

that have worked with salesmen. This is an area where a rather simple piece of research could produce useful results.

The Image of Marketing

It is a matter of common observation that sales and/or marketing activity has never been particularly successful in attracting the interest of the more gifted students. The marketing area seems to be something that a great many people fall into in more or less haphazard fashion. Clearly, if we are to make a science and profession of marketing, it is necessary that the field acquire stature and repute

as a highly regarded career among young people, particularly the college trained. In this age of highly-developed techniques for image measurement, it could turn out to be worthwhile to conduct such a project for the purpose of finding out what the image of marketing as a career really is among appropriate audiences. It thus would become a means for determining the course of action that the American Marketing Association and others might want to initiate to bring about some change. The efforts that have been made in this direction thus far by the Marketing and Sales Executives group job training but the proliferation of short courses; and others have not been conspicuously successful.

Commentary on "Marketing Education and Marketing Personnel as Research Areas"

SEYMOUR BANKS

Marketing Education

Education in Marketing vs Education for Marketing

THE questions raised by this paper are pervasive for all industry. As the rate of innovation accelerates, we find that both the demands upon education and the qualities demanded for long-run success in business are changing.

It used to be that education was of two kinds: it was purely honorific and represented conspicuous display of ornamental rather than utilitarian arts, clearly differentiating such a person from others of less exalted status, two examples being the long fingernails of the old Chinese mandarin class and the classical education of the English aristocracy. Or else, education was clearly functional and vocational in the sense that it gave someone the tools of his trade which were usable with relatively little modification for his entire professional career.

However, we find that as innovation becomes the order of the day, and as our society becomes more and more open to movement from one class to another because inherited status is of less consequence, many of the old bases for education no longer are applicable—in fact, they may even be perverse in their performance. In addition, the question of the proper nature of education for professional performance in a world of accelerating innovation becomes quite difficult.

Smith and Cooke write from the perspective of collegiate professional training in marketing for marketing. However, several major issues need to be faced. First of all, there is an issue touched upon by Professor LeBreton in his 1966 presidential address to the Academy of Management; he points out the need to educate future administrators on the basis of a model of the administrative process which would have general applicability across insti-

tutional groups and environments. The question of interest is what contribution courses in marketing can make to executives who increasingly serve as administrators in more than one organization at a given period of time (in addition to their jobs, executives frequently serve as officers or directors of civic, cultural, religious, and educational organizations ranging from neighborhood to national scope) as well as movement across organizational types during their professional life span. Smith and Cooke suggest that courses in marketing may provide an efficient vehicle for teaching an understanding of contemporary society. The challenge, of course, is to create the courses which fit marketing into this broad cultural/professional perspective.

Second, let us turn to the people who become professionally involved in marketing some time in their working careers. Since neither students nor their future employers are likely to be very good predictors of careers of specific individuals, one must raise the question of the match between college training and future employment. In other words, we should discover what proportion of the people who work as professional specialists in marketing were trained in marketing and other disciplines and the relative performance rates of marketers trained by various collegiate curricula. These studies would determine how the demand for marketing executives was satisfied, and what happened to the potential supply of students trained in marketing and the identification of those curricula which seemed to do best in preparing people for high-level performance in marketing.

It must be made clear that the comments made in the previous paragraph are not to be taken as any fundamental criticism of the sincerity and effort of marketing educators. They have undertaken many

studies designed to improve the educational process both as to content and technique. The proposal instead is one which can be applied to all education designed for professional careers—whether they be in medicine or marketing, astronautics or advertising. All that is suggested is the application of marketing research to curriculum planning.

It is always worthwhile examining the functions now carried on by marketing executives in order to adapt curricula which will train people to carry out those functions in a better fashion than they would have without such collegiate training. However, we have to remember that we are dealing with a moving target. We must train now for the jobs that marketing executives will have ten years from now and not the functions which they perform today. Therefore, one should investigate for curricular development the functions that marketing executives will perform ten, fifteen and twenty years from now. Perhaps here one might try to extrapolate some current trends. For such a study, one would need to uncover the changes in the functions of marketing executives over the past fifteen to twenty years by type of company or area of marketing under investigation. Then such trends might be projected into the future, but not in a mechanical fashion.

Formal Education and On-the-job Training—Are These Enough?

One of the most significant current educational developments is neither formal education nor on-the-job training but the proliferation of short courses, professional seminars and conferences. These are often conducted by universities using their senior faculties in quite formal, if accelerated, courses as well as by college and university extension departments using a mixture of faculty and business people as instructors. Professional organizations are also deeply involved in this both for their own members and for the general business community.

Nor should this expansion be considered astonishing. In a period of the rapid conceptual and analytical development which now stirs marketing as a result of the mathematization of thought and the influence of computers on record-keeping and decision-making processes, the gap between previous collegiate education and current needs yawns larger and larger.

The best forecast one can make is that professional education will be intermittent throughout our future careers rather than being concentrated in four or five years of college or a year shortly afterwards in industry. Therefore, it is hoped that the discussions which Smith and Cooke recommend be expanded to encompass the increasing common pattern of periodic retraining of marketing personnel throughout their careers.

Marketing Personnel

Two issues arise from this paper. The first deals with the improvement of the flow of professional

talent into marketing—here we wish to examine both quantity and quality.

The other issue has to do with procedures for maximizing the performance among current marketing personnel. But since Smith and Cooke concentrate only on the demand side, we set that aside in the hope that the combination of on-the-job training and continued professional training mentioned in the section just above will cope with these problems.

Let us deal first with the improvement of the flow of professional talent into marketing. The question here is primarily whether one should rely upon haphazard chance for improved flow of able people, first to the entire field of marketing, and second to individual business enterprises.

The improved direction of personnel having the capacities for success in marketing toward this field requires two research challenges: the development of a battery of tests which can indicate the probabilities of success in various marketing business jobs or functions. The development of such tests is not a simple matter and requires, first of all, the identification of criteria associated with success and, then, the development of personnel tests which are both discriminatory and reliable.

The second area for increasing the flow of talent into marketing deals with the identification of attitudinal and motivational hindrances to pursuit and adoption of such a career. "Image" is a much overused word but it is necessary. What we are referring to here is the determination of the content of the image which marketing has in the minds of able, young people—the managers of tomorrow—as compared to other business and non-business functions. Also we should discover how each of these images was formed, if possible.

If hindrances to this career are identified, some realistic steps can be taken to overcome them or to render them less effective in keeping people from entering the field of marketing. The Smith and Cooke paper points out that the incentives for maximum performance among professionally-oriented marketing people are likely to be quite different from those which were previously used with salesmen. This is an interesting area and could well be investigated with beneficial results.

Time, Incorporated, and the Marketing Science

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Institute co-sponsored a seminar in Fall 1966 on the Crisis in Marketing Manpower to review the factors capable of influencing both the demand for and the supply of business and marketing manpower for the future. Several questions arose which demand satisfactory research, not the anecdotal evidence given there: whether the best students in liberal arts colleges really understand business and marketing; whether business careers really attract them; and why they choose careers in other fields, if they do.

Another major area left unsolved was how to carry on open, meaningful dialogues among business and university faculty and students from the widest range of curricula.

Let me close this discussion of the Smith and Cooke paper with a mild dose of heresy. Both their paper and my comments so far have dealt with college education and college graduates. But, need marketing become so professionalized that a college

degree is an absolute necessity? No recognition is given here of the need to maintain an open society so able men and women can rise from jobs as check-out and stock clerks, retail and door-to-door salesmen to as high positions as their native shrewdness and intuition can carry them despite their lack of formal education. Even though we seem to have shifted to a general expectation that all able men and women will be able to graduate from a four-year college or university, not all will indeed do so. So the challenge is to provide meaningful introduction to professional marketing in high schools and junior colleges.

Also, employers must be alert to the availability of real talent and drive among high school graduates or even high school drop-outs. Perhaps the return may not be worth the effort in training these people in the skills developed by colleges and universities, but this should be examined and not rejected out of hand.

MARKETING MEMO

The Rise of Free Markets . . .

East Europe's "market socialism" frankly acknowledges that an economy planned and administered by the state, even when run by the wisest and most honest of men, cannot deliver the goods, and that there is no substitute presently known to man for a competitive market and a tolerably free price system. So the East European states are moving toward decentralizing their economies by allowing prices to begin to reflect both costs and scarcities and by shifting power from the planners to the individual plants or enterprises. They are preparing for the day when enterprise managers will function not merely as robot executors of a national plan, but as relatively free agents, dealing directly with suppliers and customers, making most of their production and investment decisions, paying interest for their capital, and rising or falling on their profitability. Some countries are far ahead of others, which are holding back for reasons both plausible and arbitrary.

—Gilbert Burck, "East Europe's Struggle For Economic Freedom," *Fortune* (May, 1967), pp. 125-127, 234-244, at p. 125.