

is a recent article from *Electrical World* (Mar. 22, 1965) which discusses use of psychological testing by the electric utility industry.

The authority for BPA to use tests is contained in the Federal Personnel Manual, chapter 335, subchapter 3, sections 3-5B and 3-6; and chapter 337, subchapter 1-4 and subchapter 3-3 A and B. Excerpts from these references are also attached. Within the past few days, these regulations have been amended. We will, of course, comply with the new regulations.

After BPA concluded, for reasons I will discuss shortly, that psychological testing would be a valuable adjunct to the testing provided by the Civil Service Commission, we employed two professional consulting firms—Aptitude Testing for Industry of Los Angeles, and Psychological Service of Pittsburgh.

Both organizations are highly reputable, as attested by the list of their clients, including Aluminum Co. of America, Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp., Mellon National Bank & Trust Co., Westinghouse Electric Corp., Western Hydraulics, Ltd. (Borg-Warner subsidiary) and the Garrett Corp.

BPA has employed these independent consultants primarily to evaluate present employees who are candidates for certain vacant positions or for special training opportunities. Positions for which we have asked the consultants to conduct tests include trainee power dispatcher, senior power dispatcher, head-system operations section, substation operations superintendent, chief substation operator, and certain key managerial positions.

For entry-type craft applicants and prospective management trainees, BPA uses standard tests that we ourselves administer, such as the Kuder preference record-vocational, manual dexterity tests, and the Civil Service Commission's general aptitude test.

For each position in the psychological testing program, BPA provides a job definition and qualifications statement. The consultant selected to conduct the testing for the position then determines the appropriate tests to make up the "test battery," including achievement, interest, aptitude, and personality tests. The tests which are being used are limited in distribution by the publisher and are under the control of the contractors.

Thus far, BPA has spent a total of about \$15,000 with the two firms testing for a total of 29 vacant positions. Aptitude Testing for Industry has tested 58 employees at a cost of \$150 each. Psychological Service of Pittsburgh has tested 47 employees on a basis of \$25 per hour for professional time, \$10 for technical service, and \$6 for clerical service, if any is required.

The importance of psychological testing, we believe, should not be over-emphasized. The appraisal based on such testing is not the primary factor in management decisions as to promotion or transfer. It is one of many elements considered by management. Others are confidential appraisals from supervisors and fellow employees, educational background, experience, seniority, past performance, and interviews.

A combination of three factors led Bonneville to try psychological testing as an aid in selecting key managerial and operational employees. First, we are constantly looking for ways to improve our efficiency. Government agencies are sometimes criticized for alleged unwillingness to try new ideas, to streamline their organizations, to give better service to the public at minimum cost.

The management of any bureaucracy, public or private, must constantly fight a tendency to preserve the status quo, to do things today in the same way as yesterday without asking whether there may be a better way.

There's an old joke in bureaucratic circles that if you never do anything, you won't be accused of making a mistake. At Bonneville we reject such a philosophy. We are ready to try new ideas that seem to have merit. If we make mistakes, we regard them as the price of progress.

A second, and more specific, circumstance that led us to explore better ways of testing for certain positions was that we discovered from an attrition study conducted in 1962, that some 300 employees would be eligible for retirement or retired by the end of 1967.

Over 50 of these were in positions of leadership at the middle management level and above. Further study indicated that well qualified replacements for the 50 officials were not clearly identifiable in the BPA staff.

The third circumstance was that during the very same period many key employees would be retiring, the Bonneville program would be greatly expanding. In the 4 years that I have been Administrator, our construction program has increased from less than \$20 million to more than \$100 million annually. Incidentally, we have only increased the number of employees during this period by about 340, or less than 15 percent.