

# CONCLUSION

## MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

1. The need to develop people as better managers is widely recognised as an essential element of any public sector reform programme. People can be made more effective as managers if they develop relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes. Information is now growing at such a phenomenal rate and information technology provides instant access to so much information. So the importance of knowing a great deal is being superseded by knowing where particular information can be obtained and having the means to obtain access in a timely fashion. Developing skills, and particularly inter-personal skills, is more important to managers. The skills inventory of an effective manager includes communication (by mouth, pen and ear); negotiation; planning and decision-making; and delegating and appraising.
2. Knowledge and skills can be developed through training programmes, although the style of training needs to be very different depending on the content. For example, people do not develop good negotiating skills through being lectured on the topic. Participative approaches using role-playing exercises are more appropriate.
3. Even if someone develops every relevant skill and has access to every imaginable piece of relevant information, the result is that he/she is not a manager if the attitudes are wrong. Attitudes to the value of other people; to the value of providing service to clients of the highest possible standard; motivation; commitment; integrity; cultural and gender sensitivity – these and many others are important in developing good managers. Inspirational lectures can have a transitory impact on attitudinal development. What really changes people's attitudes is how they are treated and the reward/punishment systems that apply within their organisations.
4. An understandable response to identifying the importance of training is to allocate more resources to training institutions but success is not guaranteed unless there is a very close connection between the real needs of those to be trained and the training programmes provided. The training institution must also go through a change process, with a very strong client orientation ensuring that provision is demand-driven rather than dominated by the interests of the training staff. One way is to allocate all training budgets to ministries, forbid the use of the money for anything other than training and allow ministries to buy training from whichever organisation or individual best meets their needs. Given a "level playing field", if a training institution within the government structure cannot survive in these circumstances it probably does not deserve to survive at all.

5. One key issue is the attitude that managers have to the training of staff for whom they are responsible. "If my staff are trained they only get other jobs". "If my staff go on a course it disrupts the work of the organisation". There are clearly disincentives to encouraging the training of staff and the organisation needs to create some counterbalancing incentives. One way is to be explicit in the manager's appraisal process – what steps did you take this year to ensure the development of the staff for whom you are responsible? Reward systems change people's attitudes.
  
6. Elsewhere in the world there is much good practice of relevance to Africa. The Canadian Centre for Management Development is very closely associated with the Canadian public service reform programmes (PS2000) and its course programme is directly geared to supporting change. In the UK, the Civil Service College has been revolutionised by the approach described in paragraphs 4 and 5 above. The College now receives no core funding from its parent ministry and all its income must be earned by winning business from other government departments and external sources. This has required a complete change in the College's approach to market research, course design and course promotion. The fact that its programmes continue to grow demonstrates that its staff have learned to respond to the needs of ministries. Simultaneously, a Division within the Cabinet Office with no direct functional responsibility for the College, has been active in promoting staff development and the management systems needed to relate improved organisational performance and human resource development.

#### **SOME LESSONS FROM THE CASE STUDIES**

1. Training of middle and senior managers from whom permanent secretaries would be recruited.
2. Mandatory training for permanent secretaries in the managing change process.
3. Linking training with succession plan, promotion and salary awards.
4. Training is demand-driven as it is tied to advancement in the civil service.
5. Formulating and institutionalising training policy in the entire government.
6. Training of human resources becoming a high priority of government.
7. Increasing funding for training purposes rather than reducing the training vote as many African countries have done.

8. Demonstrating leadership will and commitment to increasing the skills for top civil servants, as in the case in Malaysia.