sectioning of the audience and the pooling and reporting of observations may be handled as in the case of listening teams.

HUDDLE GROUPS. "Huddle" groups are particularly fruitful whenever the meeting requires a very wide sampling of audience ideas and opinions. In using "huddle" groups it is essential that the audience be told of the method before the presentation and be instructed in detail about how to proceed just prior to breaking into groups. The best results are usually obtained by breaking the audience into small groups of six or eight members, either by asking people sitting near each other to move their chairs into a circle or by asking three or four people in one row to turn around and talk with the three or four people immediately behind them. One person in each group can report questions or conclusions of the group to the audience and platform. This method assures every person an opportunity to take part in the meeting.

SECTION MEETINGS BY SUBGROUPS. In meetings in which the main subject divides readily into a number of subtopics, audience members can often get a better chance to deal with those aspects which are closest to their own interests and abilities if the meeting plan allows for subgroups to form around areas of specific interest. In using this method it is useful to arrange for the subgroups in advance, indicate what they will be by pre-meeting publicity, and allow audience members to indicate which of these groups they prefer to attend. Facilities

should be provided so that each subgroup can meet undisturbed by the others. Usually the sections meet together for a common kickoff at the beginning and for a sharing of section findings at the end of the meeting.

QUESTION CARDS. In meetings with smaller audiences re- actions can be obtained by distributing cards to each audience member on which he can write down questions as they occur to him during the presentation. Each question should be written on a separate card so that after the presentation the cards can be quickly sorted. This permits the platform personnel to handle the questions systematically and in logical sequence. This method has the advantage of giving the audience members a chance to get their questions down before they have forgotten them. If feasible, a variant on this method is to schedule breaks in the presentation during which audience members can write down any questions which occur to them at the time.

AUDIENCE REACTION TEAMS. When the subject matter of a presentation is particularly difficult to communicate, it is often quite helpful to the audience to select from it two or three members whose function is to make sure that platform and audience are kept in communication. The reaction team is on the lookout for points that seem unclear or confusing and has the privilege of interrupting the platform personnel so that these points can be immediately straightened out. This method, of course, requires that the reaction team be familiar with the audience and that the platform personnel be willing to be inter- rupted in the interest of clearer communication.

15.

Workshops

THE WORKSHOP METHOD has become very popular, but the name "workshop" is often misused. Meetings completely planned in advance and consisting largely of speeches have often been called workshops. To be truly a "workshop" several features should be present. The work implied and included should evolve from all the people attending. A workshop must have a planning session in which all participants are involved from the beginning. Much time should be devoted to work sessions in which all of the people work with others on problems significant to them. At the close there should always be a summarizing and evaluating session. Both planning and evaluation are focused on the work sessions, which are the backbone of a workshop. There is a minimum duration for a group to plan, work, and summarize and evaluate work sessions. The so-called one-day workshops allow too little time for work sessions if both

planning and evaluation sessions are included. Two days are usually considered a minimum duration.

Workshops are more successful if held at a place removed from distractions. Sites away from the city are favored locations. Workshops held in hotels in large cities often have sporadic attendance. People too often run errands and do shopping rather than come at the beginning of a workshop and stay throughout. All workshop members are needed for planning, working, and evaluating. It is good procedure to urge people to attend the entire workshop and to discourage attendance if it is to be on a partial basis.

CONDUCTING A WORKSHOP

The steps commonly followed in conducting a workshop are as follows:

1. Someone — a group, a committee, or organization, etc. — conceives the idea and the general area to be explored, gets the idea approved or legitimized, and then advertises or diffuses the idea.
2. A chairman or committee is designated to select a site, receive reservations, obtain resource people, and make other general arrangements.
3. The chairman opens the first session and conducts a problem exploration session.
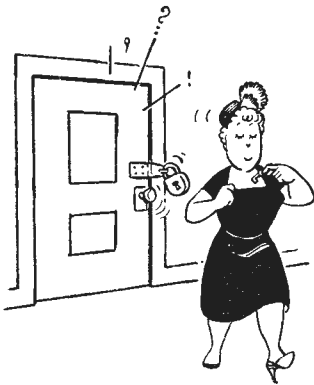
Secure a meeting place away from distraction where attendance will be free from interruptions.

4. Specific problems on which the members would like to work are listed. Work groups are then formed by the members on the basis of their choice of problems on which they wish to work.

5. Work groups meet, choose a chairman, recorder, and a representative for the planning committee, then proceed to work on the problems of the group.

6. The planning committee is organized and proceeds to plan the rest of the workshop so as to facilitate its conduct.

7. The planning committee develops a plan for the remainder of the workshop and submits their plan to the whole group for consideration and acceptance.

8. The resource people work among the groups.

9. The planning committee becomes an executive committee to carry out the accepted plan for the workshop including the summary and evaluation sessions.

10. A closing statement by someone selected by the planning committee.

WHEN PLANNING A WORKSHOP . . .

In summary, here are some things to remember when planning a workshop.

1. Do just enough preplanning to get the people there and started to work.

2. Secure a meeting place away from distractions where attendance will be free from interruptions.

3. Base the program on the problems of the people attending.

4. Avoid speeches by nonworkshop members.

5. Depend upon the interest, enthusiasm, ingenuity, and creativity of the members of the workshop for success.

6. Obtain resource people who have skill in helping others to discuss but will not talk too much themselves.

This technique of learning and problem solving is useful for either professional or lay groups. Most groups of people can learn effectively by assuming the responsibility for their own learning. The work session often provides a more purposeful medium of education than more conventional techniques, especially where every person has a worth and makes his contribution to the general program.

16.

Conferences

COUNTLESS HOURS ARE SPENT attending conferences. Many of them are held because the leaders believe it is about time to get a group together, because last year it was suggested that another conference be held, or because it is traditional to have an annual conference. Often these reasons contribute a rather shallow basis for the meeting.

The term *conference* means, "to bring together." To most of us a conference means a meeting for the purpose of information giving, decision making, problem solving, exchange of information, fact finding, problem identification, planning, or inspiration. A conference can be described as a pooling of experiences and opinions among a group of people who have special qualifications in the area, or among people who are capable of analyzing a problem from information provided by competent leaders.

Conferences are often planned by a committee that works out an agenda and then lines up the biggest name speakers that can be secured. Such conferences often begin with speeches, a series of papers, or perhaps a panel discussion. Attenders of conferences planned in this manner usually come expecting to be told what the problems are — and perhaps their solutions as well.

If a conference is to bring about group action and changes in attitudes, the delegates must be participants and not just listeners. They must participate not only in the conference but also in its planning.

Some features of good work conferences that utilize the dynamics of groups and that are based on the conceptual framework presented earlier in this book are:

1. The program is planned around the interests, needs, and problems of the participants, not those of the organizers.
2. The participants come to the conference knowing they are coming to work and not just to listen.
3. Time is taken at the opening session to review the conference objectives, the conference methods, the responsibilities of those attending, and the roles to be performed by the resource persons, group leaders, and other personnel.
4. If the conference is large, provision is made for the formation of small groups to encourage the expression of participants' ideas.
5. If the conference is large, leadership teams are selected and trained to help the conference groups achieve high productivity.
6. Time is taken as the conference goes along for the participants to look at their progress and to make suggestions for improvements.
7. The final session of the conference is used for the participants to make decisions and commitments to carry out these decisions.

17.

Institutes

IN MANY AMERICAN COMMUNITIES the institute has become a tradition. A bit more ambitious than a workshop or conference, it has served as a source of new information and new ideas for people in many fields. An institute is a series of meetings designed to convey specific instruction and information in particular areas of work. Such meetings may all be held on one day but usually are scheduled over several days, or they may extend over several weeks.

A variety of purposes or objectives can be accomplished by means of an institute. One of the most common is to present information. An institute also is appropriate to identify problems, to explore problems, to solve problems, to inspire people to action, or to create awareness and interest. Since an institute is a series of meetings, use can be made of a variety of the techniques discussed in this book.

Some that are particularly applicable are lectures, forums, panels, group discussions, symposiums, and dialogues.

Institutes, like conferences, workshops, and large one-session meetings, are often planned and conducted with a minimum of thought having been given to the various techniques that could be used. Traditionally, institutes have been a series of speeches in which the speakers, usually experts in their fields, presented their ideas. Those attending have been an audience rather than participants, and the results or accomplishments have been correspondingly below expectations.

The degree of involvement of the participants in planning an institute influences the productivity, just as it does for conferences and workshops. Whether or not an institute is a participating institute or a listening institute depends upon the choice of techniques for the separate meetings or sessions. The productivity of an institute usually varies directly with the extent to which those in attendance are involved in planning, conducting, and evaluating the institute.

. . . meetings may all be held on one day. . . .

PART

3. Evaluation

End-of-meeting questionnaires should be
easily available to all participants . . .