Chapter 19. The Design of Cross-Cultural Training: An Alternative to the University Model

Introduction

I published this paper jointly with the client with whom I did the development work that led to it, Richard Hopkins. The paper was the winner of the 1967 Douglas McGregor Memorial Award.

During my years at Yale University (1960-1966) I struggled to create in my own classroom the freedom, excitement and felt relevance of the T group. At first I failed utterly, because I did not know how to bridge the gap between my vision and my students' expectations. I did not give up, however, and during my six years at Yale I was continually designing, experimenting, and redesigning my classroom based on my ongoing experience. The early years were unrewarding, both for me and for my students, and I was only sustained in my vision by the experiences I was having with students very similar to my own in other settings. One of those settings was the College Leadership Laboratory, variations on which were given for student leaders and their advisors by the National Training Laboratories at Bethel, Maine, and at campuses all over the US. I was very active in NTL's program for college students, and my experiences in these labs of the vitality, excitement, and cameraderie between students and staff sustained me in my conviction that higher education could be transformed, if only we experimented enough with our methods.

The other setting in which the new methods worked was the US Peace Corps training of volunteers for overseas work. From 1963, I took part in a series of

innovative training programs for the Peace Corps' Latin America Division, in which I had the chance to try out and validate my ideas about education for application and for living. These experiments were not always successful, but each one increased the knowledge and experience we needed to forge a radically new way of teaching and learning, and apply it to the challenging task of preparing young people to live and work independently overseas. The present paper presents the results of a spectacularly successful undertaking carried out in Puerto Rico, one which convinced me that we were on the right track, not only in training for cross-cultural performance, but in our approach to higher education generally.

I viewed myself at that time as one of a small (and scattered) band of educators, mostly NTL trained, who were working from the inside for the radical reform of higher education in America. As such, I intended this paper not only to report the success of an educational experiment in the Peace Corps, but to sound the call for the broader reforms which were so close to my heart. I wanted to encourage others who were working for change in colleges and universities, both faculty and radical students, and I wanted to propose a philosophy and program for the redesign of the classroom. I wanted this paper to say to colleagues and students, "We did it in the Peace Corps; you can do it in your classrooms."

I was modestly successful in my aim. The paper was picked up, copied, circulated, and fairly widely read in the circles I desired to reach. At a conference of reform-minded faculty and students at Dartmouth College in the late sixties, I was greatly warmed by the appreciation I received, particularly from the radical students

present. It seemed we were in the vanguard of a wave of change that could revitalize higher education and make it truly relevant to life and work.

In a little while, however, our hopes were overtaken by events. The movement for university reform was co-opted by the antiwar movement. Its energy became politicized, and it went out of the classroom and into the streets. The forces of tradition reestablished their hegemony, and the university system proved, once again, that it, along with the Church, is one of the most stable and resistant to change of all our institutions. I soon turned to business and industry as the focus for my activities, believing that the next advances in teaching and learning would occur there, where the relevance of education was subject to tests of relevance and cost benefit analysis, rather than in higher education. In retrospect, I feel I made a wise choice, but as an educator, my heart has always been where I undertook my first innovative attempts, in the college classroom.

The Design of Cross-Cultural Training: An Alternative to the University Model

with Richard L. Hopkins

The inapplicability of traditional university-based training has become a chronic complaint in organizations which must prepare large numbers of persons for service overseas. In the Peace Corps, for example, which in almost seven years now has trained more persons for overseas work than any other civilian government agency, complaints about the irrelevance of traditional classroom training have been growing steadily since the first Volunteers entered training. (The Peace Corps continues to train most of its Volunteers at universities, for a variety of reasons not

having to do with the quality of training; but a vigorous effort is made to influence the training institutions to design programs that differ sharply from the standard curriculum design.)

The complaints are not directed toward the content of the traditional academic disciplines that bear on overseas work. The content can be relevant to performance in an alien culture; moreover, the acknowledged experts in the subject matter fields appropriate to overseas work are found in universities and colleges for the most part. The dissatisfaction is with the ways in which such subject matter is taught.

When returned Peace Corps Volunteers talk about their training, they do not complain about incompetent professors; they complain about the sense in which their experiences in training, however interesting or well presented they may have been, simply did not prepare them for the total life they had to lead overseas. Despite the overall success of the Peace Corps, it has not been uncommon for even a "good" Volunteer to take five or six months, or one-fourth of his tour overseas, to become fully operational in an overseas environment.

Now prospective Peace Corps Volunteers are highly motivated students, keenly aware that their success in a strange and alien environment will depend in large measure on their ability to deal with the dynamics of the culture in which they will be working. Above average in commitment to their work, energetic, imaginative and intelligent, they exhibit a happy blend of attitudes and motives. Yet, primed for a really stirring training experience as they are, many of those who have completed their two years abroad seem unusually dissatisfied with the training that preceded their

overseas tour. Somehow training had little more bearing on what actually happened to them overseas than the rest of their middle class life experiences, including their experiences in college prior to the Peace Corps.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the basis for such discontent by dissecting the relationships between the ends and means of training for cross-cultural performance. The conclusion to which the analysis leads is that the traditional methods of higher education simply will not get the job done. Nor are they well suited to training for any application situation that requires the ability to adapt to or to act in unfamiliar and ambiguous social situations. (Included in this category would be all types of community development or community action work, at home or abroad, especially when such work is with the disadvantaged, as well as work in institutional subcultures that differ basically from the "outside world.")

Further objectives of this paper are to present a conception of some learning processes that can lead to the ability to cope with ambiguity and to take action under stress, to present some design principles for such training, and to specify the kinds of skills and competence needed to design and operate effective cross-cultural training programs. Finally, the paper details a Peace Corps training program in which some of these design principles were tested.

The Problem of Education for Overseas Work

With few exceptions, formal systems of higher education in the United States provide training in the manipulation of symbols rather than of things; reliance on thinking rather than on feeling and intuition; and commitment to understanding

rather than to action. These systems were designed originally for the training of scholars, researchers, and professionals, for whom rationality, abstract knowledge, emotional detachment, and verbal skills are primary values. These systems, however, are applied across the board to almost all students, regardless of individual occupational goals. The criteria of performance used to evaluate the effectiveness of the traditional educational experience are familiar to all of us. They consist of tests, papers, reports, and the evaluation of performance on laboratory problems. With few exceptions, these methods of evaluation are verbal and intellectual.

There are attempts to provide action-oriented and experience-based learning models in many institutions of higher learning, but these less intellectual and more emotionally involving learning settings tend to be peripheral and ancillary to the main work of the college or university. Student governments, and student organizations, for example, have an ambiguous , unintegrated relationship to the faculty and the classroom. The status of Deans of Students and Director of Student Activities is cloudy when it is not second-class. The classroom remains a stronghold of rationality.

How the Traditional University Model Fails

When colleges or universities are approached to design or conduct training for work overseas, the resources made available to work on the problem are often those of the traditional part of the organization. Training design is usually based upon the university model.

Until quite recently, for example, the typical Peace Corps university training program was chopped up into components which conformed, by and large, to

university departmental lines, and time was assigned to each component on an hourly-bloc basis: so much to language, so much to technical studies, so much to area studies, and so on. Such a program was more than likely conducted in an environment that differed little from the one the trainee had just escaped, with all or most of its *in loco parentis* rules and regulations, its classrooms and blackboards, its textbooks and reading lists, its blue-book examinations, its air-conditioned dormitories and student-union atmosphere.

In many of these programs the environment was restrictive and authoritarian, a kind of exhausting endurance contest, which the trainee survived by a sort of game-playing designed to get him through the Peace Corps' selection process as painlessly as possible. Recognizing that *something* ought to be different in a Peace Corps program, university project directors typically designed programs that ran from dawn to dark—and beyond—up to as much as 65 or 70 hours a week of intensive instruction for 11 to 15 weeks. Thus, although one of the prime objectives of training was to convince the prospective Volunteer that he was no longer a college student, he was placed in a training environment where he was treated as one.

In any case, the goals and methods of this model focus upon the development of the student's intellectual capacity and on a certain kind of gamesmanship that enables him to *cope* with the training program. There is no manifest concern with his feelings, with an ideal behavior model, or with the interpersonal aspects of the work he may be doing. Students in a typical university setting spend most of their time reading and writing, more time talking about ideas than acting on them; and their

professors are much more interested in students' ideas than in their feelings. To be emotional as opposed to being rational and objective, at least in the classroom, is to transgress the bounds of appropriate student or professorial behavior.

Universities and colleges do succeed in influencing students to move toward the traditional goals. Students do become more rational, more critical, more detached, and more adept at the manipulation of words, symbols, and abstractions. In terms of the desired outcome of training for cross-cultural work, the university model can provide an *intellectual* understanding of cultural diversity, of values and assumptions that differ from their own.

The Missing Interpersonal Links

Nothing in this paper should be construed as suggesting that this kind of understanding is of no value or that it is totally irrelevant to overseas work. It does not, however, provide a trainee with all he needs overseas. Its weakness is that in those aspects of overseas performance having to do with interpersonal effectiveness the traditional model offers little help. This is a serious weakness. The experiences of all our overseas agencies—private, governmental, religious—have demonstrated that the human elements of overseas work are at least as important as the technical ones in the success of a job or mission, and that overseas personnel are much more likely to be deficient in these human aspects of work performance than in technical skills. The gravest problems of Peace Corps Volunteers, said David Riesman in a recent seminar on the Peace Corps as an educative experience, are "emotional and interpersonal."

By interpersonal effectiveness we mean such functions as establishing and maintaining trust and communication, motivating and influencing, consulting and advising—all that complex of activities designed to inculcate change. In overseas jobs, the performance of these relationship activities must take place across differences in values, in ways of perceiving and thinking, and in cultural norms and expectations.

Divergent Goals Detailed

These requirements suggest a very different set of goals from those of the university model. To sharpen the contrast, here in Table 19.1 are some important and divergent goals of the two educational enterprises.

Table 19.1. Contrasting Educational Goals of University and Overseas Education

Some Major Goals of University Education	**Some Divergent Goals of Overseas Education**
Communication. To communicate fluently via the written word and, to a lesser extent, to speak well. To master the languages of abstraction and generalization, e.g., mathematics and science. To understand readily the reasoning, the ideas, and the knowledge of other persons through verbal exchange.	***Communication.*** To understand and communicate directly and often nonverbally through movement, facial expression, person-to-person actions. To listen with sensitivity to the hidden concerns, values, motives of the other. To be at home in the exchange of feelings, attitudes, desires, fears. To have a sympathetic, empathic

	understanding of the feelings of the other.
Decision Making.. To develop critical judgment. the ability to test assertions, assumptions, and opinions against the hard facts and the criteria of logic. To reduce susceptibility to specious argument and to be skeptical of intuition and emotion. To search for the best, most rational, most economical, and elegant solution.	***Decision Making..*** To develop ability to come to conclusions and take action on inadequate, unreliable, and conflicting information. To be able to trust feelings, attitudes, and beliefs as well as facts. To search for the *possible* course, the viable alternative, the durable though inelegant solution.
Commitment. Commitment is to the truth. It requires an ability to stand back from ongoing events in order to understand and analyze them and to maintain objectivity in the face of emotionally involving situations. Difficult situations are handled by explanations, theories, reports.	***Commitment.*** Commitment is to people and to relationships. It requires an ability to become involved. to be able to give and inspire trust and confidence, to care and to take action in accordance with one's concern. Difficult situations are dealt with by staying in emotional contact with them and by trying to take constructive action.

Ideals. To value the great principles and ideals of Western society. social justice, economic progress, scientific truth. To value the sacrifice of present rewards and satisfactions for future advancement of these ideals and to find self-esteem and satisfaction from one's contribution toward distant social goals.	***Ideals.*** To value causes and objectives embedded in the here-and-now and embodied in the groups and persons in the immediate social environment. To find satisfaction, enjoyment, and self-esteem from the impact one has directly on the lives of others. To be able to empathize with others who live mostly in the present and to work with them toward the limited, concrete goals which are important to them.
Problem Solving. A problem is solved when the true, correct, reasonable answer has been discovered and verified. Problem solving is a search for knowledge and truth. It is a largely rational process, involving intelligence, creativity, insight, and a respect for facts.	***Problem Solving.*** A problem is solved when decisions are made and carried out which effectively apply people's energies to overcoming some barrier to a common goal. Problem solving is a social process involving communication, interpersonal influence, consensus, and commitment.

Even though the goals on the left are not universally honored in American colleges and universities, they do represent a spirit or ideal of academic excellence. They have a pervasive influence on the values and behavior of educators. They are important goals that have contributed much to our civilization. The transfer of these goals from generation to generation is not the least important function of higher education. The trouble is that they are often not relevant in an action situation.

The goals on the right above are typical of the aims of Americans working closely with counterparts in overseas situations. They are not universal, but they represent the reach and thrust of many persons who are concerned and active in the improvement of overseas effectiveness. These goals are also operative in a number of domestic programs, especially in community development activities.

Contrasting Learning Styles or Meta-Goals

University education and cross-cultural training are sharply different, too, in what Schein and Bennis (Schein and Bennis, 1965) have called the “meta-goals" of training. Meta-goals are approaches to learning and personal development which the learner acquires in the *process* of being educated in a particular system. In other words, meta-goals represent what the learner learns, in addition to the *content* of instruction, about how to approach and solve subsequent problems outside the classroom.

They represent the problem-solving processes, the learning styles, which the trainee or student becomes committed to in the course of his educational experience. Meta-goals have to do with "learning how to learn." In some learning settings, for

example, an authoritative person acts as the source of solutions to problems, while in others the learner must look to peers or to himself for information and suggestions. Such differences can be critical in overseas work.

In Table 19.2. are listed some meta-goals of university education, contrasted with meta-goals which seem appropriate for the cross-cultural situation.

Table 19.2. Contrasting Metagoals of University Classrooms and Cross-Cultural Training

Metagoals of Traditional College and University Classrooms	**Appropriate Metagoals for Cross-Cultural Training**
Source of Information: Information comes from experts and authoritative sources through the media of books, lectures, audio-visual presentations. "If you have a question, look it up."	***Source of Information:*** Information sources must be developed by the learner from the social environment. Information-gathering methods include observation and questioning of associates, other learners, and chance acquaintances.
Learning Settings: Learning takes place in settings designated for the purpose, e.g., classrooms and libraries.	***Learning Settings:*** The entire social environment is the setting for learning. Every human encounter provides relevant information.
Problem-Solving Approaches: Problems are defined and posed to the	***Problem-Solving Approaches:*** The learner is on his own to define problems,

learner by experts and authorities. The correct problem-solving methods are specified, and the student's work is checked for application of the proper method and for accuracy, or at least for reasonableness of results. The emphasis is on solutions to known problems.	generate hypotheses, and collect information from the social environment. The emphasis is on discovering problems and developing problem-solving approaches on the spot.
Role of Emotions and Values: Problems are largely dealt with at an ideational level. Questions of reason and of fact are paramount. Feelings and values may be discussed but are rarely acted upon.	***Role of Emotions and Values:*** Problems are usually value- and emotion-laden. Facts are often less relevant than the perceptions and attitudes which people hold. Values and feelings have action consequences, and action must be taken.
***Criteria of Successful Learni*ng:** Favorable evaluation by experts and authorities of the quality of the individual's intellectual productions, primarily written work.	***Criteria of Successful Learn*ing:** The establishment and maintenance of effective and satisfying relationships with others in the work setting. This includes the ability to communicate with and influence others. Often there are no criteria available other than the attitudes of the parties involved in the relationship.

At the level of meta-goals, university education and cross-cultural training diverge significantly. The sources, settings, and approaches of the former tend to be formal, bookish, rational, dependent on authority, and lacking in opportunities to gain competence in learning through interpersonal contact.

Need for Freedom to Learn Independently

They differ profoundly along the dimension of freedom. It is here that the inappropriateness of traditional educational systems for overseas work is most evident. The high degree of control and dependence upon authority common in the college classroom does not lead to the development of a learning style facilitative of success in an overseas environment. This is not just because freedom is a good thing and everyone ought to have a lot of it. It is because so much external control implies a dependency on experts and authorities for direction, information, and validation. When the learner is deprived of these sources of support, as he is almost certain to be in the overseas environment, he is in an uncomfortable and sometimes emotionally crippling situation. He not only must solve new problems in a new setting, but he must develop a new learning style, quite on his own. This experience—not knowing how to learn without traditional supports—may be productive of a good deal of the anxiety and depression grouped under the rubric, "culture shock." It is certainly responsible for much individual failure, even when it does not lead to chronic depression and anomie.

Education for cross-cultural applications should train the individual in a system of learning operations that is independent of settings, persons, and other information

sources not found in the overseas environment. If the trainee can be educated to be an effective and independent learner, he need not be filled with all the information he can contain before going into his new job. He will have the capacity to generate his own learning as needed. Indeed, he will have to generate his own learning in any case, whether he is trained to do this or not, for the simple reason that no training agency can train for every exotic contingency, for every aspect of life and work in another culture.

Risks of Emotional Encounter

The other dimension on which the two learning models described above differ is that of encounter—the extent to which the emotions,, values, and deeper aspects of the self are actively involved, touched, and changed in the learning process. The intellectuality and the formality, the emphasis on ideas and on the written word, the appeals to logic and reason implicit in university education, all combine to encourage an emotional distance from the learning material and a relativism about values.

But it is not possible to maintain such emotional distance from the sights, the smells, the sounds, and the customs of an alien culture. (And for one who is attempting to effect change or to act as an advisor in another culture, it is certainly not desirable, either.) Those aspects of life which in one's own culture are familiar and which would be supportive if they were present overseas (eating habits, standards of hygiene and cleanliness, language, social systems, subliminally perceived signals of all kinds) are *not* present; and their absence is emotionally disruptive. One's assumptions and values are called into question again and again by the most trivial kinds of events.

The interpersonal competencies that work well in one's own culture suddenly do not work any more. The cues are different. One can avoid the encounter only by retreating into some kind of physical or emotional enclave, into the kinds of American compounds that wall off "Yankees" from "natives" all over the world.

Education in the classroom teaches one to deal with emotionally loaded questions of value and attitude by analyzing and talking about them in an atmosphere of emotional detachment. Such a scholarly, scientific attitude is appropriate to the task of *understanding;* but by sidestepping direct, feeling-level involvement with issues and persons, one fails to develop the "emotional muscle" needed to handle effectively a high degree of emotional impact and stress. Lacking "emotional muscle," the individual under stress tends to withdraw as much as possible from exposure of his self-esteem or, at the other extreme, he impulsively risks too much in an effort to get the anxiety and suspense over with. Either of these reactions to stress can, and often does, lead to failure overseas. Thus an important objective in training for overseas work should be the development in the trainee of the ability and willingness to take moderate emotional risks in situations where his sense of self-esteem is involved.

The concept of moderate risk taking can be illustrated by examining the alternatives one faces when a friend or colleague has become noticeably unapproachable, cold, and unresponsive. The alternative actions one may take may be classified as low, moderate, or high-risk, according to which emotional impact is likely to result to one's self-esteem. Low-risk alternatives might include withdrawal from

the relationship or resort to written rather than oral communication. High-risk alternatives might include retaliation with some kind of personal attack on the colleague, reproaches for his unfriendliness, or demands to his face that he change his behavior. The low and high-risk approaches allow the causes of the situation to remain unknown and not dealt with. They are designed more to ease the tension and uncertainty than to solve the problem.

In contrast, the moderate-risk approach is characterized by a willingness to increase tension somewhat in order to obtain information about the difficulty. Such an approach might take the form of asking the other person if there were anything the matter; indicating that one was puzzled about the behavior of the other; trying to arrange increased interaction in non-work settings to see whether a relationship could be built on some more personal foundation; and so on. The important thing is not that these attempts be successful in resolving the problem but that they develop more information about it with low risk of further damage to the relationship. They also all involve some increase in tension for the subject, since failure might be painful. Moderate-risk approaches require more ability to stand emotional tension over a period of time than do the others.

The ability to deal directly with a high degree of emotional impact is not likely to be developed in the university classroom. The kinds of problems dealt with in the classroom neither require nor reward attempts to turn the learning situation into an opportunity for interpersonal encounter.

In summary, then, the classroom approach is poorly adapted to training persons to operate in settings, overseas or anywhere else, where they must define and attack problems without the aid of authoritative or expert assistance (freedom), and where the degree of emotional, attitudinal, and value involvement is so high as to require dealing directly and continually with emotionally laden issues (encounter).

An Alternative Model for Cross-Cultural Training

Design principles for cross-cultural training differ from those of the university classroom. The purposes of the former are to: (1) develop in the student more independence of external sources of decision, information, problem definition, and motivation; (2) develop in the student the "emotional muscle" he needs to deal constructively with the strong feelings which are created by conflict and confrontation of values and attitudes; (3) enable him to make choices and commitments to action in situations of stress and uncertainty; and (4) encourage him to use his own and others' feelings, attitudes, and values as *information* in defining and solving human problems.

Design Principles

There are a number of design principles which follow directly from these aims and goals.

Problem solving. The individual should be continually exposed to situations that require him to diagnose what is going on, define a problem to solve, devise a solution, and take action upon it. Because information and theory which are not used in the problem-solving process will not be readily available to the learner when he must

solve problems under stress, *information is not presented which is irrelevant to the solution of real problems which the learner is asked to solve in the here-and-now*.

Immediate data orientation. Immediate data are data gathered by observation of the physical environment and experience with persons involved in some problem, as distinguished from second-hand and abstract information obtained from experts and authorities. Learning to use immediate data, particularly from the social environment, frees the learner from dependence on authoritative sources of information. In cross-cultural training designs, problems should be constructed so that their definition and solution require the problem solver to develop information from the persons who are present with him in the problem situation.

Value orientation. Almost any action a person takes in a culture other than his own involves a confrontation between his values and those of the host country. In the marketplace, in work situations, in businesses, in social relations of all kinds, the visitor abroad must confront and cope with unfamiliar values and customs. Thus the problems which the learner deals with in training should also require a confrontation with opposing values. Furthermore, it is not enough that the learner examine these value conflicts with interest and detachment. In the cross-cultural application situation he will not be able to escape choices among conflicting values. The choices he makes will have important consequences. Therefore, in the training situation the learner should be confronted with problem-solving situations forcing him to *make choices among competing values which have consequences for his relationships with others in the training situation.*

Experience/action orientation. A basic problem in cross-cultural training design may be stated inelegantly as "connecting head and guts." This means that training designs which lead only to understanding are never good enough. Training problems must require that the person *experience* the emotional impact of the phenomena with which he is dealing, as well as understand them. He must be able to translate ideas and values into direct action, with all the attendant risks and difficulties. This requires that the learner influence others to action.

The principle, then, is that training situations should require that discussion and analysis lead to decision and action on the part of the trainee. This would imply, for example, that even the best led "discussion group" is only half a training situation, because it does not lead to action.

Use of authority. The authority of the educator or trainer should not be used to diagnose situations, define problems, provide information, or select alternative courses of action for the learner. If these functions are performed for the learner, he learns through dependency on expert or authoritative help.

On the other hand, plunges into anarchy and laissez faire may so traumatize the learner that he must spend most of his energy in defending himself emotionally from the learning situation. If he is allowed to, he may defend himself by side-stepping confrontation with problems and the hard work on their definition and solution which is the heart of the learning process as we have prescribed it. A delicate and unusual use of authority is thus called for.

It is clear that authority must not be used to deprive the learner of the opportunity to have his own experience. In general, he is not provided with information, but encouraged to seek it; he is not given solutions, but asked to come to conclusions on his own; he is not told what action to take or how to take it, only that action is expected of him.

Authority is used to support the learner in his first steps in an unfamiliar learning environment. At the same time, he is not left completely without sources of help. He is encouraged to experiment, to try and fail and try again, to take risks, to express himself and his values in words and action. He is rewarded by those in authority, not for succeeding or getting the right answer or expressing the right opinion, but for engaging actively and wholeheartedly in the learning process.

The restrictive side of this use of authority is that the learner *is* to some extent "fenced in" to keep him in contact with the problems he is expected to solve. Sanctions or punishments are applied, not for "goofing up" but for "goofing off"; not for making mistakes but for failing to act; not for taking an illogical or unreasonable position but for failure to take a stand.

Use of expertise.. A premise of this model is that a person does not learn to exist effectively in another culture simply by being provided with information about that culture. Although we can predict to some extent the general types of difficulties the learner will have to face in the cross-cultural situation, we cannot predict with any certainty the exact information which he will need to solve the particular difficulties challenging him.

We can, however, specify the conceptual framework which the learner needs to make sense of an alien and ambiguous social situation, and to take action in that situation. The learner's need for expert help is less to provide information about the *content* of the other culture than to teach the problem-solving *processes* and to develop the feeling-thinking linkages which are primary goals of our proposed training designs.

The expert interacts with the learner first through designing situations constructed so that as the learner follows his own natural adaptive styles he will be confronted with the processes and problems which it is desired that he assimilate. These are "free movement" situations in that the learner's specific actions and activities are only loosely prescribed: he is free to solve the problem in almost any way he chooses.

Further, the educator should help the learner reflect about his experience. The process of linking thought and feeling is as difficult when one begins with a concrete problem and moves toward conceptualization of the experience as it is when one starts with ideas and facts and tries to move toward action based upon an intellectual analysis. The educator does not simply construct problems and then sit back while the learner runs through a maze like a rat. At the very least, the educator should ask the learner what meaning the experience had for him and what, if any, connections and generalizations he can make between this particular experience and what he knows about himself, his goals in the cross-cultural situation, his own culture and the alien culture. His role is that of any teacher working intuitively to ask the right

questions at the right time. without this kind of guidance, it is just as possible for a person to have an experience-packed and emotionally laden but conceptually meaningless learning experience as it is for him to have an intellectualized and detached but emotionally bland one.

It is not unusual, for example, for returned Peace Corps Volunteers working as staff in a Peace Corps training program to see their overseas career as a kind of kaleidoscope of impactful, difficult, rewarding, but essentially unconnected, experiences. The returned Volunteer often does not have a clear conception of the processes which he used to adapt himself to the culture, to develop sources of information, or to formulate and test hypotheses about problems. When he communicates to trainees he often communicates at the level of "war stories." These anecdotes usually have as their implied message, "It's no use to prepare for much of anything, because whatever you expect, it is not going to come out as you anticipated."

Many of these veterans of the real world seem not to have been able to turn their own experience into real learning or to make it available as training for others. They have been through an experience-based learning situation in their overseas assignment without learning anything which they see as clearly transferable to other social situations. They have not been able to conceptualize their experiences, partly because they were not taught how to do so during their training period. But of course learning has occurred; it is latent, waiting for some structured conceptual framework into which it may be fitted in a coherent way.

The purpose of experience-based cross-cultural training is to inculcate somehow in the learner the ability to see and know what he is learning and has learned, so that he can articulate it afterwards and act on his learning consciously. The role prescribed for the teacher, the educator, in such a learning system is one of aiding in an inductive rather than the traditional deductive learning process. He helps the learner to verbalize his feelings, perceptions, and experiences and to draw conclusions and generalizations from them. If the teacher succeeds, the trainee will not only be more successful in the field situation; the entire experience will become a richer and more rewarding one for him. He will in one degree or another, have learned something about how to learn.

The principles of training enunciated here have been applied in an actual training situation. During the summer and fall of 1965 the authors collaborated—one as project director, the other as consultant—in the design and implementation of two community development training programs at the Peace Corps Training Center in Puerto Rico. The two programs will be referred to as one program: they were planned together, operated under the same design, and ran concurrently, although the training that is described took place at only one camp.

The Peace Corps Training Center consists of two camps located in a semi-rain forest area of central Puerto Rico about 15 miles from the coastal city of Arecibo. Each camp has a capacity of about 110 trainees. Trainees live in simple wooden cabins. There is no indoor plumbing or hot water. Nature is kind (despite 140 inches of rain a year), but life is primitive.

The camps were utilized until the fall of 1964 as so-called Outward Bound camps, where trainees were received before or after university training for three or four weeks of rigorous, graduated physical activities designed to confront trainees with challenges which stretched their capacity to deal with stress. In September 1964, however, after a small pilot project, the camps were converted into a full-scale training center for Latin America. Since that time only full-length (10-12 weeks' duration) training programs have been conducted there.

In the summer of 1965, the staff of the Training Center consisted of a director; five assistant directors; four psychologists responsible for trainee assessment; an administrative officer; an associate administrative officer and 30 maintenance workers and cooks; two nurses; about 15 native-speaking language informants; and finally, approximately 30 former PCV's from Latin America (average age 25), who comprised the core instructional and coordinating staff. The resident staff was supplemented in each cycle by 12 to 20 academicians and technicians who came to the Training Center for stays of three to ten days each.

The remainder of this paper will draw heavily on the training program. But it should be understood that it was not conducted under rigorous laboratory conditions. No systematic effort was made to collect objective data while it was going on. Two projects were involved:

The Ecuador RCA/Colonization Project included 40 trainees—two recently graduated engineers, eight nurses, and 30 so-called B.A. generalists. They were to work in newly colonized areas of the Oriente region of Ecuador as elementary

teachers or technicians and, what is more important, as community development workers.

The Latin American Regional Arts and Crafts Project included 42 trainees, all artisans (weavers, potters, metal workers, painters, and so on), several of them graduates of art schools or technical institutes. They were to be divided among three countries—Ecuador, Chile, and Bolivia—where they would work with native artisans in developing exportable handicraft items through the organization and administration of producer cooperatives.

As in all Peace Corps training programs, these trainees were subject to the Peace Corps' selection process. Eighty-two trainees reported for training; fifty-seven were sent overseas. Twenty-five trainees, in other words, either resigned or were, as the Peace Corps euphemism goes, "selected out."

In previous programs at the Puerto Rico Center, the director's authority role had been that of a traditional academic administrator. He designed the curriculum, scheduled all training activities, and left the subject matter to the faculty. For the most part, material was presented in the standard way: the instructors talked; the trainees listened, took notes, and asked questions. In this case, though, the young staff was offered autonomy and the chance to design and conduct its own program. The director and consultant would be on hand to participate as they were wanted; they would advise and make comments, but they would not run things. Responsibility lay within the staff itself.

Ultimately only about one-third of the staff accepted this offer of autonomy. They planned the experimental program over a period of about six weeks, meeting for several hours daily seven days a week. At the end, they were ready to take the risks involved in a model that differed significantly from the training they had received before their Peace Corps tours, and which also differed from that previously conducted at the Training Center.

General Characteristics

The training program, as it was designed, was to have these general characteristics:

- From their arrival, the trainees would be encouraged to participate actively in the planning of their program. In fact, in a sense, there would be no program unless they planned it by determining what kind of training program was needed in order to reach the objectives they had formulated.
- Formal classroom lectures would be played down; small group interaction would be played up, as would informal interaction of all kinds.
- Except for Spanish (four hours a day) and weekly evaluation sessions (to be discussed later), attendance at the "happenings" of the program would not be compulsory.
- An effort would be made to do away with component labels and thus to "integrate" the elements of the program.

- The program would be "experience-based." There would be ample opportunities furnished for "doing things," such as organizing and operating "academic" subjects through research projects, and so on.
- Trainees with needed skills would be urged to teach them to others, formally or informally. The emphasis, in short, was to be on trainee activity, not passivity.
- Emphasis would be placed throughout on awareness of the environment of the training program: of what was going on and how the trainees were reacting to it (and to one another). This was to be achieved through weekly small group "evaluation sessions." The personnel of these core groups, including the leaders, would remain fairly constant throughout the program.

The actual program did not turn out so neatly as its blueprint, of course. Some trainees took to this kind of design; some did not. Several staff members demonstrated anxieties under the inevitable pressures of the program. Although there were many pressures to revert to the standard model, somehow this never happened. Trainee morale was extraordinarily high; the trainees did in large measure take responsibility for their own training, and especially for defining the goals of training. Four major elements seem to us to have combined to make this a unique educational experiment.

Notable Elements of Successful Experienced-Based Training

Staff Preparation. First was the degree and intensity of planning that occurred before the trainees arrived. The kind of design we advocate here cannot be conducted by an unprepared staff or by a staff that has not confronted, grappled with, and in some measure dealt beforehand with most of the issues such training raises. When using traditional classroom models, one can assume that the other educators are using roughly similar designs. Much more communication among the training staff is needed to develop commitment to a new model, to test whether proposed training designs do in fact exemplify the model, and to resolve inconsistencies among different parts of the program.

It is not necessary to build a seamless united front in the planning phase; but in a program designed to shift the orientation of the trainees away from a dependence on authority to reliance on their own abilities to diagnose, gather data, and develop independent solutions, it is important that all the learning activities work toward this meta-goal. While there is room for the application of a number of personal teaching styles among staff members in such a program, it is important that there be basic consensus on the importance of giving trainees as much responsibility as they can manage, on the desirability of trainee activity-initiation as opposed to passivity-receptivity in all learning settings, and on the responsibility of staff members continually to help trainees build connections and bridges between their training experiences and the situations for which they are preparing in the field.

It is easy to provide trainees with experiences and problems to solve. It is more difficult to think through the learning and adaptation processes that must take place in these experiences, to help trainees devise ways of collecting data on them, and to aid trainees in conceptualizing the processes so that they may be applied in overseas situations which on the surface may seem to be radically different from the projects assigned during training. This form of elaboration requires the trainee to take account of the training experience, to dig into it rather than float on its surface to formulate hypotheses and questions. Without such elaboration, experiences are not converted into learning. Trainees should receive assistance in conceptualizing and generalizing their experience. It is impossible to reproduce or simulate or even to know precisely what conditions will be faced by trainees in an overseas situation. Crude simulations may be the best available. The *processes* of diagnosing and taking action on a problem are similar in the training and application situations, but the content of the problems is different. Unless the trainee has help in abstracting the process from the particular events he experiences, he will face difficulty in translating what he has learned into usable form.

He will not receive this help from staff members who have not been deeply involved in planning the program and who do not manifest the commitment that can result only from involvement. Involvement of this depth and intensity cannot be developed in a traditional administrative situation. The teacher must write his own job description, through interaction with his colleagues. The planning phase must constitute a training phase for the staff.

It is important, too, that much of the planning bear on process issues—that is, the interpersonal and behavioral patterns that can be expected to develop in the course of training. There is a very real sense in which the planning phase can be a kind of mockup of the training program that is to come, with the staff members experiencing similar conflicts and anxieties which they must work through before they are ready for the innumerable interpersonal transactions that will make up the actual training program. In planning for this program much of the focus of the work of the consultant was on staff process issues and their relevance to training. By the time the participants arrived, staff members could empathize with the confusion, hostility, and anxiety which this program would create for the trainees simply because the staff had experienced and examined similar feelings as they sought to relinquish the security of traditional classroom models and plan a venture into the ambiguous and unstable world of experience-based training.

Since small-group activities were a critical design characteristic in this model, the staff needed well-developed skills in managing group discussions. The need for skill was especially acute where trainees were being asked to reflect on their own performance and experiences in the more stressful parts of the program. Trainees understandably resisted connecting their behavior in the training situation with how they were likely to function in the overseas situation. When trainees sought to withdraw from the ambiguity and stress of being responsible for their own learning they had to be confronted with this avoidance pattern. All of these problems in learning require sensitivity, skill, and compassion on the part of the staff The

consultant spent considerable time with the staff working on these skills of discussion leadership. This involved both theory and practice during the planning phase and observation and consultation with individual staff members after the program was under way.

Use of Authority. The nontraditional use of authority was of first importance in this program. First, a studied effort was made throughout the program and in the basic design to wean the trainees (and the staff) away from a traditional reliance on authority in learning settings. Second, the staff sincerely tried not to use authority arbitrarily and especially not to use it in defining the goals of the training program for the trainees, or in playing any kind of role *in loco parentis.* The trainees were treated like responsible people capable of making their own decisions about the vital issues of training. Throughout the training program, the staff attempted to "level"' with the trainees, to keep them informed, and to avoid manipulation of trainee behavior by explicit or implied reference to the threat of deselection. As a result, the trainees tended to trust the staff, despite occasional difficulties.

The earliest manifestation of the nontraditional use of authority in the program came with the orientation, which was a prelude to the subsequent activities of the program. The trainees arrived in Puerto Rico with expectations of receiving more or less traditional classroom training, with perhaps a dash of exposure to Puerto Rican life thrown in for seasoning. The orientation was the first opportunity to break this set and to begin the staff-trainee dialogue which would, hopefully, lead to new attitudes and assumptions about the learning process. The trainees were told (although they

did not fully understand at the outset) how the staff would and would not use its authority; what kinds of information, direction, and help the staff would provide; and against what criteria their performance would be evaluated.

The staff made it clear that the trainees were responsible not only for the maintenance of the training camp but also for the organization of their own governing bodies, the parceling out of work, disciplinary action against slackers, and for the formulation of camp rules and regulations. The freedom to create social structures was so different from the attitudes of college administrators (most of these trainees were just a few weeks out of college) that it set them back on their heels.

They were further shocked to learn that the training program was unplanned, at least in the conventional sense, and that attendance at most activities was not compulsory. Instead, they were given written information about the countries and work situations into which they would go in some four months and were asked to meet in small groups with staff members to discuss what kind of training experience this information implied would be useful.

Thus the orientation began to build a conceptual framework for the training. It illustrated how authority would be applied in the program and it began activities in support of this framework. In a design of this sort, authority is not absent. It is used differently and with lesser intensity than is customary, but it *is* used. It must be. Trainees must know that there are people around who know what they are doing. Many of them need support in beginning to use their own resources for learning. They are well adapted, most of them, to the passive-receptive learning role. They do

not abandon it easily. Why should they, when it has worked for them in the past? They profit from authoritative encouragement, even when authority is used to prescribe the use of resources rather than to assure continued dependence.

As it happened, in the Puerto Rico programs there were wide variations in the ability of the staff to work with trainees in helping them to get the most out of their experiences. Those who were least committed to the experience-based model vacillated between excessive and inadequate control over trainee activities. On the one hand, they were concerned lest the trainees "get out of hand" and the staff lose control over the community. On the other, they tended to see the alternative to rigid control as being no staff influence at all over trainees. It seemed to be particularly difficult for them to conceptualize and practice the supportive authority discussed above, possibly because they had never been on the receiving end of it. This was a continuing concern throughout the training and was the subject of much discussion among both trainees and staff. It was also another major focus of the consultant's work with the staff.

Emphasis on Process. The third distinctive element in the program was the emphasis placed on process issues and on developing awareness of the total emotional, interpersonal, and organizational environment in which trainees and staff were living and working.

Throughout the training period trainees were urged to consider the camp and the training program as a community to be charted, researched, understood, and if need be, changed.

In the weekly evaluation sessions trainees were urged to review the organizational climate of the program, their relations with one another, and to comment on such phenomena as the power structure in the Training Center and the formation of trainee subgroups. The first group of trainees to arrive at the Center was encouraged to consider and deal with its feelings of inter-group competition arising from arrival of a second group a week later, and vice versa. When crises occurred, those affected by them were urged to analyze what had really happened and why the principals had acted as they did.

The "Project" Approach. The training program consisted of large and small problem solving projects, planned for the most part by the trainees themselves, who related to the staff through a complex of formal and informal interpersonal and inter-group transactions. The term "project" is used here to describe an activity requiring a learner to:

- Obtain information from the social environment (communication);
- Formulate and test hypotheses about forces and processes present in the environment (diagnosis);
- Select and describe some part of the situation which is to be changed or altered (problem definition);
- Plan action to solve the problem (commitment, risk taking);
- Carry out the action, enlisting the help and cooperation of others (influencing and organizing);

- Verbalize attitudes, perceptions, and tentative learnings from the experience (cognition and generalization).

Projects should be the heart of an experience-based training program. They may take almost any form: they may be short or long; they may overlap with other training activities; they may involve activity inside or outside the training location.

In the programs described here, trainees established cooperatives, they planted gardens and raised chickens and pigs, and they organized mutual teaching-learning activities for the sharing of specialized skills such as accounting, welding, and arts and crafts. They participated in such staff-designed projects as climbing rocks, trekking, survival experiences, construction tasks, and field training in Puerto Rican villages.

The emphasis on trainee-developed projects reinforced the staff's initial message regarding autonomy, responsibility, and initiative. The more aggressive trainees responded eagerly to the message; the less independent trainees tended to substitute the leadership of other trainees for the authority they found missing in the staff. Often, not being required to do anything specific, they did nothing. Some trainees were capable of accepting autonomy with regard to both the ends of a project and the means; the less creative, the less able, the less independent, the less trusting required the specification of ends before they could proceed to devise the means of getting there. In no case, however, were both the ends and the means specified. Tasks were designed to require trainees to diagnose a situation, develop a variety of possible approaches and select one, and to take initiative to produce the end result desired.

In the training-center-as-a-community project trainees set goals as homely as influencing the dining room to serve a wider variety of food and bringing other trainees to a higher level of sanitation and neatness in their living quarters. A principal activity was the trainees' persistent efforts to influence the staff to provide learning resources in the form of reading, lectures, and discussions. This hunger for learning was in sharp contrast to the avoidance games many of the trainees had shared with their college classmates only a few weeks earlier.

The critical factor in a project-focused program is the manner in which staff members support and assist the trainees in elaborating their projects. At one extreme, a project may be presented to a group of trainees to solve as best they can, with the learning falling where it may. No special effort is made to organize comparisons between experiences, to examine value issues or conflicts, or to encourage conceptualization of the influence styles and interaction patterns used by different individuals in planning and executing the action.

At the other extreme, an effort may be made to force learning from each part of the experience. Trainees may be convened in small groups and urged to formulate the problems of diagnosis, conflict, influence, and organization implicit in their project. Staff members participate in work and planning sessions as process consultants whose role is to help participants to observe and become aware of the social forces with which they are dealing in the here-and-now.

It is the elaboration of an experience-based training design which requires a high order of staff skills. It is much easier to provide trainees with problems to solve

than it is to think through the social and individual processes which will be going on, devise means of bringing them to light, and aid trainees in conceptualizing the experience so that their learning may be applied in later overseas situations which are on the surface quite different. It is here that the discussion leadership skills of the staff become critical, for they must be used to draw out of the trainee the principles and generalizations which are latent in the experience. If this does not occur, much of the potential learning will be lost.

Most of the staff worked hard at performing this function, although they found it among the most difficult of the responsibilities they had accepted in designing an experience-based program. Many of the trainees were adept at avoiding examination of the implications of this experience, particularly when the experience was stressful and anxiety-provoking. The staff were understandably reluctant to push such confrontation. Considerable learning was undoubtedly lost through caution and lack of skill, but during the course of the program the staff's effectiveness as inductive teachers increased steadily with practice.

Field Training. The trainees in this program spent a total of almost a month in small Puerto Rican villages where they faced problems of adaptation similar to those they would confront in Latin America. Here, too, efforts were made to assist the trainees in designing projects around their field living and to convert them into real learning afterward.

Puerto Rico, of course, offers an almost ideal transitional environment for trainees bound for Latin America. But if adequate help in conceptualizing and

generalizing is available, almost any alien situation can become a meaningful field training assignment in preparation for cross-cultural work. For urban dwellers, rural living may be alien; for members of the middle class, experience with the poor, angry, and the disadvantaged provides real confrontation. It is *desirable* to conduct field training in a culture similar to that for which a trainee is being prepared, but this is by no means essential. The important thing is to create as much "cultural distance" as possible from the life the trainee has been living, so that the values and attitudes that have worked for him before are no longer adequate. The cultural content may differ from that of the area for which the trainee is bound, but the process problems that grow out of confrontation are similar.

Integration of Content and Process. A persistent problem was how to make fact, theory, and opinion about the cultures to which the trainees were going and the jobs they were to do relevant to the problem-solving environment of the training program. On the one hand, lectures and books seemed to provide an escape from involvement and confrontation for those trainees who needed to defend themselves against the personal exposure of the program. On the other hand, for those trainees who did become heavily involved, the lectures and readings often seemed dry, abstract, and unreal. Trainees were given responsibility for organizing the use of visiting lecturers, which may have increased their feeling of responsibility, but it did little to connect the content to problem-solving processes. Martin Tarcher has recently described a feasible approach to the integration of content and process (Tarcher, 1966). In a program for community leaders, he created project teams as the central learning units.

The teams were responsible for using data from an exhaustive community survey to diagnose and plan action for development of the community. Outside lecturers were asked to familiarize themselves with the same data and to introduce only material directly relevant to the solution of the problems revealed in the data. Thus, content input was directly tied to the problem-solving process. There is strong reason to believe that only content which can be used and practiced in the training situation is usefully learned in an experience-based training program. Tarcher's design meets this criterion.

Behind the Design: The Teacher

Even those who are attracted to the approaches to learning we have described here may well ask where the teachers will come from to carry them out. Clearly, the desired skill mix is sharply divergent from the blend of intellectual competence and verbal facility found in good classroom teachers.

The teacher in an experience-based program is involved with people, not books; with real situations, not abstractions. He must collaborate closely with his colleagues. In his work with students, he will do little presenting and much listening. Instead of organizing content material, he will seek patterns, principles, and generalizations in the reactions of trainees. Subject matter competence is useful, of course, but it will not get the job done without true competence in the facilitation of learning through focus on process. The traditional systems in which most of us were formed do not value the subtle and sophisticated teaching skills described here.

There are, however, incompletely exploited sources of the competence which is needed. Industry, government, and the military all have had to develop methods of education that will pay off in immediately transferable skills. Educational innovation and change have been much more rapid in these applied settings than in colleges and universities. Industrial trainers in particular must be open to innovation and experimentation, or they do not survive.

For the overseas agencies, such as the Peace Corps and the Agency for International Development, a ready source of *potential* educators exists in those returning from the field. The Peace Corps program discussed here was conducted largely by former Volunteers, few of whom had previous teaching experience. As our strictures about staff planning and preparation imply, though, it cannot be assumed that persons with practical experience are necessarily qualified to teach and communicate it. This is a particularly unjustified assumption when the proposed training is highly inductive. The "practical man" has at his disposal a fund of "war stories" which purport to illustrate how to handle various concrete and specific situations abroad. But concrete and often-undigested experiences such as these are of limited value. The "practical" man, if he is to become an effective trainer, must learn to conceptualize the cross-cultural learning experience in terms applicable to experience based learning. For example, if a practical community developer can come to see working with trainees as "another kind of community development," then he is well on his way to translating his cross-cultural experience into training design. He will have begun to understand the learning process in which he participated

overseas and to consider how such experiences might be simulated for trainees in process, if not in content.

Many cross-cultural workers, however, are so practical and concrete in their thinking that they learn only those aspects of a culture which they directly encounter. They find it difficult to generalize beyond their own experiences. They may have learned, but they have *not* learned *how* they learned.

Then there are those who have taken part in cross-cultural experiences, who *have* learned how to learn, and who can, with further training, build experiences which will transmit what they know to others. To do this requires a clear understanding of such principles of learning as those described in this paper. The conceptual framework for experience-based training is not implicit in our educational background. We operate comfortably within a traditional learning system both as pupils or teachers, but this does not mean that we *understand* the conditions which facilitate learning and the transfer of learning to an application situation.

When, therefore, an individual is asked to participate in the design and conduct of training radically different in form from traditional models, he needs a basic education himself in the teaching and learning process. He needs supervised and assisted experience in design training, conducting it, and evaluating the results. He needs to work with others who are also struggling with the tasks of putting together and operating experience-based training designs.

The Climate for Innovation

The plans proposed in this paper have no fail-safe ingredients to protect them from failure. The launching of educational innovation requires more than a blueprint for success.

Fortunately, there are some resources and forces toward innovation of the kind we have proposed. Our culture is highly pragmatic. Americans are receptive to ideas that work. Supporting this pragmatism are the experiences of those who have lived in the cross-cultural situation, who have been open to their experience, and who have been able to generalize from it.

In addition, there is a small body of experience-based pedagogy which provides crude models of what this training may look like and accomplish. Practitioners of sensitivity training have been using experience-based pedagogy for some time. There are experimental schools, and even a college here and there, and a growing number of "practical" training settings where efforts are being made to develop and refine experience based education. The models are available, but they must be refined and adapted to the purposes at hand.

Lastly, the climate for educational innovation has never been better than it is now. For the first time in recent years students (and some of their professors) in institutions of higher education are beginning to question the goals and procedures of their education. There is a hunger for educational experiences which involve the whole person, which get to the "heart of the matter," which seem to have a more direct connection with life as it is lived in our relativist, kinetic, peripatetic, crisis-ridden society. Perhaps this questioning is the prelude to changes in our diverse but

tradition-bound institutions of higher learning. In the hope of influencing that change this paper has been written. For we cannot escape the conclusion that the design principles we have. enunciated here might have validity in preparing people for the ambiguities of life at home, as well as for life abroad.