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Help Wanted

It is predicted that one-third of the graduates who were recruited from the nation's 1857 colleges in 1955 will change jobs within a year. Turnover will cost employers approximately \$400 million. If students had been "work-oriented" before graduation, the personal and financial losses probably would be considerably less.

College enrollment will double in 15 years. The Ford Foundation reports that 200,000 additional college teachers must be recruited by 1970. Much has been said about monetary needs. Less recognition has been given to guidance and counseling problems that will confront administrators, teachers, and students in the future.

Who does most of the student counseling on the typical college campus? Professors, particularly psychologists, and educationists are active in liberal arts colleges. They aid students in clarifying their thinking concerning personal problems. But, too frequently, such counselors are woefully lacking in industrial experience, which would be helpful when vocational choices are under consideration. Counseling is handled more realistically in colleges of engineering where placement officers (who maintain close contacts with industry) also function as student advisers. For example, 85 percent of the Cornell engineering graduates remain with their first employers longer than 1 year. This is a direct consequence of a "work-oriented" program that is correlated with industry's needs.

College administrators have found it desirable to centralize certain functions. They have appointed deans of instruction, comptrollers, and superintendents of grounds and have given them responsibility for well-defined activities. But everybody is a personnel expert. Anyone not only can do, but does, student counseling. Coordination frequently is lacking between the offices of the director of admissions, registrar, dean of men, dean of women, chaplain, and placement officer. In former days, when everyone on the campus presumably knew everyone else, the laissez-faire system worked in a fashion. But that day is gone.

The function of a college is to serve the best interests of its students. It now does a good job of housing and teaching them. The next major task is to help students use their abilities in ways that will be personally satisfying and also useful to the nation. Better counseling should reduce college failures and improve postcollege adjustment. Coordination, rather than expansion, of existing personnel facilities is needed. Industry has taken 40 years to coordinate its employee functions under vice presidents in charge of personnel. College officials may find it necessary to put their houses in order in a tenth of that time. The close cooperation that now exists between colleges and industry is expressing itself in the form of scholarships, grants-in-aid, and gifts of equipment. An exchange of "know-how" in the field of human relations should be of mutual benefit.

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