

PENNSYLVANIA ADULT CORRECTIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES (PACT)

Law Enforcement and Corrections Services
Office of Continuing Education and Community Services
College of Human Development
The Pennsylvania State University

CASELOAD MANAGEMENT (7505)

A Training Module for Trainers of Personnel

in the Administration of Justice

Designed as Part of the Statewide Training

Program for County Probation and State Parole Personnel

by

CHARLES L. NEWMAN, PROJECT DIRECTOR

STANLEY S. GOEHRING, TRAINING SUPERVISOR

ELLEN S. PIERCE, STAFF ASSISTANT

Supported by a Grant from the Pennsylvania
Governor's Justice Commission #DS-459-73A

June, 1975

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A FOREWARD TO THE INSTRUCTOR

The training module, "Caseload Management," was developed in accordance with the Pennsylvania Adult Correctional Training project (P.A.C.T.). It is based on materials presented at the P.A.C.T. XXI workshop. This module can be used independently as a short course of several hours' duration or can be incorporated into the full series that P.A.C.T. has produced.

In order that each module be utilized to its fullest potential, the trainer or instructor first should have a sound background, preferably with field experience in the area in which he will be instructing. Secondly, he should have in-depth knowledge of the bibliographical material listed at the end of the training module, as well as other literature sources. With this basic preparation, the trainer can be in a position to employ the training module as a "road map" for the direction and substance of the course. Throughout the preparation and presentation of the course, the trainer should keep in mind the general objectives of the course as set forth at the outset of the outline.

As the course is presented, each heading and subheading should be treated by the instructor as a theme for expansion. The headings are meant only to provide the structure to the trainer, who should then build on them, expanding and enlarging as the needs of the class are demonstrated and his time and ability permit. Many examples and illustrations should be provided to the class. An abundance of case material and other examples carefully prepared by the instructor is

essential. It is the illustrative material that concretize concepts and enhance learning. The trainer should draw upon his own professional experience as well as the bibliographical material for much of this expansion. Obviously, the trainer should capitalize on the experiences of his class in order to make the material more viable.

While the trainer is preparing for the course, certain chapters and sections of the readings will suggest themselves to him as so basic or important that he will want to assign them to the class. Therefore, the bibliography will serve two purposes: preparation of material for the instructor and training material for the class. No attempt was made on the part of those developing the training modules to dictate what, if any, the class assignment should be. The trainer will know his class and its needs better than anyone else, and should have full discretionary power on assignments, drawing from the bibliographical references or any other sources which he deems relevant.

Caseload management is seen as a necessity for organizing the probation officer's job in a meaningful way. This module should be particularly helpful to probation and parole officers because it presents a systematic approach to corrections. If administered correctly, caseload management should alleviate some of the heavy burdens facing probation and parole officers by their approaching their work in a more systematic and organized manner.

CASELOAD MANAGEMENT

- Unit Objectives: (1) To explore in depth the concept of caseload management.
- (2) To detail the responsibilities of the agent and his supervisor.

I. Caseload Management, Definitions and General Concepts.

A. Caseload Management is the process by which the corrections agent, as an agency representative, plans and carries out necessary actions on his total caseload to determine and redetermine eligibility for continuing community or institutional status for the client, and by which the agent provides or arranges conditions for service to the client, in a prompt, accurate, and orderly manner.

1. Agency representative. The objective of the agency and of the agency's representative have to be identical.
 - a. The probation officer should act as a referrer and integrator of services.
 - b. He is limited by the boundaries of his capacities and the policies, function, and material resources of his agency.
 - c. He should learn how to effectively utilize all potential resources available.
2. Plans--purposeful rather than precipitous behavior. Necessary actions, as defined by agency policy (e.g., preparing certain reports for presentence, violation, etc.)
3. Eligibility. Criteria for continuing status must be set--who and when is a person eligible for probation.
 - a. Eligibility can initially be based on information gathered in the Pre-sentence Investigation which includes the following:
 1. Description of the situation
 2. Description of the offender as an individual
 3. Description of the individual in relationship to others
 4. The probable future of this individual
 - b. Eligibility can be established by answering the following questions:
 1. Does the offender have sufficient internal controls to conform?

2. Does he state or demonstrate a willingness to abide by the rules?
 3. Does he have potential for school or employment?
 4. Does he have sufficient motivation to adjust?
 5. Will the community tolerate him?
 6. Are there sufficient family and community resources available?
 7. What are the implications of the offenders past and present behavior on his ability to adjust?
- c. On the basis of eligibility, goals, and objectives can be established.
4. Client--for whom we are in business.
- B. Establishment of case goals.
1. Every recommendation for probation should have a projected plan, spelled out in terms of:
 - a. Immediate goals. Those dimensions which impinge upon the individual's perception of self and his pattern of delinquency, which can be remedied early in his probation experience (e.g., go to school regularly, find employment, find satisfactory living arrangements, limit alcohol intake, etc.)
 - b. Intermediate goals. Those dimensions which emerge from attainment of immediate goals. For example, more adequate school performance, consonant with individual's ability could be expected as a regular school attendance. Growing responsibly in relation to self and family could be expected after a period of probation counseling. Enhanced social functioning, etc.
 - c. Long-term goals. Ordinarily, we do not expect the client to have arrived at this point before discharge from probation. For instance, an individual child on probation may aspire to completion of a school program, the end of which is several years off. He should not be kept on probation throughout. Rather, upon completion of intermediate goals, planning for discharge should emerge.
- C. Levels of supervision.
1. Three levels of probation supervision can be specified.
 - a. Intensive
 1. To assist in immediate planning for client's treatment program in community.

2. To deal with crisis situations which may arise beyond the initial point.
3. To deal with possible movement in directions of revocation.
4. Contacts minimum of once a week.
5. Possible high authority usage.

b. Medium

1. Where client is progressing toward intermediate goals.
2. A period of stabilization.
3. A period of support and encouragement, with declining use of authority.
4. Period not in excess of six months.

c. Minimum

1. Most middle range goals have been attained. Problems related to illegal or deviant behavior seem to have stabilized.
2. Client's functioning quite stabilized.
3. Preparation for "emancipation" discharge planning.
4. Maximum estimate 2-3 months.

LEVEL OF SUPERVISION

Maximum	Medium	Minimum	Goal Level
X			Immediate
	X		Intermediate
		X	Long Term
			Discharge

D. Systematic case analysis.

1. Analysis of case needs should be done at point of intake.
2. Classify case in terms of level of supervision
3. Establish goals

4. Realistic time limits should be placed on achievement of goals.

5. What actual classification?

E. Principles of caseload management.

1. Every agent must have a basic work plan flexible enough to allow for adjustment to additional or unexpected work; but emphasis is on basic plan. It should be systematic in relating the sights of our service to that of the larger community.

2. Every agent should use judgment and selectivity in establishing priorities of activities in his basic work plan.

a. Necessary field and office interviews, indicated by needs of case.

b. Office work.

3. "Blocks of cases" principles.

a. Cases can be assigned on the basis of expertise or geographic area. By assigning on the basis of expertise, the probation officer will become a specialized professional. Examples of this would be to assign all drug abuse cases to one probation officer, all aggressive juveniles to another, etc. By assigning cases on the basis of a particular geographic area, the officer is aided in learning his particular area well. It also provides an optimal utilization of time.

b. This is opposed to random case assignment. By assigning cases randomly, the quality of expertise cannot be attained.

c. Both approaches, "block of cases" and random assignment can result in an uneven distribution of caseload; i.e., one officer might have 15 intensive supervision cases and another might have only minimum supervision cases.

4. Agent should be able to:

a. Measure the progress of each under his supervision.

b. Set and adhere to time limits

c. Be fully aware of the specific requirements of each case.

5. Prompt, accurate, and complete recording of the contacts and actions taken.

6. Focus on productive use of time and continuity of activities.
7. Uniformity in practice.
 - a. Staff turnover.
 - b. Fluctuation in size of loads.
 - c. Geographic considerations.
8. Eligibility must be maintained.
 - a. Responsibility for community service.
 - b. Responsibility for community protection.
9. Some problems.
 - a. Agent tends to see his work in terms of activities on his own caseload assignment.
 - b. Spiderweb supervision.

Management from Standpoint of Agent.

A. Agent's view.

1. What actions he needs to plan for and carry out.
2. When he needs to take them.
3. How well he performs these actions is of utmost importance to the agency, but it is separate and apart from caseload management.
 - a. Difference between planning time for a visit and the skill that goes into the interview itself in eliciting the interpreting facts.
 - b. Difference between planning uninterrupted time for reading a record and reading it with skill and understanding so that actions planned and taken are purposeful.
 - c. Caseload management is not an end in itself.

B. Planning time for agent.

1. Time blocked for:
 - a. Area meetings.
 - b. Conference with supervisor.
 - c. Dictation periods.
2. How much time for field?

- a. Allocation of uninterrupted days or half days in the field.
- b. Field work is not left over time from office work.
- c. Size of load (classification scheme later.)
- d. Location of load, and travel time involved between office and field and points between field.
- e. Policy decision on frequency of field contact.
- f. Special characteristics of load.

C. Management questions for agent.

1. Tests of judgment.

- a. Is this really necessary?
- b. Am I choosing the best type of activity for the occasion, taking into consideration the agency, the client, and use of my own time?
- c. Am I holding the client to the responsibility he is expected to assume and is capable of assuming when I carry out this activity.
- d. Am I thinking and working in terms of reasonable time limits. What sorts of controls am I imposing on myself?

E.G., Two to three visits when one will do.

Visit instead of phone call.

Verifications when information already in folder.

Neglect some cases in favor of others.

2. Use of office time.

- a. Interviews with clients and others.
- b. Office or "desk" work.
- c. Fixed time for office interviews? "Office hours."
 - 1. Form letter advising clients reduces unplanned-for client contacts.
 - 2. Schedules appointments. Indefinite appointments result in no-shows.
- d. If field time is regularly scheduled and adhered to, there is less difficulty in making specific appointments in office.
- e. Emergency contacts in office.
 - 1. Immediate and urgent need.
 - 2. Readiness for contact.
 - 3. Responsibility to total load.

- f. Setting priorities.
 - 1. Guard against overemphasis on difficult cases.
 - 2. Think in terms of completing units of work.
- g. Buffer by receptionist--unavailable except for emergencies.
 - 1. Cannot work on all cases at once.
 - 2. Chooses blocks of cases to work on.
 - 3. Should show balance of difficult to complex.
- h. True emergency cases take precedence.
In groups decide what constitutes a true emergency.
- i. Daily functions.
 - 1. Daily statistical sheet.
 - a. Activity
 - b. Dictation control
 - 2. Field notebook.
- j. Importance of reading records before visits.
 - 1. Plan for each visit.
 - a. Stated objectives.
 - b. Evaluations of accomplishments.
- k. Recording cases.
 - 1. Use of statistical sheet and field book.
 - 2. Use of alphabetical folder for correspondence, etc.
- 1. Priority.
 - 1. Cases to be transferred.
 - 2. Cases with oldest undictated material.
 - 3. Cases needed for discussion with supervisor or administrative review.
 - 4. Cases for closing.
 - 5. Cases where small but important bits need to be dictated to bring records up to date.
- 3. Writing the report.
 - a. Style--simplicity, good grammar.
 - b. Formality--"professionalize."
 - c. Verbosity should be avoided.
 - d. Obscurantism.

Example: "Marvin's ambiguous feelings toward his parents will be the essential focus for helping him, and altogether we question the granting of probation for M."

- e. Importance of describing a person.
- f. Guard against emotionally charged words.

Casework Principles with which the Supervisor Must Continually Work in Assisting Probation Officers to do Effective Correctional Counseling.

A. Identification and evaluation.

1. Identify the nature of client's problem and obtain relevant facts, recognizing the interacting social and psychological factors.
2. Relate client's needs to eligibility requirements of the agency with appropriate reference to individualization.
3. Evaluate and interpret content of the interview.
4. Evaluate and use the resources of the individual, family, agency and community which may alleviate or solve problem.
5. Establish realistic plans and goals with the client in terms of his capacity and the limitations of programs and community resources.
6. Willingness to understand rather than to judge.

B. Caseload management questions.

1. Is this contact really necessary?
2. Is this the best method to get the information? (letter or phone call)
3. Is the client being used to his greatest capacity in this contact?

C. Use of field time.

1. Plans visits by blocks.
 - a. Geographic propinquity.
 - b. Regard for conservation of time.
2. Considerations in determining: Client's
 - a. Age.
 - b. Physical and/or mental limitations.
 - c. Home responsibilities.
 - d. Transportation.
 - e. Trustworthiness of client. (classification later)

3. Consistently reviews his decision as to location of next interview.
 4. Difficulties of prearranged home visits.
 - a. Agent may be delayed--hence frustration.
 - b. Client "prepared."
 - c. But reduces number of no-shows.
- D. Questions related to agent and information necessary for administrative decision making.
1. How many cases require:
 - a. Maximum Supervision.
 - b. Medium Supervision.
 - c. Minimum Supervision.
 2. In a balanced caseload, how many of each type.
 3. Projection of additional staff.
 4. Does policy impede effective operations?
- E. Dealing effectively with people--the essence of good job supervision.
1. Must understand the psychology of his staff.
 - a. What motivates them.
 - b. What gives them satisfaction.
 - c. What causes resentment and resistance.
 - d. What leads to frustration and a sense of failure.
 2. Understanding is only a first step.
 - a. Sensitivity to the needs of his staff.
 - b. Recognizes the human problems of his workers.
 - c. Has skill to deal with them constructively.
 - d. Likes people and enjoys working with them.
 - e. Tight control and direction vs. sharing in decisions.
- F. How to supervise.
1. Assist in achieving goals.
 2. Listen.
 3. Ask questions.
 4. Don't jump to conclusions.

IV. Summary

- A. Caseload management involves two specific areas.
 - 1. Agent plans and performs actions within the framework of his total caseload in order to evaluate client's eligibility for continuing community or institutional status.
 - 2. Agent provides or arranges conditions for appropriate services for his client.
- B. Successful caseload management depends upon:
 - 1. Efficient agent performance in correctional counseling.
 - a. Planning time.
 - b. Accurate judgments about client.
 - c. Efficient use of office time.
 - d. Setting priorities.
 - e. Concise, objective report writing.
 - 2. Effective supervision of the field agent.
 - a. Determination of type of case supervision required.
 - b. Effective handling of staff.
 - 1. Balancing agent's caseload.
 - 2. Projection of additional staff.
 - 3. Evaluation of policy as it contributes to performance of agency goals.
 - c. Sensitivity to staff.
 - d. Assisting staff in achieving goals.

The Prisoner's Dilemma or The Red-Black-Game

This "game" is intended to point out the almost universal competitiveness that exists in our society. The strategies which each group will develop for playing the game may later be useful for discussion purposes.

The object of the game is to get as many points without helping or hindering the other group. Players are divided into two groups. As a group, choose either red or black.

If Group A chooses and Group B chooses then the pay-off is

		A	B
Red	Red	-3	-3
Red	Black	+5	-5
Black	Red	-5	+5
Black	Black	+3	+3

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Group A											
Group B											

There are ten rounds in the game with points after each round. The odds are doubled after the fifth round. Square the odds after the tenth round (do not change sign). After the fourth and eighth rounds, the groups have the opportunity to negotiate. This can maximize the number of points accumulated by both groups.

Each group must decide:

1. Whether to negotiate
2. Who will represent the group as negotiator (one person)
3. What powers this negotiator will have in the negotiations

They must decide how they are going to make a decision on picking the color.

- Issues:
1. competition vs. cooperation
 2. trust vs. mistrust
 3. honesty vs. dishonesty
 4. treatment of minority groups

All this is in the framework of community resources, and community relations in relation to the client.

This game is useful as an exercise in group decision making processes.

The NASA Survival Game

This game employs the concept of Group Consensus decision-making. First, each person will fill out the NASA Exercise Individual Worksheet. Follow the instructions provided on each sheet. Scoring is then done on the basis of the answer sheet provided. The lowest scoring group wins.

Individual Worksheet

INSTRUCTIONS: You are a member of a space crew originally scheduled to rendezvous with a mother ship on the lighted surface of the moon. Due to mechanical difficulties, however, your ship was forced to land at a spot some 200 miles from the rendezvous point. During landing, much of the equipment aboard was damaged, and since survival depends on reaching the mother ship, the most critical items available must be chosen for the 200-mile trip. Below are listed the 15 items left intact and undamaged after landing. Your task is to rank order them in terms of their importance to your crew in allowing them to reach the rendezvous point. Place the number 1 by the most important item, the number 2 by the second most important, and so on through number 15, the least important. You have 15 minutes to complete this phase of the exercise.

- _____ Box of matches
- _____ Food concentrate
- _____ 50 feet of nylon rope
- _____ Parachute silk
- _____ Portable heating unit
- _____ Two .45 calibre pistols
- _____ One case dehydrated Pet milk
- _____ Two 100-lb. tanks of oxygen
- _____ Stellar map (of the moon's constellation)
- _____ Life raft
- _____ Magnetic compass
- _____ 5 gallons of water
- _____ Signal flares
- _____ First aid kit containing injection needles
- _____ Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

NASA EXERCISE GROUP WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: This is an exercise in group decision-making. Your group is to employ the method of Group Consensus in reaching its decision. This means that the prediction for each of the 15 survival items must be agreed upon by each group member before it becomes a part of the group decision. Consensus is difficult to reach. Therefore, not every ranking will meet with everyone's complete approval. Try, as a group, to make each ranking one with which all group members can at least partially agree. Here are some guides to use in reaching consensus:

1. Avoid arguing for your own individual judgment. Approach the task on the basis of logic.
2. Avoid changing your mind only in order to reach agreement and avoid conflict. Support only solutions with which you are able to agree somewhat, at least.
3. Avoid "conflict-reducing" techniques such as majority vote, averaging, or trading in reaching your decision.
4. View differences of opinion as helpful rather than as a hindrance in decision-making.

- _____ Box of matches
- _____ Food concentrate
- _____ 50 feet of nylon rope
- _____ Parachute silk
- _____ Portable heating unit
- _____ Two .45 calibre pistols
- _____ One case dehydrated Pet milk
- _____ Two 100-lb. tanks of oxygen
- _____ Stellar map (of moon's constellation)
- _____ Life raft
- _____ Magnetic compass
- _____ 5 gallons of water
- _____ Signal flares
- _____ First aid kit containing injection needles
- _____ Solar-powered FM receiver-transmitter

NASA EXERCISE ANSWER SHEET

<u>Correct Number</u>		<u>Rationale</u>
<u>15</u>	Box of matches	No oxygen
<u>4</u>	Food concentrate	Can live for some time without food
<u>6</u>	50 feet of nylon rope	For travel over rough terrain
<u>8</u>	Parachute silk	Carrying
<u>13</u>	Portable heating unit	Lighted side of Moon is hot
<u>11</u>	Two .45 calibre	Some use for propulsion
<u>12</u>	One case dehydrated milk	Needs H ₂ O to work
<u>1</u>	Two 100-lb. tanks of oxygen	No air on Moon
<u>3</u>	Stellar map (of Moon's constellation)	Needed for navigation
<u>9</u>	Life raft	Some value for shelter or carrying
<u>14</u>	Magnetic compass	Moon's magnetic field different from Earth's
<u>2</u>	5 gallons of water	You can't live long without this
<u>10</u>	Signal flares	No oxygen
<u>7</u>	First aid kit containing injection needles	First aid kit might be used but needles are useless
<u>5</u>	Solar-powered FM receiver- transmitter	Communication

Estimation of Probation
Officers' Work Distribution
Per Month by Place and
Nature of Activity

INSTRUCTIONS: Probation officers engage in a variety of activities and some of the more important tasks are listed below. Based upon an 168 hour per month work schedule, estimate the distribution of hours by the type and place of work.

Office Work:

with supervisor	_____
with clerical staff	_____
with colleagues	_____
with paperwork	_____
with client/relatives	_____

Subtotal

Field Work in Formal Settings:

in court	_____
in jail	_____
in institutions	_____
with police	_____
with others	_____
(teachers, other agencies)	_____

Subtotal

Field Work in Informal Settings:

with employers	_____
with community groups	_____
with others (e.g., school)	_____
with client/relatives	_____

Subtotal

TOTAL

168 hours

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FILMS*

THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE #1: MANAGING TIME color #31396 25 min.

Peter Drucker applies effective management of time techniques through direct discussion and in assuming the role of management development consultant to a mythical corporation. Dramatizes typical problems faced by executives. c-a-

THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE #2: WHAT CAN I CONTRIBUTE? color #31397 25 min.

Peter Drucker discusses teamwork and communication among decision makers in management positions. How team members who have a high degree of specialized knowledge can contribute to each other's performance in explained. c-a

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS--A. Wellington. The Pennsylvania State University, 1963. 30 min. #30340. Rental \$6.40.

Less-experienced counselor seeks help from a colleague in synthesizing information about a student in preparation for an interview. Counselor with more experience and professional preparation suggests use of school records, test results, autobiographies, etc., as ways for a counselor to learn about students.

SOCIAL WORKER Universal Education and Visual Arts. 1967. 17 min. color #20807 rental \$6.40

Depicts how the concern of the social worker is reflected in service to people as individuals, as families, in groups and communities. By use of professional knowledge and skills, and empathy with people strengthened by self-knowledge and professional values, the social worker is able to deal effectively with the social problems and adjustments necessary in a complex world.

*Films available from Audio-Visual Services, The Pennsylvania State University, 6 Willard Building, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802. (Phone 814-865-6347)

Rental prices are subject to change. Though these films are not on the particular topic of Caseload Management, they are seen to be relevant to the general topic.

END

7 26/10/1954