

WORD PROCESSING GETS STARTED.

Quite some time before I was promoted to ET Manager, I became aware that I felt inferior to my DP sales colleagues in Stuttgart. They were selling the concept of Data Processing which, of course, would finally end in the placement of Data Processing Equipment (at that time IBM mainly rented out their machines). However, the final sale was nonetheless achieved by first selling a concept which, in my view, was much better than our approach. We were just selling machines, electric typewriters, and although it wasn't spoken of openly we soon realized that the ET business was considered more as peripheral business by DP-IBM.

After two years, 1953 and 54, I had seen enough of big companies all over Stuttgart and had sold quite a few typewriters to top secretaries - as well as to established typing pools - to know what I was talking about. Enviously, I observed how my colleagues in data processing held important business meetings with many important leaders of Stuttgart industry participating. During these two years I also attended quite a few important meetings, with organisers of these major companies participating and then drawing their conclusions. It became obvious to me that the interest in typing efficiency in some banks and insurance companies had increased; however, I could also observe how diverse their approaches to solving the problems were.

Using my now established maxim, learned from PAA's Bill Miller, 'Don't talk - do it', I decided to try to organise a meeting on typing. Of course, as I had no doubt mainly big DP customers would be invited for this first occasion, I first had to discuss the idea with Alfred Hummel. Mr Hummel was, initially, absolutely flabbergasted at the idea. 'Typing - How to improve typing', that was to be the subject of an important business meeting? It took quite some time and energy to explain the concept using charts I had prepared, but he gradually came around to the idea that it wasn't so crazy. Finally, he agreed to try but, in order to reduce what he still saw as a risk, he proposed to have this seminar held at one of the best restaurants in town, with a good dinner as an incentive.

At that time the best location was on top of the Hotel Graf Zeppelin where PAA had had their sales office on the ground floor. I don't remember exactly the wording of the letter Alfred Hummel sent to his best DP customers in town, but he did mention that I would give a valuable point of view on the future of 'typing'.

We all, my colleagues in DP, Alfred Hummel and ET salesmen (in the meantime our numbers had increased), were astonished by the number of positive answers. Not only was it a question of the numbers, but also the quality and rank of those who accepted that was a surprise. I prepared well by reading several university studies on how to reach better productivity in manufacturing and had prepared quite a few good slides. There was a big screen where I could project these, with Peter Döring assisting by operating the projector according to a plan. I had prepared my speech which, at the beginning, highlighted some of the problems of the future; for instance, the declining birth rate of the female population due to the influence of WW II. This usually engaged the audience as there was already clear evidence of a shortage of good typists by 1955. Those executives who were not already aware of this developing situation were grateful that it had been highlighted. My colleagues, on the other hand, joked that I was becoming a specialist in 17-year-old females.

In my view another important feature was that the fierce rivalry between the East and West was just the beginning. This would also, necessarily, be a competition between the people, the machines at hand and the economy of the methods used. I was, of course, referring to the difference between a free society and a dictatorship. I

was already using my diagram where I would begin by suggesting that whether you manufacture something or whether you work in an office, you always first have to think, and that would generally be agreed upon. Then it would become more difficult to explain the main activities in the office - writing and/or calculating - resulting in the office products which would be pages of text, figures, or a mixture of both. These office 'products' were much simpler, in essence, to the factory-produced equivalent e.g. cars, televisions, electric razors, bicycles, radios, and, yes, electric typewriters!

In factories we had to organize many differing activities such as casting, grinding, turning, mounting, lacquering, polishing and many, many, more. Wasn't it much simpler for us in the office where we principally only had to deal with thinking, calculating and writing? In modern offices, calculating was already performed with the assistance of data processing equipment. So I proposed that it was high time that we also did something in the area of writing, e.g. typing. We could confidently state that IBM, with its DP division, assisted in many ways in the processing of pages containing data, but could we say the same for the written word? Shouldn't we now, I asked, not also follow in the same direction with the Electric Typewriter Division? Then we could, as shown in my first diagram, now approach the problem holistically.

In my preparation work I had read that, since the beginning of the so-called industrial age in the middle of the 19th Century, productivity in factories had risen more than 1,000% - whereas the office productivity had only increased between 50 and 100% during the same period. Wouldn't you think, I would ask, that it is time we tried to determine just what measures were responsible for the favourable development in industrial productivity? Perhaps it would then be possible to apply some of our findings to office work.

The scientific findings were:

1. Find, promote and properly employ productive talents.
2. Create permanent working places.
3. Use machines instead of manual labour.
4. Standardize – produce in series.
5. Use scientific production methods - open mind towards other countries.
6. Increase and control quality.
7. Realize your ideas – put them into work.

In respect of point 3: The prerequisite for proper use of machines is a production schedule. In how many offices will you find a schedule in writing, compared with industrial production? Don't you think it would pay to plan office work in a similar way to planned production? Not to forget the training of existing employees when new methods and machines are introduced. Too often people think that merely the purchase of a more modern machine means higher production and forget that a more modern machine only means progress if the person using it has been trained to use it to the best advantage.

This point was particularly stressed by IBM, offering not only to train typists when typewriters were delivered, but also to continue on-the-job training in our customers' offices. As another example, observe Point 6 – Increase and control quality. About a year before my first presentation, a firm had engaged a school teacher who gave their correspondents revision lessons in German language for two evenings a week over a period of three months. The result was a considerably better style, evidenced particularly by shorter sentences. Not only did the letters become

shorter and their quality improved, but dictating and typing time was shortened too. Therefore we automatically fulfil Point 7 - Realise your ideas, put them to work!

As a last example, a department of a firm employing six typists requested two additional typists due to pressure of work. A survey was conducted and the result was that one girl who typed invoices all day, more or less undisturbed, hit an average of 28,000 strokes daily. The other five girls collectively managed 17 – 23,000 strokes daily. I would then make the point that my audience had understood the simple truth: five typists together produced less than one girl alone. Nevertheless, the five were completely convinced they were working diligently to discharge all other duties properly; answering and making telephone calls, dealing with reception of visitors, filing etc, etc.

My recommendation for reorganization was the creation of two dedicated typing stations which put an end to the perceived pressure of work. No new staff were needed and there was even a surplus of typewriters. I believe that example alone would convince my audience of the advantage of typing stations that could operate without interruptions. Of course this would lead us – the audience and myself - to the creation of typing pools and to the consideration of what kind of machines would be most practical and efficient. This again leads to the question of the total cost (including building and furniture) of modern office buildings. Here I would show a slide of a Siemens office building in Munich with the caption: 'They spent some 30,000 *DM* per employee just for building and from a Stuttgart bank we learned that just the overheads per employee were 13,500 *DM* per year'.

Now I would begin to steer the presentation toward my purpose by suggesting that if, by purchasing an electric typewriter, it is possible to increase productivity by only a few per cent, you have spent your money quite well. However, we are not confining ourselves to rough estimates, I would continue, and offer to make IBM staff available to evaluate their particular situation.

To continue to drive the point home I would make some more comparisons between the European, the Russian and the US systems, including their economic, and population background etc. After all I wanted to show Alfred Hummel and also my DP colleagues that a simple ET salesman could not only speak good English but also has something important to say about business affairs. When I had closed my initial talk, Linny gave her show on a podium in the middle of the room so everybody could see her cigarette demonstration and the rest of her highly skilled demonstration. After that I led a lively discussion with the audience which took so long, because it seemed everybody wanted to say something, that Mr Hummel had to close it by announcing, 'Dinner is served!'

After all the invited executives had left we, the IBM staff, stayed on with Alfred Hummel; my colleagues from data processing and all my fellow ET salesmen congratulating me on what had been a very successful evening. The ET crew stayed until the end, celebrating with quite a bit of wine and beer.

Within days of this event I decided to propose my diagram as an official employee's suggestion. It had not only proven successful in my sales approach, but now also at the presentation. In the body of the suggestion I proposed that the diagram be printed on all blue IBM folders that were sent to customers, containing estimates or, more detailed, the DP *Arbeitsvorschläge* (operations schedule). There would also be a brief explanation of the concept.

It was well known to all employees at that time that suggestions which were accepted could sometimes mean quite a substantial reward to the originator. Soon the German committee evaluating these suggestions came back, giving me the number 9193 for the suggestion but also added that what they considered such an

important decision could not be made within IBM Germany. They therefore asked me to translate my suggestion into English so it could be sent to IBM headquarters in the USA for further evaluation. Within a few days of this instruction I again sent it to the German committee, realising from the off that it would be some time before I would receive a reply.

Waiting, however, was never a problem; we were all kept very busy. Stuttgart was a large IBM Branch Office employing roughly one hundred people. It had its own kitchen and dining room on the ground floor, and also had its own works council. During the time of my promotion to manager, the re-election of members of the works council fell due. I don't know why but I was proposed by all ET sales branch employees for election and got so many votes that I became a member. Initially that was fine but, as I was to be promoted, it raised the question of whether I could be a member of the works council and a manager. Of course that was another new problem for IBM Germany which could only be decided at the top. Surprisingly for everybody, the senior management decided that Steinhilper could be promoted to manager as well as becoming a member of the local works council.

A significant factor which contributed to this decision was, I am sure, the fact that the local (and excellent) spare parts and store keeper - who was the member for the Customer Engineering branch - had a background in communism. Before the communist party was declared illegal in Germany, he had openly declared his membership and helped to spread their 'good news' and always took the side of the workers in Stuttgart. That he was the head of the Stuttgart works council was no small problem for the senior management of IBM Germany, but he had been democratically elected and there was, therefore, little they could do about it. When the communist party was declared illegal he ostensibly 'left the party', however it was rumoured he still maintained his connections; he was even prosecuted and spent some time even in Karlsruhe prison. I was never told officially, but I always suspected that the previously unheard of appointment of a manager to the Stuttgart works council was sanctioned by the management, in order to have some form of counterpoint to any overt communist influence.

The local works council dealt mainly with the negotiation of salary increases which IBM granted for extra contributions on the job. I realized that the local council knew the Stuttgart employees, mainly DP customer engineers, much better than me. Therefore they could make an informed judgement as to whom such an increase should be made, and a recommendation as to the amount. With my frequent travels as a manager through my new ET territory I could not participate in many of their meetings. However, it soon became clear to me that the Stuttgart works council, without any influence from me, was loyal to the company.

ET - MANAGER

Working and planning in a large territory.

Covering such a large territory as I had been assigned, I simply couldn't 'dance at all weddings'. Even before visiting my sixteen ET salesmen there were first the most important DP managers in the larger branch offices of Karlsruhe and Mannheim, together with the smaller offices at Kaiserslautern and Freiburg, to meet and, hopefully, to establish friendly relations. On top of this there were quite a few outlying salesmen, who operated in relatively remote areas, to be visited and incorporated because, in the meantime, I had become not only responsible for the ET business but also assigned sales responsibility for the ITR (time-systems) business. To be prepared for this kind of IBM business (which I never did understand well enough) we new German ET managers had to attend a special course that was designed for us by Werner Granzow. He was known and respected all over Germany as an expert in time studies within numerous, sometimes exceedingly diverse, types of manufacturing processes. This course took one more week of our precious time as new 'ET Managers' - as we were called right from the beginning.

What I had to consider during these first few weeks within my territory was that some of the salesmen, mainly mixed ITR and ET salesman were 'outlying', i.e. they lived in towns with no branch offices, like Heilbronn, Reutlingen, or Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance. I had soon concluded that in order to work remotely efficiently I would have to plan at least four weeks in advance. I also learned that if I had ever worked as hard as a salesman as I now had to work as a manager, I would have made a great deal of money! I discovered very soon that it had been a smart move by IBM to promote me to manager with a higher salary, while still having me participating in the success of sales without necessarily receiving my percentage as a salesman, consummate with my effort and involvement.

Having established that I would have to plan well ahead, I would let the DP managers and all the salesmen in my territory know well in advance of my proposed visit. This type of planning wasn't necessarily company policy but, possibly because of my officer's training and experience, I wanted clarity in everything and to set a good example. That meant I wanted all to see my plan, and I had to be punctual all the time, arriving at 8 a.m. in the morning at the given meeting place. Clearly this sometimes meant that I had to leave very early in the morning or take a hotel overnight and discovered that this schedule was quite demanding. Just to put this in context, the distance from Stuttgart to Trier (northwest of my territory) is about 250 km, from Trier to Freiburg (going through France) about 200 km, from Mannheim to the Swiss border (southern extremity) roughly 150 km. To add to this there were still not many roads of an *Autobahn* standard and a lot of that driving had to be done on secondary roads. However, one copy of my plan went to Bernhard Sengen and I still wanted to prove to him that my approach (teaching and demonstrating) would be successful in the end, so I had to stick with it.

On my first round, the emphasis was on establishing good relations with the local DP Managers. Mannheim was the biggest branch and Karlsruhe the second. In both cases the local DP Managers were 'old-timers' and were glad that from then on the responsibility for ET and ITR no longer rested on their shoulders. Neither were they required to achieve their own quota (making certain points targets within their own assigned territory) and could therefore fully support their DP salesmen. I explained my approach of good teaching demonstrations to the ET salesmen. They agreed with it and offered their help when it was needed with big DP customers. In Mannheim this was BASF (before the war a member of the IG Farben group) but as

they were already good ET customers there was need for urgent support. Karlsruhe had nothing similar in the way of a big DP customer. However, at Kaiserslautern things were quite different. There, a successful young DP salesman had recently been promoted to manage what was a large territory. By 'large' I would emphasise this was geographically, rather than in business terms. Therefore he still had to sell his own sales quota and was urgently looking for new customers. As in other areas, this branch did not yet have a dedicated ET salesman and, further, also had an ITR quota in points. It soon became clear that this branch demanded attention.

At that time it was not known whether the Saar area, with its capital Saarbrücken, would remain within France or be returned to Germany. I kept out of the politics; I had enough problems driving around this unnatural border. Besides, American Forces located in that area conducted their DP business direct with IBM USA, whereas the ET situation was not clear. For a while it seemed to me that I would sell quite a few IBM typewriters to American troops (mainly Air Force) in this area.

A most special case was Freiburg; here Herr Lachenmann resided as a manager. Before meeting him I was told by Werner Granzow himself that I should treat him with caution. Apparently he and Johannes Borsdorf (the head of IBM Germany) were good friends and, as rumour would have it, they pooled information and shared very good luck buying good stocks and shares in growing German companies. Word had it they were in constant telephone contact discussing what to buy or sell. Of course I could not test this, not even daring to ask Mr. Lachenmann who, from the beginning, was very polite to me. He did, for instance, explain to me repeatedly that businesses in his territory (which included the Black Forest) were 'traditional' and were not only making the introduction of data processing difficult, they would not even accept the new concept of electric typewriters. In the Black Forest, he told me, the concept of 'hard work' was still demanded, and there was no need for the light touch of an electric typewriter. He also explained that, due to his own diligent work, he had been named as a 'quota free' manager by order of Johannes Borsdorf himself. Business in his large territory was actually not sufficient to set him in that category, but it was recognised that DP business was difficult there. Equivalent to his approach was the ET business where he hadn't even acquired one dedicated ET salesman.

This sizeable territory with considerable precision industry (not only cuckoo clocks) was, at the time I arrived, handled by a combined ITR/ET salesman. He never lived on his commission from those sales but, due to the size of the territory, on car allowance, hotel and other expenses. It took me a long time to find and hire a new ET salesman from Stuttgart. He had a large family with five children but was still courageous enough to move to a village near Freiburg and did quite well. I helped to find, and arranged to help finance, a home for his family and to acquire a cheap car for him so, at first, he could drive from Stuttgart to Freiburg. When he finally made quota, reaching the 100% Club for the first time, Mr. Lachenmann made him office manager in Freiburg. Having made such an effort this irked me but I remained polite and Mr Lachenmann and I enjoyed a good working relationship. However, I admit to having spent much more time in Freiburg than a sensible business decision would have allowed.

Mr Lachenmann remained in post for a long time and had established good relations with the local government and industry throughout his area. Taking advantage of this, I held many business meetings in hotels in the area which improved our business and also achieved some good results in DP. Later, one town became of importance to the ET business, St. Georgen - home to many important

precision manufacturing factories. Also of note was the fact that it was not only in the Black Forest, but was also the highest town in Germany, about 1000 m (3280 ft) above sea level and accommodated 1200 workers. In St Georgen, the firm, Papst, constructed and improved electric motors for many IBM typewriters and supplied them to many European factories. They also bought typewriters, not only for testing and evaluation, but also for their own administration. Unfortunately, their administration was always small but, when quoting them as a good customer, most of the time the reply was, 'Well, we now know they got big because they supplied IBM'.

To jump ahead for a moment before we move on, it should be explained that in Germany, for the first time, the SPD (socialist) party succeeded in winning enough votes to elect Willy Brandt as their first member to become chancellor. When this happened, Mr. Lachenmann sold his entire portfolio of stocks and shares at a good profit. When retiring, he emigrated to Canada and there used his money to found a big housing company near Toronto. Because of Canadian law his son had to re-qualify as a medical doctor in order to practice there. However his wife never felt at home in Canada and constantly travelled back and forth to Freiburg, finally settling back there where, fortunately, they had kept their own apartment. Eventually, Mr Lachenmann also moved back to Freiburg and, eventually, died there.

When travelling from Trier or Kaiserslautern to Freiburg, it was quite a bit shorter to go through France. Aware of time savings, I very soon started to take this route. Just on the way was Strasbourg, with its fine hotels and restaurants, and its position made it ideal for me to stay there frequently. Amazingly IBM never questioned my expenses in France, so at least there was one advantage in the territory; I enjoyed French hospitality in the hotels and restaurants. Only when I was due in Freiburg did I have to leave early to make my appointment. I was reminded of former times in 1940 when I was flying from Coquelles in France in the 'Battle of Britain'. If we were to be rested or if the weather forecast was particularly bad for the next day our coded signal, 'Lobster tonight!' would be broadcast as we made our way back to land at base. This meant we would all jump in our cars and stay in Lille and visit the restaurant Huître, which is exactly the same today and still run by the same family. However, neither the quality nor prices for oysters and lobster in Strasbourg could compare with those 'good old days'. Nevertheless one evening, probably flowing a successful event at Kaiserlautern, I enjoyed the French red wine so much that on the following morning it took me a long time to find my parked Volkswagen.

Another memorable time was when, one evening, my car was already packed with my bag to leave. However the Kaiserslautern DP Manger and the local ET/ITR salesman wanted me to have a final drink to celebrate a successful sale that day. I could not refuse (laws concerning driving under the influence of alcohol were not as strict as today), even though during the day I'd had a telephone call from Werner Granzow, telling me that the next day I would have to meet him at Heidelberg at 10 o'clock to assist the management of Heidelberger Druckmaschinen (big manufacturer of printing machines for books as well as newspapers) with a problem - a factory strike. The strike was caused because the management wanted to introduce IBM check clocks in the manufacturing process. The clocks had been bought but the works council was against their introduction.

Back in Kaiserslautern my explanation that it was time for me to leave wasn't accepted. One drink followed another and both my colleagues saw it would be too dangerous for me to drive so they proposed I stay in Kaiserslautern, which, in retrospect, I have to admit would have been best. However, although it was already

dark, I insisted on driving to Heidelberg where I had a hotel reservation. I was probably quite confused and it took me several attempts to find the junction for the *Autobahn* from Kaiserslautern to Mannheim, which led on to Heidelberg, even though I had taken the same route several times before. When, finally, I made the *Autobahn* I drove with all the speed that my Volkswagen could muster. After about an hour, near the exit for Gruenstadt, there was a diversion which I missed completely. At the last minute I found my car skidding below a big highway sign, indicating 'Exit'. It was really an 'exit' for me and with a terrific bang my Volkswagen hit the lower part of the sign and came to an abrupt halt. Seat belts were not yet in common use and so I hit the rear-view mirror with my head. Amazingly, a uniformed policeman was on the scene in no time and pulled me out. He saw me bleeding profusely from the head wound with the blood running freely over the face and told me to get into his car. I followed his orders and, rather than him questioning me about what must have been quite a pungent smell of alcohol on my breath, he drove me to the Grünstadt hospital. There I found the duty doctor already awaited me. Everything worked like clockwork and the policeman left to look after my car and the road sign.

Fortunately, it turned out that the doctor was from Stuttgart and quite friendly. He asked me some questions and I told him that I desperately needed my driver's licence to do my job as a manager at IBM. He listened carefully and said, 'Just calm down, I will manage when the policeman returns, keep quiet and let me do the talking.' Soon the policeman returned to tell the doctor that my car had been towed away to the local Volkswagen dealership. Then he asked the surgeon what his impression was regarding my apparent drunkenness. The policeman said that, on the way to the hospital, I had been rather annoyed about my drunken driving. But he also said that when talking to me he had formed the impression that, although I had obviously had a few beers, it seemed to him that I wasn't drunk. With that introduction it wasn't difficult for the surgeon to agree and confirm that in this case, according to his understanding of the rules, no blood test would be necessary. That satisfied the policeman and, being happy that there would be no further work for him, he left, wishing me and the doctor good success. For my part I thanked my luck and learned a valuable lesson.