

Remember, you teach a subject in which everyone is interested. That makes it easier. You know your subject but in teaching, you will accomplish little unless your student understands the fundamentals and is successfully sold on their importance. Often, talking in terms of his family and his friends best crystallizes the importance of prompt action. Progress is being made when operating people are making suggestions to the Medical Department.

What really matters is what happens to the men themselves as they work in your plants. Planning safety and health is the simple part. Making it function effectively is another story. It is not only hard, it is harder than hard. It is one of the great challenges to management. There are thrills for you in the progress that is made.

We know medical research can solve the occupational health problems. We in management must effectively put to work their successes.

The weak hygiene departments of today lack ability to be effective much more seriously than they lack knowledge of hygiene. In many cases this is because the head does not understand the human elements involved, and in many more cases it is because he has not the effective backing of company officers. There is no greater waste of material than an able medical head in a company where the tops have the right "patter" and the wrong hearts. Actually, the executive who isn't deeply interested in eliminating all hazards does not qualify otherwise in this period when human relations are at last getting the recognition due them.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT HURDLES

This brings us to our real problem. How are we

[46]

to make effective today's hygiene knowledge? Let's recite just a few medical department hurdles —

First and foremost of these comes in companies where senior officers do not feel or accept a personal responsibility for the department's effectiveness.

Second, and as serious, are not only the hurdles but unjumpable fences made by budget controls in many companies. Time and again budgets are deferring to tomorrow, expenditures which for the men in the company are "musts" today.

The resistance which comes from operating people who suspect the medical people of trying to run their show.

Lots of other things need doing in a hurry; perhaps the new safety change will be forgotten.

A greater operating willingness to gamble on new production ideas than to gamble on the new ventilation "possibilities" recommended by an industrial hygiene engineer.

The lack of efficient and effective follow-up all over the company map.

It takes selling ability for this job but so for the family doctor does a "good bedside manner." Should we say in our work "a plant side manner" takes good selling?

In a jam, an impartial arbitrator is sometimes necessary — hence "health" should report to the home office.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT NEEDS

There are many needs:

All the exhaust equipment in the world will not do the job unless it is properly and intelligently used. Foremen must be educated.

There must be willing cooperation with local and state public health departments.

[47]