

Second Edition



TEACHING YOUR OCCUPATION TO OTHERS

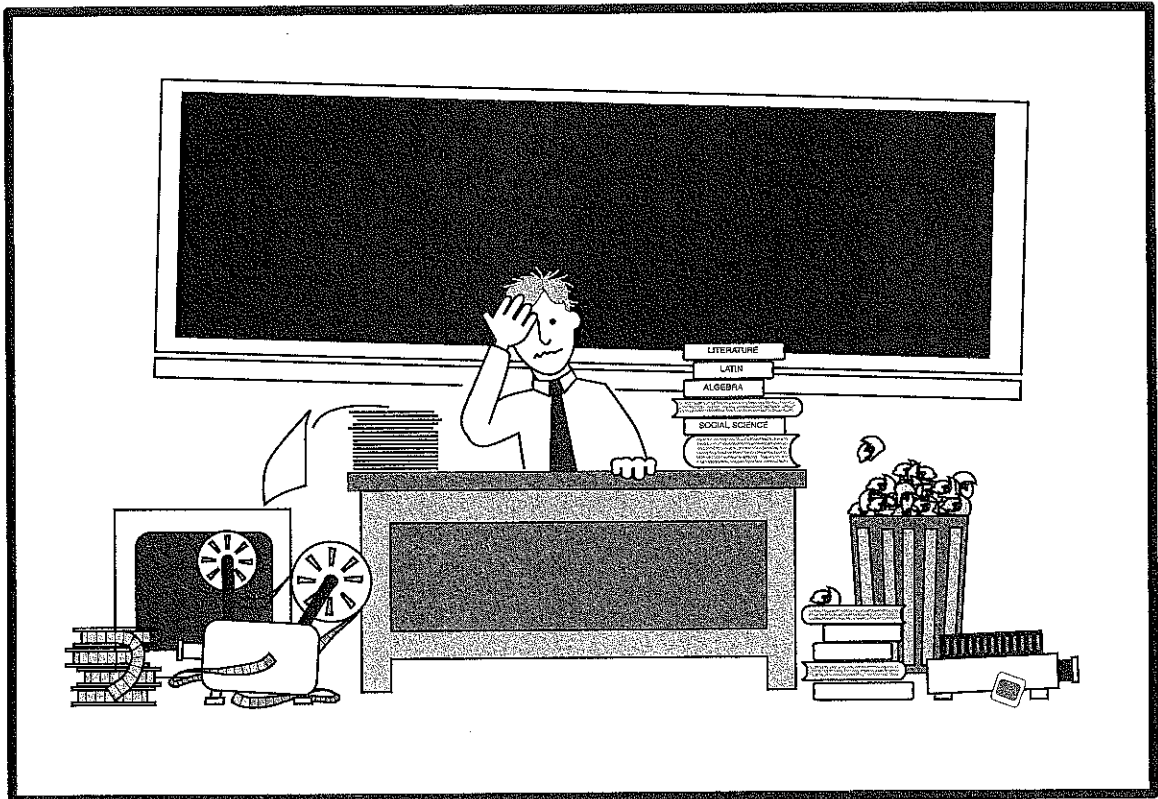


A Guide to Surviving
the First Year



Paul A. Bott

2 Surviving the First Few Days



FORTUNATELY FOR TEACHERS and other school personnel, school usually doesn't start until the staff has had a day to get ready. Most of the time, the entire staff will assemble one or two days prior to the students' arrival for general and departmental faculty meetings and to open the classrooms and ready laboratories. Some of the things to be aware of during that first faculty meeting and the first few days of your career as a teacher are examined in this chapter.

The first and second sections contain some ideas and items to consider during the first day of meetings and getting acquainted and a list of things that need to be done just prior to or on the first day of instruction. The third and fourth sections contain hints to assist you in becoming comfortable with and growing in your new profession.

Initial School Contact

Someone has told you that if you can survive the first few days of teaching you can make it through anything, so you arrive at the school an hour earlier than the first scheduled meeting hoping to get a jump on the many activities. Your initial contact usually is with the school secretary who will inform you of sign-in and sign-out procedures. Most schools and districts, especially those with collective bargaining agreements, have definite hours during which teachers must be on campus. Learn what those hours are.

The school secretary also will tell you your room and laboratory assignment and will issue a form that enables you to get the keys you need to rooms and cabinets. While you are in the main office, you will probably be shown the locations of your mailbox and the teachers' workroom.

With your head buzzing with the expectations of a new job and a new career, you leave the main office and head for the custodian's office. "Why the custodian?" you ask. Because the head custodian is usually the keeper of the keys, and without them you will find it difficult getting into your room. The custodial staff has many responsibilities in addition to maintenance. They often act as the shipping and receiving department; they arrange for equipment repair and maintenance; and, in some schools, they assign parking spaces. You will have occasion to use all services performed by the custodial staff, so be sure to introduce yourself and tell them what your assignment will be.

Now that you have your keys, drop by your room and make sure that you have keys to everything in it. In the remaining few minutes before the general faculty meeting get to know your room and its contents . . . you will be spending a lot of time there over the next few months.

The First Faculty Meeting

It's nearly 9 o'clock, so you head for the room in which the first faculty meeting of the semester is about to start. You probably know only two people at that meeting, the principal (or dean) and your department head. If the faculty is large,

locate one of them and find out where your department will sit. Quite often you will have a department meeting right after the school's general meeting.

Most faculty meetings include introductions of new faculty, overviews of the budget problems, descriptions of curricular additions, instructions on how to fill out this year's new forms, news from around the school and district, and, finally, a pep talk by the school administrator. Quite often in larger districts, the superintendent will address the faculty using videotape or closed circuit television. Pay close attention to the way people relate to one another in the general faculty meeting. During this one or two hour meeting you will often get a good idea of the political and administrative tenor in the school. Remember who does the talking, how they say it, and how well it is received by different members of the group. Take time to listen to others and observe your surroundings before forming opinions or making judgements about the administration and fellow faculty.

Unless there are a large number of new faculty, several items will not be covered in a general faculty meeting that you definitely need to know about. One of these is the "faculty handbook." Most school districts and educational institutions have some form of handbook that provides details of how the school is operated, school and district policies, state and local laws pertaining to school operation and teacher conduct, what to do in the event of emergencies, and dozens of other essentials. Get a copy of the faculty handbook as soon as you can and master the contents.

Another essential bit of information is the student handbook. Learn the school policies regarding what constitutes an offense and what the consequences of these behaviors are.

School Organization

Most educational organizations are administratively organized in similar fashions. Typically, one person is the education equivalent of the CEO. They are usually called "principal" in secondary schools and "president" in post-secondary institutions such as community colleges. There will usually be one or more vice-principals or vice-presidents, depending on the size of the school; several department heads; numerous supportive staff; and the faculty. Figure 2.1 contains two different school organizational structures with descriptive titles. Flow of information and direction will usually follow the paths from one position to the next.

Paperwork

At the department meeting, be sure to inquire about the paperwork that is required. You will discover that there are forms for everything and that each one has to be submitted by a specified hour or date. Some examples of forms include grade books, interim grade reports, attendance records, accident forms, hall passes, student communications, disciplinary reports, supply orders, and requests for equipment maintenance. Without a proper knowledge of forms and their whos and wheres, you will find it difficult to get everything done. Most

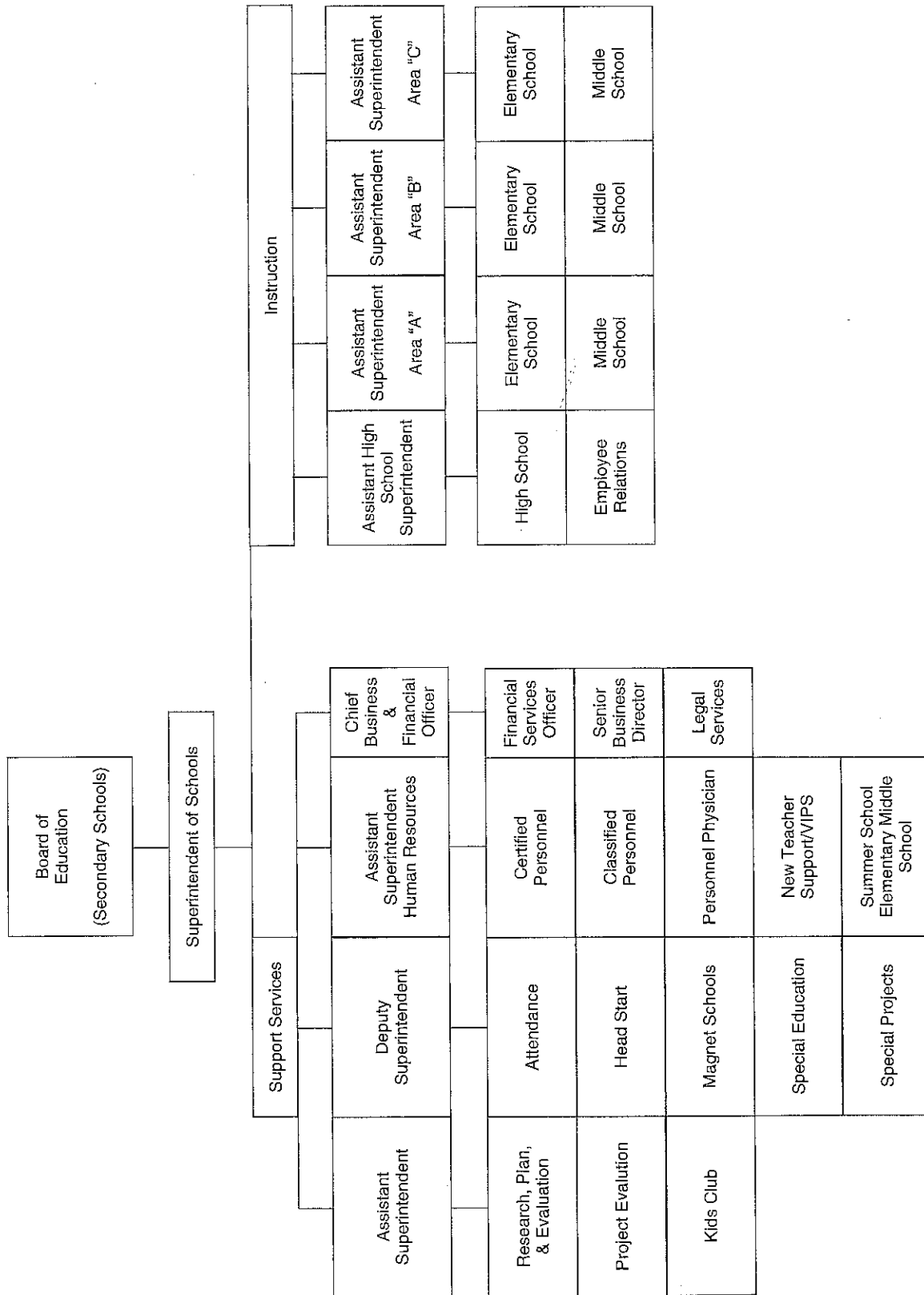


Figure 2.1A Organizational Chart for Secondary Schools

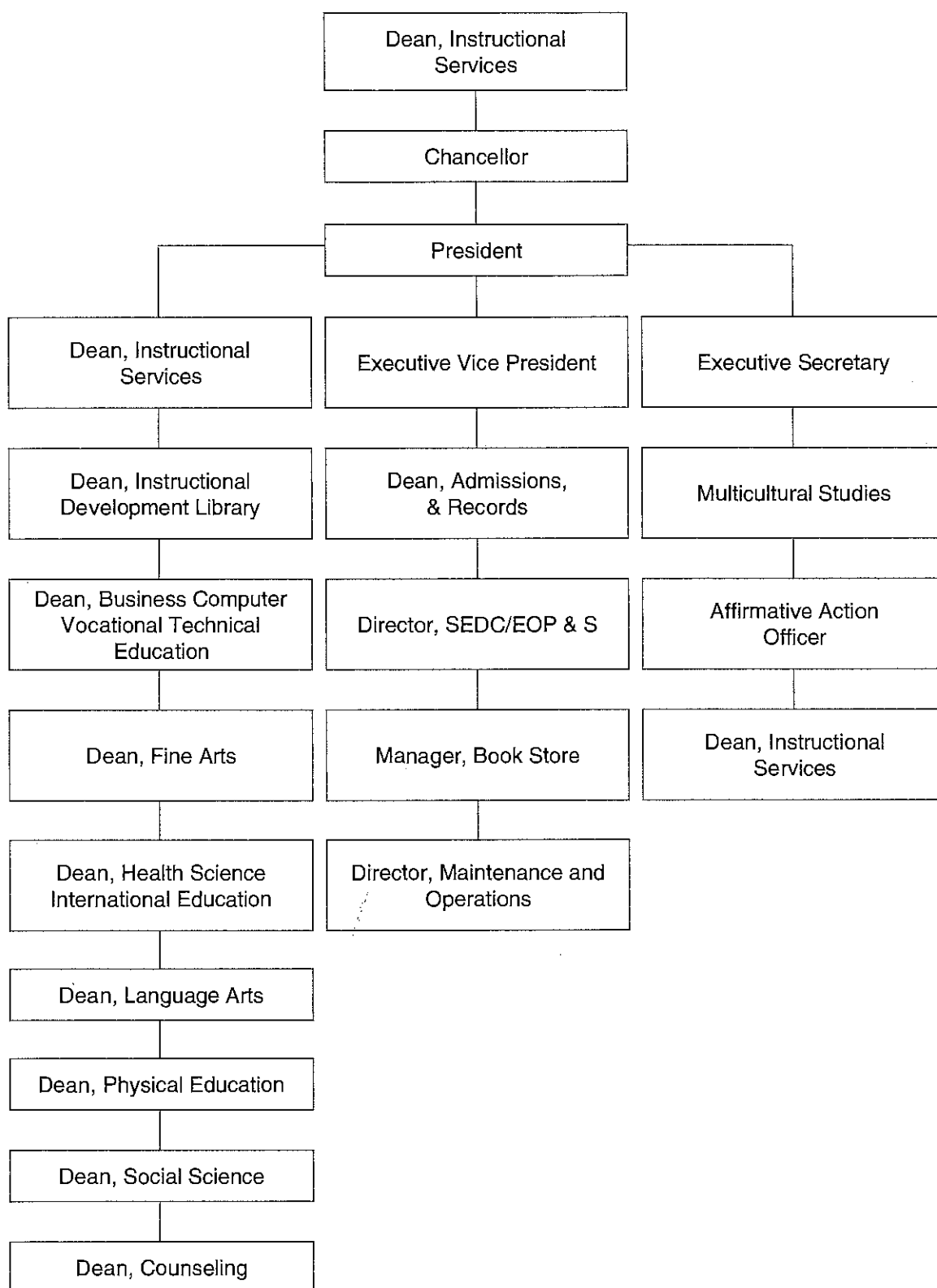


Figure 2.1B Organizational Chart for Community Colleges

new teachers report that paperwork is one of the two most difficult and frustrating parts of their job—the other being dealing with student discipline problems.

Understanding the Budget

One of the essential things to know is what your budget is. School budgets are prepared in much the same manner as budgets for businesses or the home. The chief administrator is responsible for the entire school's budget, but each entity within the school gets and uses a specific portion. For example, a portion of the budget is earmarked for maintenance (to keep the school plant clean and operable) and another portion is allocated for the purchase of supplies. Each curriculum area (i.e., English, Business, Auto Mechanics, etc.) has a set budget. The department head allocates the money within the department according to the need. For example, once initial equipment purchases have been made, a carpentry program is more expensive to operate than a business skills program and usually receives a larger portion of the budget.

If you are a new teacher it is likely that your budget was set and agreed upon by your predecessor. Any changes for the present year will have to be done administratively. If you are starting a new program, you probably will be given a budget for equipment and supplies to get the program off the ground. The budget and the budget process will be discussed in later chapters as it applies to the particular subject.

Meeting the School Team

To start on the “right foot,” extend yourself from the beginning by meeting the other staff and faculty. If you are teaching in a small school, you may be the only one teaching your subject. If so, don't hesitate to call on teachers and building administrators outside your field for assistance in “learning the ropes.” Some schools have mentor programs where more experienced teachers volunteer to help new teachers deal with the problems of teaching.

If you are assigned to a medium-to-large school, it is likely that you will find others in your teaching area or related fields. In this situation, a program coordinator or department head can assist you by providing valuable information and general assistance in these important first days.

You will discover that no single teacher or department provides all the education to any one student. Each teacher and person in the school hierarchy is but one member of the team that educates. In the case of schools, the whole is definitely larger than the sum of its parts.

Support Staff

Meeting key school personnel other than teachers and administrators and ensuring their amity and cooperation is essential. A partial list of individuals who can

help ensure that your teaching experiences are pleasant is found on the following pages. Don't forget, it is a two-way street—one good favor deserves another. In other words, the best way to ensure continued support is to make sure that you reciprocate and help others in any way possible.

Program or School Secretary. Anything you can do to make the secretary's job easier will be greatly appreciated. Turn in the required reports and forms, with all the information that was requested, on time. The days of the school secretary who typed all teachers' exams and made and reproduced dittos are long gone, if in fact they ever existed. Today's school secretary is more like an administrative assistant to the principal, responsible for activities that extend well beyond the secretarial. Teachers are expected (especially in these days of computer literacy) to prepare their own tests and instructional materials. Nevertheless, remember the school secretarial staff at special times, such as National Secretary's Week, Valentine's Day, and other holidays. Show that you care; it *does* make a difference.

Professional Resource Staff. Many school districts have a resource staff available to assist teachers. They can provide a variety of information and materials that will make your job easier. For example, the special education resource person will familiarize you with the needs and requirements of students with disabilities, including implications of the various pieces of legislation pertaining to people with special needs. The curriculum resource person can provide valuable ideas and information on development of your course materials. Counselors can provide assistance regarding career planning for students, testing, and diagnosis. These resource people are there to assist you. Find out what services are available and establish good working relationships with them.

Custodial Staff. Whether you are assigned a classroom, a laboratory, or both, it is a good policy to establish good working relations with the custodial and maintenance personnel. An excellent idea is to formulate a classroom or laboratory management plan so that routine cleanup and maintenance operations are performed as an integral activity by your classes. Small maintenance tasks that you can accomplish yourself will be greatly appreciated by the maintenance staff. Such activities incorporated as a regular part of instruction also gives the students more of a "real world" experience.

A sound idea is to contact the custodial and maintenance staff soon after you are hired. Work out a cooperative plan so that everyone understands precisely what tasks will be accomplished by whom. Avoiding misunderstandings regarding responsibilities of the custodial and maintenance staff will help ensure a positive working relationship.

Your First Day of Teaching

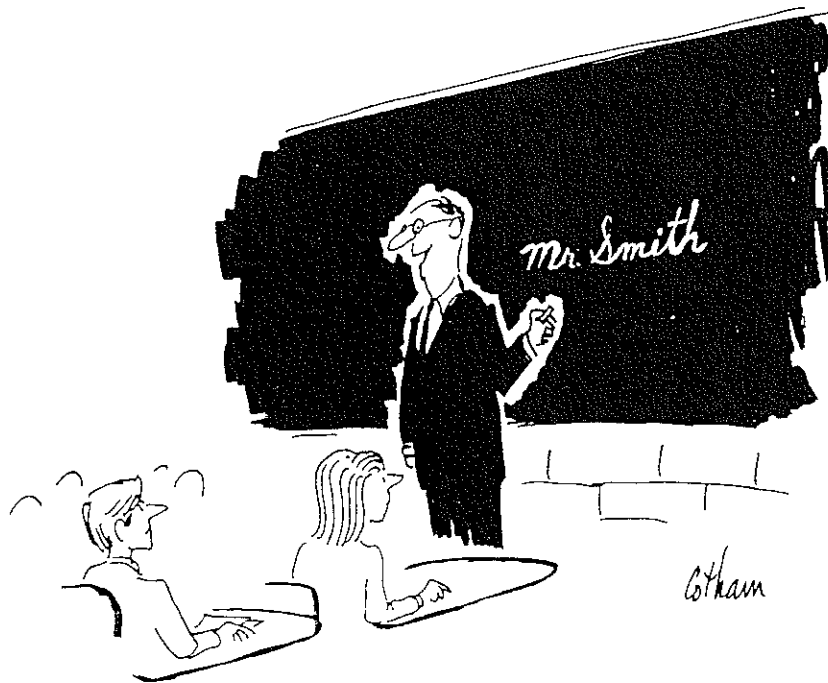
Now that you have made it through the meetings and getting your facilities ready, you need some advice on how to handle yourself on that first crucial day in front of the class. This section contains some hints on how to deal with some of the more important first-day chores. This section is only an overview (further discussion follows in various chapters). It is important that you prepare for at least the following few things.

Introductions

You have undoubtedly heard the adage that first impressions are the most lasting. It's true. The first impressions that your students have of you (and you of them) could affect the tenor of your class for the entire term, so it's a good idea to "set the stage" from your first meeting.

Students of all ages wonder whether their teachers are really *human*. Let them know who you are, where you have worked, and where you went to school. If you are married and have children, tell them about your family. Do not hesitate to tell your students (in a nonthreatening way, of course) that you are an expert in your field . . . after all, they are there to learn from you.

Experience shows that good teachers are friendly and that their students view them as friends. This does not mean that teachers are or should be *pals*, *buddies*,



"Actually, this is not my real name, but it should keep any of you from calling me at home!"

or one of the *homies*. Some teachers write their names on the board as Mr. Smith, or Mrs. Jones, and then tell the students what their first name is. It is rarely a good idea to have students (especially adolescents) call you by your first name.

Course Requirements

From the beginning, let students know what is expected of them in all areas. Give them a syllabus or a list of topics that will be covered in the course, assignments with due dates, and materials, books, and supplies that will be needed. It is essential to tell the students what role you will play in helping them complete the course successfully, what assistance you will provide, and how you will organize the class. Figure 2.2 is an example of a complete course syllabus.

Grading System

Many institutions prescribe the type of grading system that is used. You might even be told how much weight assignments and examinations can have on final grades. For example, many institutions require that grades be based on at least three different types of assessments or demonstrations of competence. Daily assignments might be one area of assessment, projects a second, and exams a third. List the components, criteria, and weights of your grading system in the syllabus or post them in a conspicuous place in the classroom. It is very important that all students know from the outset how they will be graded and what criteria will be used to determine the grade. The elements of a typical grading system may be found in the course syllabus shown in Figure 2.2.

Safety Requirements

Let all students know that safety is of major importance. Explain that safety tests will be administered and that they must be passed prior to the operation of any equipment or machinery. Many school districts have safety tests that are used district-wide for each subject area. Or the school in which you teach may have its own safety regulations. Often, teachers supplement these tests with their own. Tell your students that their safety and that of their peers and the supplies and equipment is of paramount importance, both in class and later on the job. Making this point firmly and unequivocally from the start will save you a lot of grief later on.

Discipline

It would be nice if there were no discipline problems in today's schools. Unfortunately that is not the case. More teachers who leave teaching cite discipline problems as the main reason for quitting. There are numerous ways to maintain order in a classroom, and there are as many books on how to do it (the reference section at the end of this chapter contains some excellent sources). A

<p style="text-align: center;">Name of Course and Term Here Institution</p> <p>Your Name: Your Office/Classroom Location: Where and How to Reach You:</p> <p>Course Description: Place here the "official" description of the course as approved by your educational institution. Students may need this for successive courses they take or for certification requirements.</p> <p>Course Objectives: Put each of the general course objectives in this section. Go over them on the first day of class as part of the "telling the students what you are going to teach them" activities. Periodically during the course you may need to refer back to these objectives. Place objectives for individual classes on the Instructor's Lesson Plan.</p> <p>Evaluation Criteria: Describe in this section the criteria that you will use (or that the school requires you to use) in evaluating student progress and achievement. Generally, you will have categories for homework, projects, special assignments, short quizzes, unit examinations, mid-term and final examinations, and attendance and participation. In most instances, you will also provide the numerical scale used for grading. You might also want a section or sentence on the expected student behavior while in class.</p> <p>Schedule of Classes: This section requires a lot of thought and planning, for here is where you tell the students what they will be learning or studying in class on a day by day basis. If your course meets everyday for one or two hours, you may only show activities on a week by week basis. Provide as much detail as necessary, but do not overdo it. This will serve as your and the students' roadmap to the end of the course.</p> <p>NOTE: The complete syllabus should not be more than two or three pages in length, but should provide the students with the essential knowledge of what to expect in the course and what is expected of them as students.</p>

Figure 2.2 Elements of a Course Syllabus

complete discussion of discipline is well beyond the scope of this book, but a few pointers may be of help in getting the atmosphere established.

Many discipline problems result from situations where there is a question of control in the classroom. Teacher control is necessary for a number of reasons, but most notably because the school is a place for learning, and learning cannot take place when pandemonium rules. The teacher must exert firm control of the classroom from the moment the students enter. One way to do this is to tell students what is expected of them in terms of behavior, and then be prepared to enforce these rules.

Fortunately, most teachers and students have normal, productive days in school without so much as a threat of violence. Students in occupational programs tend to be older (or more mature) and motivated to be in the class for other reasons, so the tendency for discipline problems or violence in the classroom is lessened. In the event that you ever encounter a threat in the classroom, it is important to not grab or attempt to take a weapon away from a student. Clear the way to an exit so that the student or intruder has a clear exit route. Just as we have fire drills and instruction on what to do during those drills, teachers would be well advised to rehearse other situations as well. In those practice sessions, students should be instructed in the event of violence or the threat of violence to get on the floor and to stay down. These procedures should be practiced with students *before* any violence or threat of violence ever occurs, so that at least one student knows to go get help. Anyone contemplating teaching would be well advised to seek assistance through university classes or self-help books on behavior management. Several such books are found in the reference section at the end of this chapter.

Attendance Procedures

Schools and school systems as well as privately owned schools receive their income on the basis of the numbers of students who are enrolled and in attendance. Most public schools refer to this as ADA (Average Daily Attendance), or FTES (Full-Time Equivalent Students). In addition, teachers are responsible for students who are enrolled in their classes during a given time period. If a student skips a class and is injured or commits a crime while they are enrolled and counted present, the teacher might be held liable. It is imperative that student attendance procedures be set up, maintained, and continuously monitored. Let your students know that attendance is important and that you can't help them learn if they aren't there.

Many teachers entrust attendance-taking to a student, but because of the legal implications, it is a better practice to do it yourself. Set up a system for attendance-taking; let your students know what it is, and then adhere to it.

Tour

Typically, the first class period with students is spent on introductions and going over paperwork. The last few minutes of the period are well spent conducting a tour of the facility during which you may wish to point out the major pieces of equipment, safety zones, material storage, fire protection equipment, exits, and first aid materials. Use this opportunity to stress the safety aspects of your facility and which areas are off-limits until safety tests have been passed.

Settling-In Activities

Once you are hired, you should begin to assess your surroundings. Some suggestions about how you might deal with these surroundings and some ideas on getting started are presented in this section. If you are fortunate, you will have several days or even weeks to prepare for these “settling-in activities.” Review this information again after that monumental first day of teaching.

Preparation of a Safe Classroom and Laboratory

The phrase “safety first” is especially important for beginning teachers. Competent teaching and thorough preparation of curriculum mean little if serious accidents occur in your facility. Seasoned teachers (particularly those unfortunate enough to have experienced accidents) agree that safety is one of a teacher’s most important responsibilities. Federal legislation has done much to ensure that states conform to minimum safety practices in both industrial and school settings. It is, therefore, extremely important that you understand your responsibilities under federal, state, and local regulations and that you take immediate steps to develop a complete safety plan as a component of your curriculum. Below are some guidelines to consider when preparing your safety program. Remember, however, that your individual responsibilities for safety *must* come from your particular teaching situation. If you are not sure of your specific local and state regulations, check with your immediate supervisor or state department of education personnel. Most states have safety information available for teachers to use in the classroom. The following areas merit your particular attention.

Tools, Machinery, and Equipment. Start your safety program by initiating a thorough performance and safety inspection of *each* piece of tooling, machinery, and equipment that is assigned to you *before* allowing students to operate them. Specifically, check for the following:

- Appropriate guards and protective devices
- Correct wiring practices (approved code for school facilities)
- Worn parts that could create a safety hazard
- Machines and equipment that should be anchored to the floor or a bench
- Adequate spacing and placement of equipment to ensure safety for students during operation

- Safety zones maintained around machines
- Hand and power tools that are sharp, safe, and clean
- Danger zones that are adequately marked
- Any lifting or hoisting equipment is in safe working condition
- Machines meet noise level requirements when being operated

Once classes begin, your safety checks for machinery and tools should include:

- Assurance that all machines are off when not in use
- Supervision of all tools and machines when being operated
- Assurance that all machines and power tools are *off* when the instructor is not present
- Classrooms should always be maintained in such order that they could pass a surprise check by the fire department or other government or insurance agency.

Student Safety. Students enrolled in your classes are entrusted to your supervision while they are in your facility. This responsibility cannot be taken lightly. A new teacher should obtain all safety information available concerning policies for students enrolled in both classroom and shop or laboratory courses. Federal legislation mandates that states comply with strict enforcement of personal safety codes and regulations in both industry and education. At the local level, building administrators and teachers are given the ultimate responsibility for maintaining safety programs.

What does this mean to you as a beginning teacher? The information presented here as well as information obtained from local, state, and federal sources should be used to carefully develop your own personal safety program and implement it throughout your curriculum. You will also want to cover these topics.

1. Current methods of using tools, instruments, and machines
2. Appropriate clothing and hair protection
3. Eye protection including safety glasses and protective shields
4. Student reporting of hazardous situations
5. Correct lifting procedures
6. Correct use of compressed air
7. Horseplay rules
8. Respect for electrical devices
9. Policies regarding jewelry, including rings, clips, and chains
10. Proper use and care of respirators used in dusty or toxic conditions
11. Ear protection devices

Other concepts of safety that may be specific to your class should also be considered.

Facility-Related Safety. The best rule here is simply “cover the waterfront,” meaning that you should check every building-related safety item. Here are two examples.

1. Fire Extinguishers

- a. *Hand Held.* First, check the date to determine whether the certification is valid. Also, read the directions carefully and commit the operating procedure to memory. Familiarize your students with the process. Check local regulations for extinguisher locations within your facility. A check by the local fire department is free and is your best single source of information on additional fire safety questions.
- b. *Sprinkler and Heat Sensitive Systems.* These systems are often maintained by the installer or district maintenance personnel. Periodic inspection is necessary, but they require little or no maintenance. Check your local regulations.

2. Barrier-Free Exits

All fire exits must be properly marked, usually with lighted exit signs, and be free from any machinery, equipment, supplies, or other hindrances. Make sure that you also provide a barrier-free runway to the fire doors. Doors should swing out and be fitted with a safety bar if possible.

Fire Plan. Your school undoubtedly has a comprehensive fire plan that includes your facility. Check the plan carefully; then develop a comprehensive fire drill procedure for each class. Make sure your students understand it and can execute a quick and orderly exit.

Heating and Cooling System. Familiarize yourself with the type of heating and cooling system furnished for your facility. If the system is exposed (such as suspended space heaters) or could in any way cause a fire or heat-related accident, take necessary precautions.

First-Aid Certification. Most states require that persons teaching classes in which accidents may occur must possess a valid first-aid card. If you are not first-aid qualified, become so as quickly as possible. Check your first-aid kit station and ensure that it is well stocked with the necessary items. If you are not sure what the kit should contain, check with your supervisor, the district office, or the kit manufacturer. Teachers, particularly teachers of adults, also are well advised to have Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification, and many states now require such certification as a condition of credential renewal.

Accident Reporting Procedures. Learn the accident reporting procedures adopted by your school. If possible, set up a file with all the necessary forms and a procedural outline. Follow it carefully! Keep copies of all records for future reference and for your own protection. Figure 2.3 contains a sample accident reporting form. If your school has no such form, use the elements of this form when reporting accidents.

TO BE COMPLETED IMMEDIATELY!		This report is for the confidential use of the insurance company and of attorney's for the school and its employees in defending litigation		
The school employee who either witnesses the student injury or is supervising the student at the time of the injury should complete this form. If possible, the report should be submitted immediately to the administrator's office. Should other pertinent facts develop, notify the administrator's office by means of a supplemental report.				
ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT FORM				
SCHOOL				
SCHOOL ADDRESS			PHONE	
STUDENT'S NAME			AGE	GRADE
HOME ADDRESS			PHONE	
WHERE DID ACCIDENT OCCUR?		DATE	TIME	
HOW DID ACCIDENT OCCUR?				
NATURE OF INJURY?				
FIRST AID APPLIED? yes___ no___		BY WHOM?	DISPOSITION OF INJURED STUDENT (RETURN TO CLASS, HOME, DOCTOR, HOSPITAL)	
DOES INJURED STUDENT HAVE SCHOOL ACCIDENT INSURANCE COVERAGE? yes___ no___			NAME OF INSURANCE COMPANY	
WAS ANY SCHOOL RULE VIOLATED? yes___ no___			IF SO EXPLAIN, COMMENT ON SUPERVISION	
WITNESSES AT TIME OF ACCIDENT: NAME:		ADDRESS:		PHONE:
HAVE PARENTS CONTACTED SCHOOL? IF YES, EXPLAIN BELOW. yes___ no___		WERE PARENTS CONTACTED BY SCHOOL? IF YES, EXPLAIN BELOW. yes___ no___	WERE PARENTS OR STUDENT TOLD THEY WOULD BE CONTACTED AGAIN? (EXPLAIN BELOW) yes___ no___	
COMMENTS:				
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	POSITION	DATE	ADMINISTRATOR	DATE

Figure 2.3 Accident/incident Report

Facility Ventilation. If you work in any facility that produces agents such as smoke, sawdust, or potentially toxic fumes, check the ventilation system carefully. Determine that the system is functioning properly and is being maintained regularly.

Lighting. Poor lighting conditions can contribute to serious accidents. Use an appropriate light metering device to ensure that you have adequate lighting for reading, machine operation, and mixing of chemicals.

Fluorescent lighting is commonly used to illuminate school facilities. It is an excellent system providing even, functional lighting. A word of caution: Because of the way it operates (it flickers), certain moving objects such as running saw blades, milling cutters, or mixers can actually appear at certain RPM to be motionless. Test this condition in your facility. If this situation occurs, you should establish appropriate policies to *prevent accidents*.

Laboratory Capacity. A frequently overlooked safety hazard is an overcrowded facility. Check the number of work stations or seats in your facility and determine how many students you can safely work with at any one time. Then check state, district, or school policy regarding enrollments. Work closely with your department chairperson or building administrator to ensure that the class enrollments are compatible with safe instruction.

Safety Implications for Students with Disabilities. You have an important obligation as a teacher to make sure that students with disabilities enrolled in your classes are provided the same educational opportunities as all of the other students. Special considerations such as barrier-free classes or laboratories must be provided. Be aware that you may have to make certain changes to your facility to accommodate the safety of these students. For example, such items as fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, and fire alarms must be mounted low enough for wheelchair access. Many of these changes can be accommodated quickly and inexpensively. Funds also are available through federal or state programs to help schools prepare for meeting the special needs of some students. Contact your immediate supervisor or building administrator for assistance if students with disabilities are enrolled.

Teacher Liability in the Classroom or Laboratory. It is important that you fully understand your responsibility and liabilities as a teacher in the class and laboratory. Most school systems provide some type of partial or total liability insurance for teachers. In many districts insurance coverage is the responsibility of the teacher association. Other school systems provide a basic policy as part of employee-employer benefits. In addition, the various professional associations (such as the American Vocational Association) offer liability insurance plans.

As a new teacher, you should determine your personal liability in case of an accident in your facility, and then take positive steps to ensure that you (as an individual) have adequate protection.

Security of the Facility

The security of your assigned area is fundamental to successful teaching. The first person you typically see about security is the head custodian who has the necessary keys to your facility. After you have been issued keys, survey your assigned teaching area and develop a security plan. This plan is nothing more than a formal system of accounting for *all* aspects of securing your facility, from student lockers to windows. Many teachers develop a comprehensive management plan for their facility with students playing a major contributing role. For example, security arrangements can be established so that a comprehensive security check can be accomplished at the end of each class period. Some important security factors that you should be aware of are:

Doors and Windows. Develop a means of determining that all windows are both lockable and tamperproof. Then check them each time you leave the facility.

Student Project Storage. This area or room should be lockable, and no one should have access unless you are present. Depending on the subject taught and the size of the projects, shelves, lockers, or cabinets should be provided to keep student items safe from theft or tampering.

Your Office. Tests, grade books, student records, computers, books, and other valuable materials are commonly located in your office. Make sure your office door can be secured and develop a policy that covers the appropriateness of students being in the office. It is usually a good idea to make your desk off-limits to students at all times.

Security of Small Tools and Instruments

Without a full complement of tools and equipment, your program cannot be operated effectively. To prevent loss or theft, try the following suggestions.

Tools and Precision Instruments. A variety of methods can be used to secure these expensive items. Many teachers find that open storage areas are appropriate when the main facility is secured properly. A second method is to place easily lost items in secured cabinets or drawers within the room or laboratory. A third, and perhaps the most secure and easily managed storage system, is an area or room that is used expressly for issuance and general storage of tools, instruments, and supplies. Commonly called the tool room or tool crib in industry, this is one of the best and most secure storage and accounting systems.

Select the system you find most appropriate, but be aware that you should not place yourself or your students in the position of compromising your program because of damaged or missing items. In other words, it is absolutely necessary to develop a relatively foolproof system of accounting for items necessary to offer a comprehensive and high-quality program.

Student Lockers. Many schools provide student lockers in the classroom or laboratory. Whether it is storage of clothing, materials, or supplies, it is important to develop a system that provides real security for students' personal items. Typical storage accommodations include lockers, shelving areas, drawers, or cabinets. For each system, it is important to ensure that each storage area is lockable and that *you* control the system.

Organization of Your Administrative Area (Office)

Many schools provide an office or administrative area where teachers can organize paperwork, plan lessons, and counsel students. Some of the things you will have or need in your office are discussed in the following paragraphs.

File Cabinet. A file cabinet is useful for organizing curriculum materials, tests, student records, evaluation forms, and handouts. If student records are stored in the file cabinet, it should be locked at all times when you are not present.

Computer and Media Storage. Computer software, CD-ROM, paper, and printer ribbons or cartridges should be kept in one secure area. Most schools have site licenses for computer software that restrict the number of machines that it can be installed on. The integrity of the site license agreement is only protected by maintaining a secure storage facility for the software. It is also a good idea to restrict access to the computer itself by using a password or other security system.

Desk. A desk in your administrative area provides a convenient place to do paperwork. Most desks can be locked, so your desk can provide storage for small but valuable tools and instruments. Student records may also be stored in a locked desk.

Book Shelves. Beg, build, or borrow enough book shelves to hold your texts, periodicals, and reference materials. You may wish to set up one section as a student resource center. If students will have access to reference materials, set up a checkout system so you know who has your materials.

Telephone. If you teach in a laboratory or classroom where accidents may occur, the installation of a telephone not only makes sense, but in some states is mandatory. In an emergency, a telephone provides immediate access to aid. It is important to secure the telephone so that it may not be mis-used.

Student Counseling Area. Organize your office so that it lends itself to student counseling. You will be talking privately to students more than you may think. It is important to establish the right environment, as this is a major function of teaching. You can do this by providing chairs (preferably next to, not across from, your desk) and assuring that voices are not carried into the classroom or laboratory.

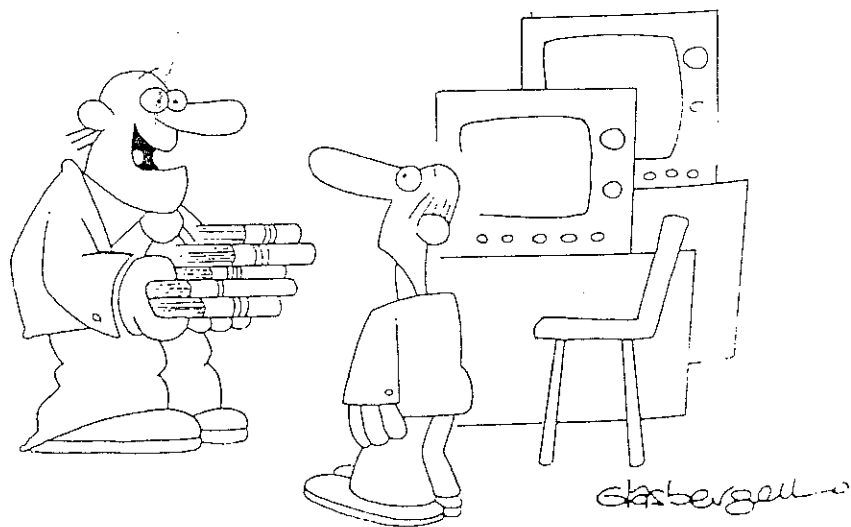
Ordering Materials, Supplies, and Equipment

A third important task is the ordering of necessary supplies, materials, services, and text books. Most expendable materials, such as wood, steel, bandages, paint, and paper should be ordered immediately because delivery to your facility typically takes several days or even weeks.

Textbook Ordering

You must decide whether your classes require text materials. If so, you may encounter one of two situations. On one hand, you may inherit a set of existing texts. If they will suffice for the first class period (i.e., quarter, semester, or year), then you can simply use them and order new ones at your convenience. Some proprietary schools have a preestablished curriculum and books, in which event you will not be able to change these texts. If, on the other hand, the existing books are not appropriate or if no books exist, then you must get permission to submit a priority requisition and order new books. In most instances the matter will be handled through the district offices. However, you can ensure that your order receives priority by hand-carrying the necessary paperwork through the system. A number of factors must be considered when ordering textbooks. A form that will help you identify those that are most applicable to your situation may be found in the appendix.

If you find the books won't be in for several weeks, ask permission of the publisher or copyright holder to duplicate necessary materials from your own copy. Do this by contacting the copyright owner or the owner's authorized agent—they will usually be named in the formal copyright notice on the original work, or by contacting the Copyright Clearance Center on the World Wide



"I'm taking an innovative approach to teaching this semester. I'm using books!"

Web at web address **<http://www.copyright.com>**. Be prepared to provide the proposed use of the material and why you need to copy it. Although oral permissions are generally legally valid, it is always best to document the permission with a letter that the grantor will sign and return to you.

A second way to solve the problem of not having sufficient text material on hand is to place your copy of duplicated materials on a two-hour reserve in the school library. Each student then has access to the text. This, of course, places the students at a serious inconvenience by having to wait for the material and not being able to study at their leisure.

Services

It is easy to overlook essential services needed to make your class run smoothly. Making sure these services start prior to the first day of classes or as soon as possible thereafter will enable you to concentrate on more important items like keeping the class running and maintaining your sanity! Some of the more important services are:

Custodial Services. Seasoned teachers generally agree that it is easier to work in a classroom or laboratory that is clean and orderly. Typical custodial services include maintenance of floors, the work area, benches and tables, waste containers, windows, and lights. In an era of fiscal cutbacks, custodial services are often the first to be cut. Use your students to maintain their own work areas and the floors as much as possible. They will need to do this later on the job, so the classroom is the best place to develop the habit.

Electricity, Gas, Water, and Telephone. Energy conservation often means discontinuing these services during nonschool periods. Check with your supervisor to ensure that you will have these when you need them.

Materials and Supplies

It is difficult to teach computer applications without floppy disks and printer paper! Similarly, for most technical courses, both expendable and nonexpendable items are necessary. As a new teacher, it is a good idea to “over organize” the first time around. Simply stated, this means that the sooner you determine which materials you need and have them ordered, the better. Many items may be available locally within one or two days. However, if you teach in a rural location or a large metropolitan district, you may wait weeks or months for some items. To further complicate the situation, many school districts have regulations stipulating that certain materials be acquired only through the competitive bid process. Remember, too, that supply houses often are hard pressed to fill school orders promptly during summer months, since that period is when they receive the most orders. In the following year, you can eliminate the problems by (1) staggering your orders throughout the year, or (2) submitting your orders early and maintaining a stock of needed items.

Initial Course Planning

A seemingly formidable task for any new teacher is determining how to organize course materials. There is usually little time to organize or develop course materials *before* you start that first day of teaching. Here are some ideas on how you can survive until you have time to sit down, take a breath, and identify some concrete course goals, objectives, student activities, and evaluation materials.

Start by asking other teachers, administrators, or your department head if there are approved curriculum materials available. You may be lucky and find that the courses you will teach are part of a well-articulated school or state curriculum effort. If this is the case, you most likely will find a curriculum guide with specific course information including goals, objectives, class/laboratory learning activities, tests, and perhaps even daily lesson plans.

Another possibility is to locate materials developed by the teacher who previously taught your assigned courses. You may find a complete guide and syllabus, or at least a minimum of materials to get you started.

A third possibility is to talk with other teachers in the district or adjoining districts who teach the same or similar courses. They will most likely share ideas and even materials with you. Remember that help is a two-way street. Devise a way to return their assistance.

Your state department of education may help in your search for curriculum materials. States typically have recommended or approved curriculum materials available. Write or call the person in charge of your curriculum area for assistance.

College and universities with teacher preparation programs will often maintain a file of curriculum guides for most subject areas in the library or a curriculum resource center. They may also have materials from other states.

While on the topic of colleges and universities, you may wish to check with the faculty of undergraduate and graduate programs in your subject field. These departments usually maintain excellent files of curriculum materials developed by students as part of teacher preparation and graduate programs.

Local community advisory committees can also provide you with valuable information on initial curriculum development. This group typically works closely with teachers and can provide knowledgeable information on community needs and available resources.

It is likely that you simply will not have the time or the experience at this point in your teaching career to develop a complete set of course materials before you begin teaching. In fact, it is recommended that you *not* try to develop too much too soon. Start with a basic framework for the course, then plan on continually modifying, rewriting, and adding details based on meetings with advisory groups, student input, development of your own teaching style, and general teaching experience. Once you have identified the essential components of the course framework, it is relatively easy to develop a more complete course guide.

The first and most important component of the framework is the set of major goals for each course. For example, a major goal of many courses is that stu-

dents will develop enough skill and knowledge to survive in an entry-level job. Consult with school personnel, the state office and advisory groups, and/or program administrators to be sure that you are placing the proper emphasis on the course. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of how curriculum is developed for the occupational class.

The second component of your curriculum framework is the specific performance or behavioral objectives written for each major course goal. The third component is the development of student learning activities. These include the things the students will do in class in order to master the competencies that are specified in the performance objectives.

The fourth component of developing the curriculum is to identify teaching methods or strategies that you, the teacher, will incorporate in the classroom in order to help the students master the necessary competencies that were identified in the performance objectives. The fifth component you will need to identify early is the material you will need to teach the course.

Last, but certainly of great importance, are the ways you will evaluate the following: (1) student learning, (2) your teaching effectiveness, and (3) the course curriculum.

As you can see, once the basic goals are identified, it is necessary to sequentially follow up by writing objectives, learning activities, and so on. Remember, too, that it isn't necessary to assemble the entire course framework during these first few days or weeks. Identification of the major course goals and enough specific objectives and learning activities for a one-to-two week period are sufficient. You will have a much better idea on how to proceed after you have spent two or three weeks in the classroom.

How then do you develop the more complete curriculum materials for each course? A full explanation of how to develop a course guide, including examples of goals, objectives, and learning activities is covered in Chapter 5.

Professional Involvement

Teaching, whether it is in public and private schools, or in industry, will require at least some involvement with various professional organizations and associations. This involvement can be beneficial to your career development and ultimately to your students.

As a new teacher, you will probably hear many differing opinions about teachers' associations, youth leadership development organizations, advisory groups, and professional educational associations. It is in your best interest to examine each opinion carefully. Most of these organizations and associations serve different, but important, purposes.

Here are some hints for evaluating organizations and associations:

- Talk with several colleagues (teachers and administrators).
- Read the recruitment literature.
- Determine the organization's or association's mission or purpose.

- Ask yourself; What can I give to the organization? What can I gain from membership?
- How much time and money can I afford?

Remember, you are joining a profession, education, and yet you want to maintain a commitment to your technical field. Many teachers select several organizations that provide opportunities for both technical and professional involvement.

Let's now turn to five types of organizations: teachers' associations, teachers' unions, youth leadership development organizations, advisory groups, and professional education associations.

Teachers' Associations

Not so many years ago many school districts required, or strongly urged, that teachers belong to the local teachers' association. Membership typically includes affiliation with the state teachers' association and the National Education Association. Teachers' associations usually have strong, professional interests and services. These interests and services include:

- A code of ethics
- Professional literature for personal and classroom use
- Active support for legislation at the local, state, and national levels
- Insurance programs, including professional liability protection.

Teachers' Unions

Teachers' unions began to rapidly expand their membership in the 1960s. Their growth was due in great part to a need for much stronger job security and appropriate salary increases. Working primarily through the collective bargaining process, unions have often been able to meet their objectives. In response to union activity, teachers' associations have also begun to work through collective bargaining.

The formal and informal battles between several teachers' associations' members have been bitter in some school districts. This atmosphere may exist in your district or school. Assess the situation carefully before you join either organization. Remember, however, that both groups have their strong points; and, if you join, choose the group that will, in your opinion, support professional growth and security.

Youth Leadership

You have undoubtedly heard of youth leadership groups such as Junior Achievement and 4-H. Their goals and activities are generally well known. In the public and private schools, there are similar groups that are an important part of the school's curriculum. Their existence depends on strong teacher support *and* participation.

These groups help students gain the skills, knowledge, and attitudes neces-

sary to live in a working world. Students are given the opportunity to take leadership and followership roles, and through these roles gain confidence and recognition from their peers, teachers, and parents.

Some of the well-known student leadership development organizations include:

- Business Professionals of America (office education)
- DECA, Distributive Education Clubs of America (marketing education)
- FBLA/Phi Beta Lambda (business leadership)
- National FFA Organization (agriculture)
- Future Homemakers of America/HERO (consumer and home economics)
- Health Occupations Students of America (health care)
- National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Organization
- National Young Farmers Education Association (adult students in agriculture)
- Technology Student Association (high-skill technology)
- VICA, Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (skill training and leadership)

What will your decision be if you are asked by your principal or department chairperson to become faculty advisor to one of the school's youth leadership groups? What will you do if some of your students ask you to help out? Remember, teaching entails more than five or six periods a day. Addresses of the several student organizations may be found in the appendix.

Advisory Groups

Advisory committees are important to the proper functioning of many educational programs. When used well, they can be an invaluable resource.

Advisory committees are used by schools and other educational and training institutions to provide input from community, business, industry, and government. Schools often will have an advisory board to ensure that the community has an input to the operation and offerings of the school. These committees may be made up of parents, students, business leaders, governmental officials, religious leaders, and other interested parties.

Similar committees are used to advise and support vocational education programs. These committees represent the business and job community. When used effectively, they can provide critical information on the latest developments in your field including technological changes, changing job requirements, and job market demand. Many advisory board members are a source for equipment, materials, supplies, and jobs for students. This key group is typically comprised of (1) business and industrial leaders, (2) skilled craft people, and (3) union or governmental officials.

It is *vital* that you understand and effectively use your advisory committees. There are many people in your community who feel strongly about the value of education and who are eager for the opportunity to participate.

Professional Associations

One of the real problems of the educational profession is the generally poor involvement by teachers in their various professional associations. Probably the first comment you will hear from your colleagues is, What has the association done for me? It is a difficult question to answer because many who ask do so with a closed mind; that is, they do not want to join anyway.

Some of these associations, such as the National Education Association and the American Vocational Association, continually fight for legislation that makes your job *possible*. Literally thousands of teachers would not be able to provide valuable educational services had these associations not been in Washington, DC, promoting the type of programs you are or will be teaching.

These organizations provide more than just legislative support. They keep their members up-to-date on educational issues and trends. They provide special services such as legal advice and insurance programs. Many hold regular conventions at which the profession meets to establish operating policies, review vendors' products and services, and exchange ideas on their various programs.

Take time to review the several organizations in your field. Join those that you feel will help you *and* the profession. The dues for these organizations are generally tax deductible. Addresses of the largest and most active associations may be found in the appendix.

Summary

The first few days of teaching are an overwhelming experience. There are, however, many ways to make the transition into teaching as painless as possible. One of the most critical areas of concern for the new teacher of vocational subjects is safety.

Safety is a serious matter. As a new teacher, you should use every resource available to become thoroughly familiar with all federal, state, and local safety regulations concerning your teaching area. Many resources are available for gathering this information, including: (1) federal regulations; (2) state policy guidelines; (3) state department of education printed materials; (4) local district or building safety guides; and (5) commercially available materials including those available from the National Safety Council. Safety should be an integral part of each vocational curriculum. The safety program should contain information on general facility safety; tools, machinery, and equipment considerations; personal (student) safety; special consideration for students with disabilities; and security measures.

Your personal safety and liability as a teacher warrants your special attention. The best policy regarding safety in the classroom is to develop an excellent safety program. You are then in a position to maintain a "zero accident" approach.

Organizations and associations are important to you, your profession, and ultimately your students. As a teacher, your job requires more than just teaching a few classes: it requires you to be involved. You will be a better educator if you actively support the various educational organizations and associations.

For Further Reading

- Alschuler, A.S. (1980). *School Discipline: A Socially Literate Solution*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Charles, C.M. (1996). *Building Classroom Discipline*. (Fifth Edition). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Gathercoal, F., and Stern, S. (1987). *Legal Issues for Industrial Educators*. Ann Arbor, MI: Prakken Publications.
- Johnson, S.O. (1980). *Better Discipline: A Practical Approach*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher.
- Kigin, D.J. (1987). *Teacher Liability in School-Shop Accidents*. Ann Arbor, MI: Prakken Publications.
- Kohurt, S., Jr. (1986). *Classroom Discipline: Case Studies and Viewpoints*. Second Edition. Washington, DC: National Education Association.
- "Let's Teach Safety: A Directory of Classroom Resources." (1980). Joint Safety Committee of the American Vocational Association and the National Safety Council. Washington, DC: American Vocational Association.
- National School Boards Association (1993). *Violence in the Schools*. Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association.
- Schloss, P.J. (1994). *Applied Behavior Analysis in the Classroom*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Sprick, R.S. (1985). *Discipline in the Secondary Classroom: A Problem-by-Problem Survival Guide*. West Nyack, NY: The Center for Applied Research in Education.

Exercises

Using the examples in Figure 2.1, create an organization chart for the school or agency where you work. Follow the hierarchy, or chain of command as it exists. Place all names, correct titles, and telephone extensions in the chart so that you may use it for reference later.