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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Operations School
 VIA : Chief, Headquarters Training

FROM : Chief Instructor, Information Reporting,
 Reports, and Requirements

SUBJECT: Final Course Report -
 Information Reporting, Reports, and Requirements No. 26
 4-22 April 1960

DATE: 12 May 1960

Synopsis

1. Contrary to what has often been the case in the past, there were no last-minute cancellations of registration in Information Reporting, Reports, and Requirements Number 26, running 4-22 April 1960. In fact, there were three added registrations after the list of students had been delivered from the registrar's office. The final number enrolled was 13 students. Only one of them left before the end of the course. [redacted] who was withdrawn by her desk on 15 April [redacted]. A check with [redacted] established the necessity for her withdrawal. She had successfully completed the first two weeks of the prescribed training.

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2. The class reverted to an earlier pattern of division as between women and men; ten women were in attendance and only three men. Ten students, nine women and one man, were wholly or partially in reports or headed for duty as reports officers. Two of the men were going to the field, where one was to be a case officer almost wholly responsible for his own information reporting and the other was to do counter-intelligence reporting primarily. Three of the women were headed for immediate field assignments, including at least some duties in the preparation of finished information reports. One woman was a covert-action operations officer. Six different area divisions were represented in the class: five students from NE; two from WH; and one each from WE, EE, FE, and SR. One student came from OTR and one from FI/D. It might be relevant to mention here that although [redacted] telephoned for help in filling needs for trained reports officers in the Africa division, the division has not enrolled anybody for training in IRRR during 1959-1960. The class as a whole was a moderately young one, ages ranging from 23 to 47 years, with an average age of about 31 years. The average grade was lower than usual, GS-7, with a spread of from GS-4 to GS-12. This unusually low average grade, however, was coupled with a class rating for performance that is probably the best in the history of the course. The class roster and data on individuals follows.

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JOB NO. _____ BOX NO. _____ FLD NO. _____ DOC. NO. 2 NO CHANGE
 IN CLASS/ (DECLINE) / CLASS CHANGED TO: IS S (C) RET. JUST. 22
 NEXT REV DATE 10 REV DATE 5 Feb 60 REVIEWER 023614 TYPE DOC. 02
 NO. PGS 6 CREATION DATE _____ ORG COMPI _____ OPL (I) ORG CLASS S
 REV CLASS C REV COORD. _____ AUTH: HR 70-3

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3. The class as a whole was characterized by its mature steadiness in doing its work, by its receptivity to material placed before it, and by its extraordinarily high level of performance. During the three weeks of instruction, no student was absent; only two students were tardy, and they only occasionally and not when the tardiness interrupted speakers. There was not a day in which some students or other were not at their typewriters or reading by 0800 hours and still working at 1800 hours. The group's receptivity to instruction was evident in its questioning guest speakers, in some cases to the point of exhausting either the supply of information, the time available, or the speaker. They were persistent, too, in getting at the thinking behind, the why's of patterns of procedures, that were presented.

Student Performance

4. Out of the 62 ratings of performance given members of the class, 28 were of excellent, 20 were of satisfactory, 3 were of poor, and 1 was of superior. The ratings were in four areas of performance: qualitative and quantitative production of reports, requirements performance, editorial performance, and reporting (including active collection of information) performance. Probably this is the highest number of excellents earned by a class in the course.

5. Four students - [redacted] and [redacted] were rated excellent in all phases of performance; a fifth, [redacted] with one superior to balance one satisfactory, averaged excellent. With one exception, all these students were university or college graduates; [redacted] was a graduate only of high school, a commercial course at that. [redacted] and [redacted] presented an achievement picture of interesting contrasts: [redacted] has an A.B. degree from Vassar College and only a few weeks of experience in the Agency; [redacted] has not even an academic secondary-school education but 17 years of on-the-job education in the Agency and its predecessors. This is a real example of what can be done to substitute practical experience for formal education and also what the substitution costs in time to arrive at a comparable goal of achievement. Another student, [redacted] with one year of college, had only one rating, satisfactory in editorial performance, below excellent. All three of the relatively poor students had university or college degrees.

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6. In the ordinary sense of the term, there were no troublesome students in the class. With ratings of poor in requirements performance and in editorial performance, [redacted] showed the lowest level of achievement. Her poor showing came not as the result of not trying; she was one of the most steadily industrious, punctual, and pleasant students in the class. Her trouble was simply that she could not communicate clearly what knowledge she possessed, and too often the knowledge itself was shaky as the result of her failures in understanding. Invariably inability to write coherently is hooked up with hazy thinking. When it is considered that previously she had been subject to 40 hours of training in Information Reports Familiarization, the chances of ever making a sound reports officer of her are dim to say the least. The other student with a poor rating, in requirements performance, on her record was [redacted]. She was the only one in the class to show lack of punctuality except when she returned too promptly from an assignment with the assignment half-done. Too big a share of her time went into sitting at her work table staring off into space. Although [redacted] performance was rated satisfactory, every job that he did he had to do a second time before it was acceptable; re-doing involved not only re-writing reports but filling gaps in collected information. To begin with, despite a university degree with a major in English, [redacted] just could not write coherently. In the second place, although the strain of his effort to understand an assignment would show in the lines of concentration in his face and in the tense eagerness to be on his way, what he came back with always indicated at least only a partial understanding of the problem. With an hour or two of tutoring on the product of the first attempt, he would willingly do the whole job again by meticulously correcting every error pointed out to him in his copy and by rechecking all details of his information-collection operation. Invariably his second try would be satisfactory, and on the basis of his willingness and of his final achievement, albeit delayed, he was rated as, by and large, satisfactory in performance. Such loss of time at arriving at a satisfactory product, however, might well be intolerable in a field assignment.

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7. With reasonable assuery it can be said that [redacted] had the highest potential in the class and that he was the only student who did not fulfill his potential. Not that his performance in general was not highly satisfactory; it was. Had he really concentrated his efforts on the job at hand, though, his performance could well have been excellent in every phase. It would seem that his primary interest is in the law and that his work with the Agency is a means of support while he is attending Georgetown University, where he is a second-year law student. It would also seem the chief instructor in IRRR made a mistake in telling [redacted] when [redacted] sought the information at the end of the first week that generally he was doing excellent work. [redacted] apparently had been notified by the panel having in hand his promotion that it would hold the promotion in abeyance until he had satisfactorily completed a course in reporting since that was the direction his Agency career seemed to be taking. With what the chief instructor had told him as insurance, under the common student belief that an excellent start automatically means an excellent ending, [redacted] from then on lost some of the drive that early had been evident. In fact, on the basis of a vocal report to the panel after [redacted] had satisfactorily completed the course, the chairman said that [redacted] promotion was assured. [redacted] editorial performance was limited to a mere satisfactory one by his insistence on writing at the level of a law bulletin - not a high level in matters of conciseness and exactness of expression - to the staff of which he had been elected as a law-student honor. Whatever the cause for not having achieved the performance level of which he was capable, however, his not having done so made him a difficult student. In teaching of any sort, the real failure always lies in not getting out of the gifted student his best, whether the fault be with circumstances, the student himself, or the teacher.

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Student Comments

8. As has been practice in the course almost from its beginning, students were required to write a final report on what information of particular value to them they had collected during the three weeks of instruction and practice. Whatever information they have available in their heads, in their reading kits, or in their notebooks they are free to use. They write against the pressure of a three-hour deadline. Not only is the exercise a practical one in the preparation of an information report, but it is a realistic estimate of the students' ability to collect information, particularly through the talk of sources and through reading. Subjective reactions are required in a comment section of the report. Here are some of the reactions that may have significance.

"If a more formal lecture on the [redacted] and the CRITIC system could be included in the course, it would increase the students' knowledge of what is included in the communication field of reports. . . . As a whole, the course thoroughly explained the role of reports work in the intelligence field. . . . The collection assignments were the most valuable."

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"It is hard to set down on paper the things that the student learned by carrying out information collection assignments, but he did learn about some of the difficulties involved and about the effort that must be spent in the construction of an objective report. He did learn also that the qualities and skills set forth in the course are necessary for the development of what he now understands to be a good reporter."

"I found all aspects of the course, with the possible exception of the information on technical collection, helpful. . . . Most important of all, I have some basis to work on in improving reporting of my own project."

"By far most useful to source [student] was the training and the guidance received in methods of effective writing."

"Especially important is the 'field experience' of collecting information that is then reported on. The tying together of all the factors that make up information collection and reporting is a thorough way of presenting a clear-cut picture of the various processes of the intelligence community and the way in which it works."

"The instruction was helpful in providing information on reporting qualifications, organization, correct procedures, and collecting and communicating information in accordance with requirements. The practice in collecting information and writing reports was extremely useful."

"The operations officer as a collector and reporter of information is the part of the IRRR course that I think will do me the most good."

Conclusions and Recommendations

9. The addition of a lecture on the [redacted] (b)(3)
and on CRITIC suggested by one of the students seems worth trying. If such
a lecture is included in the next running of the course, the chief of [redacted] (b)(3)
has agreed to prepare and to give it.

10. It is recommended that no immediate successor as an instructor be
appointed vice [redacted] who is retiring from the Agency as of 20 May (b)(3)
1960. Unless the next class, starting 6 June, is a large group, one
instructor, with the help of guest speakers, can adequately handle the full
lecture load. Since [redacted] never was very active or dependable in working (b)(3)
with the students in the preparation of CS reports in the laboratory, his
services there will be missed little if at all.

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11. It would seem desirable to delay the appointment of a new instructor until a hard-headed, energetic, enthusiastic man, who can give himself whole-heartedly to working with students, can be found. He needs to be a working teacher, not a talking one - one lean in the hams with no tendency to broaden them by spreading them over the full butt area of a tilted armchair with cushions in both the seat and the back. Such teachers are hard to find, but even in bureaucracies they do exist if they can be caught young enough, in spirit not in years, not to have deteriorated into placidity as insurance for security. In the case at hand, it is much easier for one man to carry the full load of instruction than to be hampered by a helper who, young or old in years, has none of the true teaching drive. Since the classes in the IRRR course have consistently contained more women than men, a female instructor is likely not to be effective in it; in fact, women are rarely wholly effective in teaching men either. Not discrimination but experience would dictate the appointment of a man.

12. An often made recommendation that needs to be repeated again is for better classroom housekeeping so that students have at least a fairly clean place in which to work.

13. A recommendation would seem to be in order, too, that if the Africa division calls on [] to supply it with trained reports officers that [] could well take steps to encourage the enrollment of at least a few Africa division prospects as students in IRRR.

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