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The Utilization Of Women In The
Management Of The Bell System

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Personnel Relations
American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

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Introduction

A task force, studying the effective utilization of women in management, was formed early in 1970. While the Bell System employs more women than men, and while there are a sizeable number of women in management, the overwhelming majority of these managers are at the first level of management. The mission of the task force was to diagnose and evaluate the lack of utilization of women in higher management and to recommend approaches to provide for the full utilization of women in management.

This report summarizes the task force's findings and recommendations. It consists of five parts which are:

- I. An Overview
- II. Data on the representation of women in management
- III. Attitudes towards women in management
- IV. Organizational factors inhibiting progress in management for women
- V. Recommendations for the full utilization of women in management

I. An Overview

From the very start, the solution to the problem of the under-utilization of women in management seemed quite obvious: get more women into responsible higher management positions. Having thus "diagnosed" the problem, the "treatment" of the patient also seemed quite obvious - develop methods and strategies to move women into higher management positions.

This was easier said than done, for it soon became clear that there were many factors which tended to inhibit women from moving into higher management jobs. Some of these were factors that could be easily identified. Changing these factors, however, might be quite difficult. An example of such a factor are the attitudes held toward women in higher management. There are many types of attitudes that fall in this category. Some are held mainly by male management incumbents, others by women in management, and others by the public at large. Part III investigates this area.

There are other factors inhibiting movement in management for women that are not as "simple" to explain as attitudinal factors. These are factors that are directly related to the way that the organization operates as an institution. As a general rule these factors deal with the opportunities the system gives to its managers. These include opportunities to learn new skills, to take on new responsibilities, to assume the risks and rewards of management. Major differences exist in the opportunities afforded to men and women in the System. Part IV describes these factors.

In developing our diagnostic strategy, two aspects, which added to the complexity of the problem were considered. One was a matter of diagnostic evaluation, the other was a strategy for implementing change. From a diagnostic standpoint it was recognized that there were a variety of factors, many of them interrelated in a highly complex fashion that impede progress in management for women. Treating them as distinct entities, which is the way attitudes are handled in Part III and opportunities within the organization are handled in Part IV tends to oversimplify the problem. At the same time it does allow us to present the situation as it is.

From an implementation point of view, the committee felt at the

changing the status of women in management, the need for change, particularly , at the local operating level, was not widely felt. Changing the situation concerning the utilization of women in management might be easier said than done.

Both the diagnostic and implementation aspects of the problem resulted in a general strategy: no one single approach whether in terms of diagnosis, or in terms of recommendations could adequately attack the problem. Consequently our diagnostic approach was somewhat eclectic ranging from the gathering of "hard" data on the jobs held by women, to interviews and meetings with representatives of the operating departments and companies. Similarly the recommendations for implementation, outlined in Part V, can not be translated into the program or package applicable in all locations. It can and should be adapted to meet local needs.

II. Representation of Women In Management

The Bell System is the largest employer of women. It is also one of the largest consumers of female managerial talent. As of December 31, 1969 there were a total of 390,494 women employed by the operating companies. Of these over 53,000 or 13.7% of these women were members of management.

These figures look impressive until one examines the situation in depth. We do have a sizeable number of women in management, but virtually all of them are bottlenecked at the lowest management levels. For example, Table I presents the distribution of the operating telephone company force by level and by sex as of 12/31/69.

Table I

	TOTAL EMPLOYED	1ST LEVEL	2ND LEVEL	3RD LEVEL*
MEN	330,392	58,524	33,385	14,412
WOMEN	390,494	50,508	2,782	154
TOTAL	720,886	109,032	36,167	14,566
WOMEN AS % OF TOTAL	54.2%	46.3%	7.6%	1.1%

Figure I shows the same data graphically.

There is a disproportionate utilization of management men and women as one moves up the management hierarchy. Forty-six percent of our first level managers are women, less than eight percent of all managers at second level are women, and one percent of all managers at third level and above are women.

Another way which presents the bleak picture regarding the utilization of women in higher management is seen in Table 2, which compares the ratios of management jobs by level to the number of men and women holding them. At first level the ratios are about equal. About half of our work force are women, and about half of our first level managers are women. Beyond first level, however the disproportion is quite evident.

What this means is that promotional opportunities beyond first level are not equal for men and women, despite the fact that there are essentially the same number of male and female first level managers. For example, the chances that a given male first level manager will reach district level sometime in his career, (all other things being equal) is about one in four or one in five. For an incumbent female first level manager, the odds become less than one in 300.

Table 3 presents a final look at the basic problem, showing both the number of management jobs by level and department. Percent summaries showing the composition of women by level for the last four years are also shown. Movement during this four year period has been quite slow; for all practical purposes the only change has been a slight increase in second level jobs held by women.

The picture presented by the preceding data is a bleak one, but the picture gets darker when the data is examined in greater detail. For example, 86 of the 154 district and above level jobs listed in Table 3 are classified in non-operating departments. This represents over half of all of the high level women managers. Only a few of the district and above women managers are functioning in line management jobs. The job titles of the vast majority of these managers, regardless of department indicates either a specialist assignment or a staff role. The few women that do progress in management, do not move into the general management mainstream.

Further analysis of similar data yielded variations around the same theme. Instead of continuing to empirically study the problem the committee decided to learn why women were not utilized more fully. Parts III and IV present these factors.

Comparison by level of men and women in management . . .

Operating Companies - 12 - 31 - 69
Management Employees

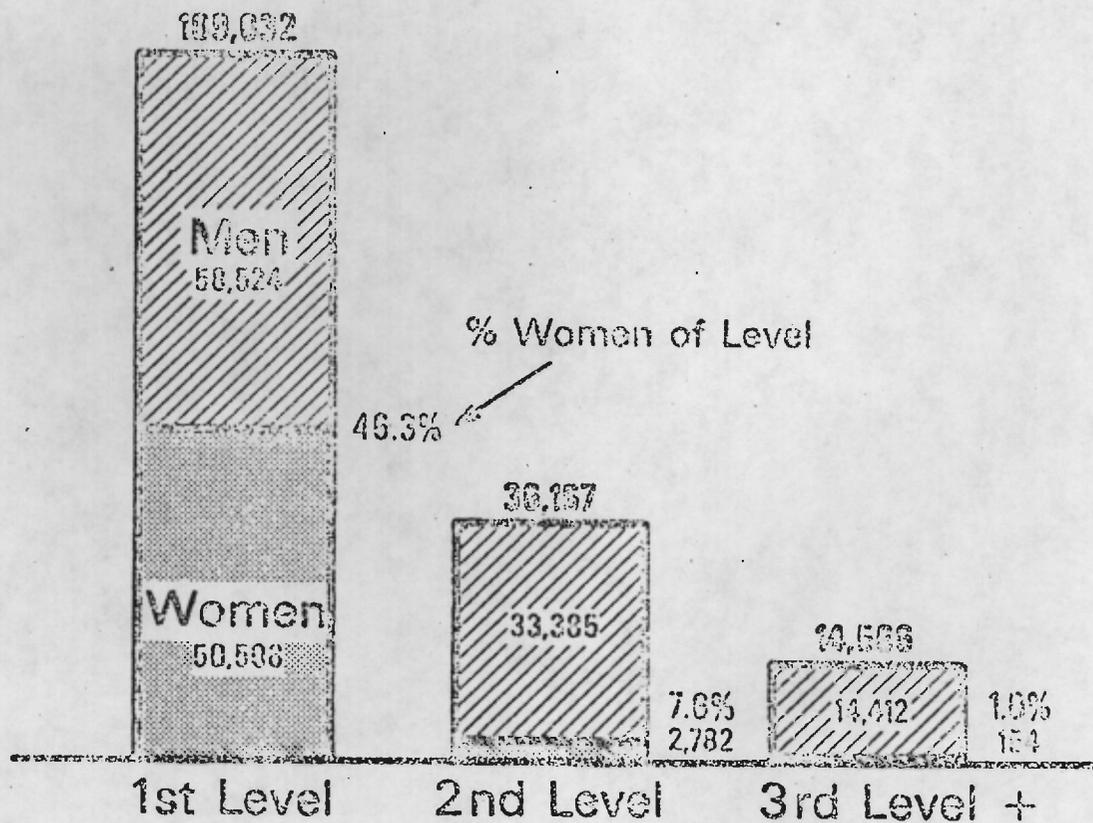


Figure I

Table 2

Incidence rates of men and women in management . . .

Operating Companies — 12-31-69

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
1st Level	1:6	1:8
2nd Level	1:10	1:140
3rd +	1:23	1:2536

Table 3

Management women by department
by level - Operating Companies
12 - 31 - 69 . . .

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3+</u>
Accounting	5,944	632	19
Engineering	3,384	111	3
Commercial	9,336	391	18
Marketing	2,984	152	5
Plant	4,283	62	3
Traffic	17,313	1,051	20
Other	7,264	383	86
Total	<u>50,508</u>	<u>2,782</u>	<u>154</u>
<p>% of Total</p>			
1969	94.5%	5.2%	0.3%
1968	95.0%	4.7%	0.3%
1967	95.2%	4.5%	0.3%
1966	95.6%	4.1%	0.3%

III. Attitudes Toward Women In Management

The previous examination of the statistics of women in management attests to the fact that an important source of talent for managerial positions has been virtually untapped. In examining the causes preventing women from playing a more important role in the management of the business, it seemed clear that a majority of these were attitudinal in nature. This section discusses the attitudes, beliefs, feelings and opinions that bear upon decisions to promote women to higher management positions.

During the team's earliest deliberations a list of attitudes inhibiting progress in management for women was postulated. This list was not intended to be all-inclusive but merely representative of the many biases present in this area. This list, for all practical purposes was quite representative - managers in many different locations expressed similar views.

For example, the team held several fact finding meetings with the operating departments at A. T. & T., and with the personnel and operating departments in the field. The managers attending these meetings expressed beliefs and opinions which essentially were the same as the ones postulated by the team. It seems reasonable to infer that the managers interviewed (both men and women) are representatives of Bell System managers in general.

The general conclusion that one sees is that management, as a group, is quite reluctant toward placing women in management jobs at second level and above, unless it is a staff position, outside of the general management mainstream.

It would be unfair to suggest that each concern or belief expressed by these management representatives was totally unfounded or invalid, or that each manager interviewed was rigidly holding on to outmoded beliefs. For example, the community provides both a social and a political setting in which the company operates. Therefore, in a small rural community a female manager may not, as suggested, be acceptable to the local businessman.

Managers who are favorably disposed toward promoting women to more responsible management positions may refrain from doing so because of their superior's attitude, because their motive may be questioned, or for any other

sometimes at the expense of some more competent women.

Since attitudes affect many aspects of business behavior and appear to be a major factor inhibiting the full utilization of women in management, it may be useful to examine some of the specific attitudes expressed by Bell System managers. These are shown in Table 4.

As noted this list is not all inclusive. It does represent a major portion of items listed when managers were asked to suggest factors preventing women from moving into higher management. These attitudes and beliefs are separated into four categories:

- Attitudes pertaining to women at work
- Attitudes pertaining to male-female competition
- Attitudes pertaining to characteristics attributed to women by men
- Attitudes pertaining to society's role expectations

It should be pointed out that many of these statements could be placed in several categories; that the distinctions noted are somewhat arbitrary. Nonetheless, each one of these beliefs contribute in some part to impeding the progress of women in management.

One thing that became extremely clear during the fact-finding meetings with management representatives was that many traditional beliefs concerning women were found, when challenged, to be quite questionable. A good example of this phenomena was a frequently stated belief that women are not as mobile as men.

When this belief was examined in greater detail, several questions needed realistic answering. For example:

- is mobility required solely for mobility's sake?
- is mobility crucial to the growth and development of the manager?
- how much "real" mobility is actually required?
- should mobility still be regarded as a qualification for advancing in management?

The managers attending our fact-finding meetings indicated after reflecting on these and other questions that mobility, though desirable, is certainly not a requirement as in the past. This is particularly true in larger urban areas where a manager can spend an entire career in the same vicinity. Other aspects of mobility should also be considered. For example, marital

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status appears to be a key factor in mobility: single women do not appear to have as much of a mobility problem as do married women. However, even a married woman may relocate if the management job is attractive enough.

This example is cited to indicate that many of the attitudes commonly held concerning women in management may be unfounded. Others may be more realistic. It is not surprising that the predominating beliefs, opinions and feelings concerning the roles women should play in society have transferred to industry and affect the jobs that are offered to women.

While there are programs designed to deal with attitude change, the committee's feeling is that emphasis in this area should be secondary to other factors which will be discussed in subsequent sections. It is strongly felt that most of the attitudes towards women in management are not directly amenable to change. Instead these attitudes will have to be dealt with indirectly through increasing positive experiences with women in higher management jobs. The number of women both willing and desiring to compete with men on an equal basis appears to be increasing. It is up to the System to provide the best female talent with the opportunities to be selected, developed and utilized in the best possible way. In this manner the situational aspects regarding the acceptance of women as higher level managers will change. This in the long run seems to be the most desirable and most effective way of creating behavioral change.

Table 4

Attitudes Unfavorable To Women In Management

A. Attitudes Pertaining To Women At Work

- Women in management are perceived as specialists, generalists are usually promoted.
- Women do not have as long a career as men due to marriage and pregnancy.
- The best women leave before a management job is available to them.
- Women should work in staff jobs only.
- Women are not as mobile as men.

B. Attitudes Pertaining To Male-Female Competition

- Women in management can't compete with IMDP men.
- Women in management are a threat to men.
- Men and women differ in terms of achievement motivation.
- Women cannot be appraised on the same grounds as men.
- Women are not as competent as men.
- In order to manage men, a woman must have "masculine" characteristics.
- Male managers have difficulty in giving feedback to a woman.
- The motives of a supervisor promoting a woman are questioned by peers and supervisors.

C. Attitudes Pertaining To Characteristics Attributed To Women By Men

- Men cannot consider women as equals.
- Men have longer range goals than women.
- Women just don't want to manage.
- A woman cannot be held fully responsible for her work.
- Women cannot supervise men in the field.
- Women think differently than men -- those who get into management think more like a man.
- Women prefer staff jobs.
- Women are too emotional.
- Women come into the company with specific job goals, whereas men have more general goals.
- Women cannot be approached like men, i.e., one cannot make the same

- Men will not want a management job which many women also hold, i.e., the position is regarded as a woman's job.

D. Attitudes Pertaining To Society's Role Expectations About Women

- Some jobs are for men only.
- Women have fewer obligations to meet.
- Women should subscribe to a passive, domestic image.
- Men and women should not work together too closely.

Part IV. Organizational Factors Inhibiting Progress In Management For Women

The preceding sections of this report have shown that women are not included in higher management positions and that one major cause of this was the attitudes and beliefs held concerning women as managers. A second major cause, which inhibits women from progressing into higher management in significant numbers, concerns the way the organization provides men and women with opportunities to manage. This section examines the various organizational factors which essentially provide great differences in the opportunities men and women have in progressing into higher management.

As a general rule, most management women are not in the mainstream for higher management progression. Several dominant organizational factors which tend to prevent women from progressing into higher management positions. These organizational factors, while not mutually exclusive, are:

- Manpower planning efforts for women
- Selection of women managers
- Training and development programs for women
- Utilization of women as managers

This section will examine each one of these areas in detail, emphasizing the organizational factors which essentially provide different opportunity factors for our women managers.

(1) Manpower Planning Efforts For Women

The failure to include women in manpower planning programs is seen as one of the major organizational factors inhibiting movement into higher management positions for women. To a large extent this area is seen as the keystone for providing management opportunities for women.

On a system wide basis the manpower planning approaches and models both men and women are not very sophisticated. It should be noted that while these remarks are aimed at utilizing women in management, they also apply to the intelligent utilization of all talent available to the organization. To

lack of sophistication of our manpower planning efforts for women, however, is seen as a symptom caused by many factors, of which three seem to stand out. These are:

- There is no high management official specifically responsible for the progress of women in management
- Women are not included in manpower projections for middle management jobs
- There is no functional organizational plan or structure which provides an outlet for manpower assignments

(2) Selection Of Women Managers

A second major area which inhibits progress in management for women deals with existing selection policies and procedures. These should be re-evaluated in terms of providing better utilization of women in higher management.

A basic consideration in the selection of managers is that the characteristics required for success in management are similar for both men and women. If this assumption is a valid one then similar policies in selecting men and women for management should be developed. On the other hand, if different characteristics determine success in management for men versus women, then alternative policies should be considered.

What are the characteristics required for success in management? Management Progress Study findings indicate that the three ingredients related to success in management are ability, motivation and opportunity. These are labeled as "ingredients" because they all are needed and all interact with one another.

Ability factors, broadly defined, refer to the characteristics subsumed under the concept of general managerial ability. This includes cognitive, interpersonal, administrative and personality dimensions. Motivational factors relate to the individual's preferences for job related rewards derived either intrinsically or extrinsically. Opportunity factors relate to the organizational practices that effect how well a person can use their abilities in pursuing job related goals.

The three factors, ability, motivation and opportunity help to determine management success. Men and women do not appear to differ significantly from one another in either the ability or motivational dimensions. Opportunity factors,

however, clearly favor the talented male manager at the expense of the talented female manager. Alternative policies must be established for both the initial selection of managers into the company, as well as re-evaluating promotional policies within the company.

A. Promotional Policies For Women Managers

It was noted that the likelihood (all other things being equal) that a male first level manager will reach district level is about one in four or five. The likelihood that a female first level manager will reach district level is less than one in three hundred.

While women are promoted into management at about the same rate as men, the likelihood of promotion within management for women is negligible when compared to men. There seem to be two major organizational factors which are seen as basic roadblocks which are:

- Women are not considered as managerial (above 2nd level) candidates
- Women are not assessed or appraised for managerial potential

These are seen as interrelated and stem from the lack of manpower planning for women. Women are seen as filling a position rather than as moving through it. Positions are assigned on a terminal rather than on an assignment basis. In addition there is no formal organizational system (such as assessment for higher management potential) which would not only assist in identifying talent but also might serve as a vehicle for change.

B. The Initial Selection Of Women Managers

This area is concerned with external sources of management talent - typically the selection of the recent college graduate. Here again many of the problems inhibiting progress for promotion are seen. Two more or less unique dimensions are:

- Women are not recruited for higher management jobs
- Women are not considered to be as "permanent" as men

Separate recruiting standards are applied for the male and female college graduate, and while recent progress in this area has been made in terms of starting salary, initial management expectations differ considerably. Once again the male college graduate is expected to move through assignments rather rapidly, while his female counterpart is seen as occupying a more or less terminal management assignment.

Turnover losses of the young college graduate are always a consideration in initial selection. Women promoted from the ranks into management have demonstrated over a period of time, some degree of permanence. The fear that this

may not be the case is always present with the young female college graduate. Turnover data for both men and women college graduates hired directly into management, however, seems quite similar. In view of the limited progress afforded to the female college graduate, and the nature of her early assignments as compared to men, one would expect a higher turnover rate. The fact that it is almost comparable to men indicates a staying power that should be tapped.

It should also be realized that selection based on management potential and selection based on prediction of turnover are not similar in nature. Emphasizing turnover at the expense of management potential, particularly when turnover data for men and women college hires are similar, is seen as also inhibiting progress in management for women.

(3) Training And Development Programs For Women

A third major factor which inhibits the progress of women in management is the general orientation on the part of management towards training and development programs for women. More realistically this factor should be labeled as a lack of training or development opportunities for women.

While the manpower planning area was seen as a general influence which tends to inhibit organizational approaches to utilizing female talent, the lack of training and development programs for women is seen as a major problem area preventing women from obtaining the opportunities for relevant management experience. It was also noted that opportunity factors per se seem to operate differently for male and female managers.

In a sense, opportunity factors facilitate progress in management for men, and since as a rule they are not afforded to women managers they act as a hindrance in career progression. In effect then these enlarge the disparities for management effectiveness between men and women. Two essential opportunity factors are not available to women, in general. These are:

- Women are not included in special "schools" or programs
- Women are not given rotational experience for development

While there have been some exceptions in attendance by women in special developmental programs, the number of women in IMDP for example is insignificant.

Some programs have been exclusively male, for example no women have attended the Dartmouth or Carleton Programs.

Women are also not generally considered for rotational assignments. Rather, most management jobs filled by women are viewed as terminal line or staff assignments. Progress for a women typically is viewed as movement to a staff specialist role, rather than vertical movement in the management hierarchy. The lack of opportunity, either by training or by job experience helps to keep women from being in the mainstream of management progression.

(4) Utilization Of Women As Managers

The last major organizational factor inhibiting progress in management for women is an outgrowth of poor manpower planning models and limited opportunity factors. It is listed as a contributing factor but it can also be viewed as an effect rather than a cause. This, in general, is the underutilization of women as managers.

Two aspects of utilization of women managers are seen. These are:

- Not all management jobs are available to women
- Managerial skills present in women managers are not fully utilized

These two aspects represent the organization and individual approaches towards utilization. Both seem to indicate that women are not fully utilized as managers.

From an organizational point of view, there are many management jobs not presently available to women. This is particularly true at lower levels of management where job related experience is overemphasized at the expense of management skill. It is also an outgrowth of departmental philosophies towards transfer and rotation.

From an individual point of view, the skills required in many "management" jobs currently held by women are not supervisory in nature but represent special knowledge rather than special aptitude. It would seem that many assignments held by women on a terminal basis do not fully utilize the management skills of the job incumbents.

Part V. Recommendations For The Full Utilization Of Women In Management

This section examines several approaches designed to increase the utilization of women in management. It should be noted that the committee felt that no one single method or "program" was seen as the best or only approach.

When management representatives were asked to suggest ways they would feel might bring about desired changes, they invariably responded in one of two ways. At one extreme, they felt that no change was really needed. In essence they were rationalizing many of their attitudes and beliefs towards women in management. At the other extreme, some managers saw the need for change but did not know how to change the situation. Typically these managers responded by suggesting some form of a top management directive. Rarely did they see themselves in a position to change the situation.

These meetings reinforced the committee's belief that for the most part, the typical management person in the Bell System did not perceive a problem concerning women in management. This, when coupled with the many attitudes and beliefs about women in management, as well as the organizational stumbling blocks afforded women, suggest that a major effort is needed to educate our management people and provide the strong leadership that is needed in this area. As a general strategy, the team felt that a major emphasis should be placed on changing the opportunity factors available to women. This, in the long run, would "change the situation." For example, it seems quite clear that one basic reason for the disparity in utilizing men and women in higher management are the opportunity factors noted earlier. It was pointed out that these enlarge utilization differences: enhancing progress in management for men since they are afforded to men, and inhibiting progress in management for women since they are not afforded to women. Providing women with similar opportunities to get into the management mainstream (not, as feared by some, in creating special opportunities for women at the expense of men) is probably the most intelligent approach to this problem.

There are several ways which could be used to change the situation. One method would have each company examine its specific operations with particular emphasis to the roadblocks noted in Part IV. Depending on individual company needs various strategies should then be developed. An outline for this general program is presented in the Appendix.

Another approach, which could be adapted to specific needs is outlined below. This would require a formal project which would provide women the opportunities to move into higher management positions and at the same time would enable a comprehensive follow up of the success of such a project. Guidelines for implementing such a project are:

The team should contact several associated companies for the purpose of determining whether or not they would be interested and willing to participate in a research project aimed at appointing more women into higher management jobs. This project would afford women with opportunities to manage at higher levels and would contain follow up and evaluative procedures which would be used to determine the effectiveness of this project. The team should assure itself that the companies selected are meaningfully dedicated to the purpose of the program and have the appropriate conditions which would permit a project of this type.

Each Company selected should agree to assign the responsibility for this project to an Assistant Vice President. This person should be the coordinator and administrator of the project and the person with whom the Implementation Team should have contact.

The Company Coordinators should arrange with his Departmental Counterparts the kinds of management jobs which will be open to women at the second, third, fourth, and higher levels of management.

He should determine with them the number of positions at those levels that will be reserved for women. Objectives should be set, for example: 20% of total EMDP hires in 1971 will be women; 20-30% of all second level appointments

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and 10-20% of all third level appointments will be women.

The Coordinator should arrange for the Departments to provide the openings at the various levels required so that development and experience can take place in order to prepare women to qualify for the reserved openings mentioned above.

He should obtain agreement by the Departments involved to actually promote qualified women into the reserved positions within specified time limits. All objections to meeting this commitment shall be overcome with the assistance and expertise provided by A. T. & T. where needed and requested. For example, if in the project the company is unable to find a suitable woman candidate, or are unable to recruit, assess, develop, or whatever, we (A. T. & T.) will provide whatever expertise is required to overcome the blockage of filling the positions. In other words, a spirit of "no excuses" will prevail.

The Coordinator should arrange to obtain the name of every woman now in management capable of advancing to a higher management position. All necessary data on each person will be collected.

He will, with the departmental counterparts, determine what developmental or experience requirements for each woman listed above are needed and will arrange when, where and in what job these requirements can best be evaluated. He will arrange for these women to obtain whatever developmental experiences are needed.

The Implementation Team should assist the companies involved in the project with the selection of new women college graduate hires and the promotion of women to higher management positions. Where needed, special assessment programs should be developed.

The Team should determine the need and utilize outside professional resources in specific facets of the project as implementation suggests or dictates.

It must be realized that there is a definite urgency regarding change

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in this area. There are both social and political pressures evident. At the same time, the organization can not afford to avail itself of all talent available to it. In this respect the comment that "a company gets all of the good managers that it deserves" is quite appropriate.

One final comment bears mentioning. The team's emphasis has been on utilizing women in higher management positions. As such, no comments were directed to opportunities afforded women in non-management jobs or first level management jobs. It can be expected that by enhancing progress in management for women, changes, both direct and indirect will affect these groups also. Similarly, programs designed to aid the "housewife-employee", such as day care centers, recruiting educated women after their children have been raised, etc. also will affect the progress of all women.

Appendix

Guidelines For Implementing Progress In Management For Women

The following guide represents a general approach which can and should be used within an organization to:

- Examine the current situation
- Determine needs
- Provide for these needs

I. General

- Determine the current policies (formal as well as defacto) concerning women in management. Are these policies consistent with company objectives?
- Identify key individuals within the organization who are likely to be receptive to change and will be willing to assist with implementation
- Establish some specific goals (depending on the situation) that will be met within a realistic time limit. For example, one approach might be to first examine the kinds of management jobs that could be held by women and then obtain women for these jobs. Another approach could look at the number of district level openings and could set some specific objective regarding the number of women who will be promoted to this level.
- Consider developing informational and educational approaches for general management use. Again this would be a function of a particular situation. Projects included in this area could range from attitude and information seminars to a central clearing house which would disseminate news about women in management, the types of jobs available, etc.

II. Manpower Planning

- Select a high level management person who will be responsible for the full utilization of all personnel. A major portion of his (or her) responsibilities will involve procedures concerning progress in management for women.

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- Develop meaningful manpower systems which include women in all manpower projections.
- Determine jobs which can be held by women and develop procedures to identify, select and develop candidates to meet these needs.

III. Creating Opportunities For Full Utilization

- Develop procedures to recruit and retain high caliber women for higher level management jobs.
- Develop procedures to assess women for managerial assignments. This would include both recent college graduates assessed early in their careers, as well as incumbent first level managers. Individuals demonstrating managerial potential will be expected to receive demanding and challenging managerial assignments.
- Reevaluate current training, rotational and developmental programs to insure that career opportunities are afforded to women as well as men.
- Develop control and follow-up procedures which will be used to administer and evaluate programs designed to enhance progress in management for women.