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MOTIVATION AND TRAINING TO INCREASE EXPORTS

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MOTIVATION AND TRAINING TO INCREASE EXPORTS

Summary

1. In most developing countries of Africa, the current needs for motivation and training in foreign trade are practically limitless. There are at least eight distinct kinds of persons who require at least some training.
2. In the specific task of training for trade development and promotion, the ECA Africa Trade Centre is beginning to conduct its own training activities as well as to study the appropriateness of those offered to African countries by other organizations. It now conducts Training Courses in Export Promotion with the International Trade Centre, Commercial Policy Courses, in-service and Local Training, and is seeking funds for other training programmes.
3. Many other organizations are also offering relevant training to Africans. Among these are the International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/GATT), the ILO-assisted management training centres, and the World Trade Centre of the Port of New York Authority.
4. There is, however, a large motivation and training gap in Africa in the field of foreign trade. The existing programmes are not nearly sufficient to satisfy the needs. The most feasible way of narrowing this training gap seems to be for each country to select one institution to be in charge of foreign trade education and to co-operate with the ECA Africa Trade Centre (ATC), which is prepared to assist these selected local institutions to plan, organize and staff their training activities.

The Needs for Motivation and Training

5. International trade today is as competitive as any business or industry. Few countries will have substantial volumes of exports if they do not have trained, motivated persons who can and will carry out the many functions involved in exporting, and whose own skills are continually upgraded.
6. In Africa there is little depth of trained manpower in the field of foreign trade. Among the groups of persons who should be motivated and trained in various aspects of the subject-field are:
 1. Middle-and upper-level manufacturing executives, who are or who could be producing for export,
 2. Middle-and upper-level exporting company executives - the front line in the battle for exports,
 3. Middle-and upper-level export service company executives - bankers, insurers, transporters, etc.,

4. Service, manufacturing and agricultural employees,
5. Personnel of concerned Government Agencies,
6. Trade Promotion and Marketing Board Personnel,
7. Commercial attaches, and
8. Educators and trainers in the field of commerce.

If any one of these groups is omitted from training activities, its members may fail to co-operate effectively with the programmes to increase exports and thus hinder the efforts of others.

7. Training for the groups of persons listed above should be offered in such subject areas as:

1. Principles of business, marketing and domestic trade,
2. Foreign trade services, procedures and documentation,
3. International economics and finance,
4. International marketing and export promotion, and
5. Commercial policy.

Of course not all of these subjects must be taught to all of the groups of persons named above.

8. The purpose of training in foreign trade is not only to equip individuals with the technical know-how of the processes of export development and promotion in a competitive world, but also to give them two important kinds of motivation. The first of these is in the immediate area of on-the-job performance. It is well known that persons who want to produce results, i.e. who are highly motivated, generally contribute more to their organizations and countries than do less highly motivated persons. Therefore a training course on, for example, trade development, should stress the benefits to be derived from attaining higher levels of foreign trade. Functionaries who understand these benefits are likely to be more highly motivated than those who do not, and are therefore likely to be more useful to their organizations.

9. The second kind of motivation to be created pertains to continuing education, so as to continually increase one's ability to perform. The most important lesson to be learned from many training courses is that learning should be a never-ending process, not just an activity that one engages in before he accepts employment.

10. Some types of training, most notably in overseas marketing research, can best be carried out in the market areas. Other types, such as the identification of products with potential for intra-African trade, are most effective if done on an all-African or a sub-regional level. Many other types of training, however, can and should be carried out in each exporting country. The main reason for this is that only training done within an exporting country can apply entirely to its peculiar circumstances, can serve enough persons to really help increase the volume of exports, and can reach those persons who cannot be spared to receive training abroad. Generally it is those who cannot be spared who will help their countries most after being trained.

11. How much motivation and training is needed in a given country, i.e. your country, depends on several factors, most notably the present level of education and the volume of trade to be controlled by citizens of the country. We can say, however, that the present training needs of African States which are attempting to give control of trading to their own citizens are virtually limitless. A well-designed and conducted training activity can be of more benefit to its participants than many months of actual work experience. Trained personnel can be expected to work more creatively, and with fewer mistakes, than their untrained counterparts.

The ATC Training Package

12. The Africa Trade Centre's concept of motivation and training is that it should be made available to all eight groups mentioned in the previous section, and that all five subject-areas should be covered. Thus there is a need for still more sub-regional and regional courses and others outside the regions, as well as for courses within most of the ECA member countries. Every training activity should be carefully planned, adequately organized and expertly conducted. There should be continual evaluation and follow-up so as to improve the programmes, and attempts should be made to offer sequential (progressively more advanced) courses to the same participants.

13. ATC endeavours not to duplicate the training given by other organizations, but to compliment their courses with others based on the unique conditions faced by African exporters. We are beginning now to co-ordinate our training programmes more closely with those of other organizations, and are even seeking means of helping your countries determine the appropriateness of the various courses made available to them.

14. The ECA/ITC (International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT) training courses in Export Promotion begin in Addis Ababa, then move to Geneva, then to other European cities and finally back to Geneva. Each year five young executives from each of eight selected countries attend these courses to learn the fundamentals of foreign trade and export promotion and to receive field experience in supply and overseas market research.

15. The ECA Commercial Policy Courses are held each year in selected African cities. In these five-week courses, present and future policy-makers study the kinds of decisions they will be called upon to make

as well as of the techniques of export promotion. For 1972, the theme of these courses will relate to intra-African trade.

16. ATC's In-service Training Programme involves four participants at all times. These young executives are nominated and financed by their own Governments for periods of six months each. They intern in various facets of the Centre's work.

17. The Local Training Programme of ATC has been announced and is now ready to begin. It will involve co-sponsoring training activities in the fields of foreign trade and export marketing with local institutions in ECA member countries. Thus, a college or university export promotion council, management training centre, chamber of commerce or other institution in your country may ask ATC to help it conduct local training activities. This programme will be explained in more detail later in this paper.

18. In addition to the above-named operating programmes, ATC is seeking financing for intra-African marketing courses and for teacher training.

Other Training Available

19. In about fifteen African countries there are management training centres advised by the United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO), or other types of management development projects. Most or all of these give courses in marketing and sales management, and some of them, such as the Management Training and Advisory Centre in Kampala, are beginning to deal with the subject of foreign trade.

20. In six countries there are management development organizations such as the Nigeria Management Institute, which offers a variety of training programmes, although foreign trade has been dealt with little if at all by these organizations.

21. Other local organizations that could consider offering the needed training are colleges and universities, chambers of commerce, schools of public administration and export promotion organizations. Very few of these, however, have given courses in the fields of export marketing or foreign trade.

22. Outside and on occasion within Africa the International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/GATT) sponsors training activities for which African countries are invited to nominate candidates, among which are courses co-sponsored with the Governments of various European and Asian countries. Probably your Government has received and will continue to receive announcements of these courses. Other organizations outside of Africa offering useful training include the Foreign Trade Institute of the New York World Trade Centre and the International Marketing Institute of Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA which more than ten years ago was a pioneer in the field of expert marketing training for public and private-sector personnel, (both men and women) from developing countries.

23. For longer academic programmes (two years or more), there are the Thunderbird Institute of Foreign Trade in Arizona as well as schools in Great Britain, France and other countries. Most information offices of foreign countries have at least the names and addresses of their national institutions offering relevant courses of study.

The Motivation and Training Gap in Africa

24. It is apparent from what has now been said that there is a motivation and training gap in Africa. That is, the existing programmes are not sufficient to satisfy the needs. All outside the region courses available can serve only a few persons from each country each year, and many of those will be the persons who can be spared from their jobs. Moreover relevant training activities are only beginning to be held in African countries. In the private sector there are innumerable manufacturing, exporting and export service executives and employees who should learn more about business, marketing, foreign trade, export promotion and international economics. In the public sector there are many officials of Government ministries and trade promotion councils and marketing boards, as well as commercial attaches, who need to know more about the before-mentioned subjects as well as trade policy. Finally, the employees of service, manufacturing and agricultural enterprises should understand why it is important to them that their countries export; and educators and trainers themselves must learn more about how to teach the disciplines named above.

25. The most feasible way of narrowing this training gap seems to be for each country to select one local institution to be in charge of foreign trade education. The institution selected may be a college or university, an export promotion council, chamber of commerce, institute of public administration, management institute or management training centre. The main criterion for selection should be that the institution be willing and able to organize and conduct frequent short-term courses in subjects pertaining to foreign trade.

26. The Africa Trade Centre, with its staff of experts and its specialized experiences, is prepared to assist these local institutions by helping them plan and organize their courses, suggesting didactic materials and providing experienced instructors. It will place each institution selected on its mailing list for new materials relating to foreign trade education. It will also try to organize, beginning in 1973, yearly workshops for directors and instructors of the African institutions selected.

27. The need now is for the Government of each country to determine whether it wishes to co-operate with this ATC "Local Training Programme", so as to provide significant numbers of its exporters and other interested groups with well planned, expertly conducted training. Each organization so named and referred to ATC will be immediately contacted so that the programme can begin at once.

28. The volume and importance of world trade are increasing so rapidly that countries unprepared to compete will find themselves losing market share and therefore foreign exchange. Extensive motivation and in-country training are needed, and the time to begin is now.