

CASE STUDY 24

As part of your development, you and two colleagues, Patricia Wilson and Anne Dixon, are to spend a period of intensive training. You are party to a conversation with these trainees which has so far gone as follows: on receiving the news of the secondment, Anne said, "Good — I love course work. I hope we don't have to get involved in all this on-the-job training that is so fashionable these days. You can't learn anything just sitting watching people."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Patricia; "courses are really boring — sitting there listening to lecture after lecture. However good the speaker is, nobody can concentrate on that sort of thing for hour after hour, day after day. And what have you got at the end of it? A lot of notes about nothing that ever happened in the real world".

"Well, so what?" Anne responded, "The 'real world' isn't so wonderful, and if everyone did everything right out there, there wouldn't be a need for training. If we find ourselves involved in the training department's on-the-job project we'll learn nothing except how it's done, not how it should be done. We'd be much better off on a course."

"I'm sorry, but you're really mistaken", said Patricia. "You don't know what it's like at the training centre. I mean if they had heard of visual aids it might not be so bad; but have you been there recently? They have only just discovered the blackboard!"

"As far as I'm concerned, that's not what's important. A course is what you make it" Anne retorted. "Sitting next to Nellie is no good. They usually don't know you are coming until the day you arrive, they've usually not had to explain their job before, and they are more often than not irritated by you being there looking over their shoulder and blame all the mistakes on you. I had the experience when I first joined, and I don't want it again, thank you".

"Well, I've had enough of courses. Two weeks of airy-fairy theory and no idea of how to cope with real problems, not to mention being bored out of your socks".

At this point they turn to you and ask simultaneously "What do you think?"

Set out your considered answer to their query; BRIEFLY outline the advantages and the disadvantages of on-the-job training and course training; and outline what you hope for in the construction of your intensive programme.