

**LEADER'S GUIDE**  
to accompany. . .

THE  
EYE  
OF  
THE  
BEHOLDER



**BNA COMMUNICATIONS INC.**  
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### **Acknowledgement**

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*“O, wad some Pow’r the giftie gie us / To see oursels as ohers see us!”-Burns*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE FILM

This highly intriguing film classic is one of the best available to industry, government agencies and schools on perception, the projection of oneself in our appraisals of others, and related topics.

Among the points which a group or class will be likely to learn from this film are:

... The importance of caution in judging other people.

... The wide spread of differences between judgments, that no two people see the same thing in the same way.

... The significance of the mechanism of projection-the tendency to see in others qualities which are really part of ourselves. As Spinoza put it-“When Peter talks about Paul, we learn more about Peter than we do about Paul.”

... The importance of two-way communications, including plenty of active listening.

... Mental set-we see what we want or expect to see.

... The value of empathy, and the effect of lack of empathy.

... The rigidity of snap judgments-“I could see right away that he . . . “ or “The only way to do it is...”

The film can be used at various levels of education and training programs-from overview courses for new supervisors to top executive training, from junior high school to University graduate discussion groups, from introductory classes to in-depth programs. More specifically, “the Eye” will be of special interest and value to the following:

**1. MANAGEMENT and SUPERVISORY GROUPS** in industry, business and government, particularly in connection with discussion of these topics:

Human and Employee Relations  
Industrial Training and Public Relations  
Communications ... Sensitivity Training  
Appraisals and Periodic Reviews  
Supervisory Selection ... Prejudice  
Executive and Management Development  
Sales Training ... Marketing Training  
Leadership Courses ... Awareness

**2. TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS (T.A.)** discussion and training groups  
An excellent film for discussion of the basic concepts of T.A.: Adult-Parent-Child Ego States, Rituals, Games, Pastimes, Stroking and Scripts emerge from the different prejudices and character reactions of five different people to one man.

### **3. COLLEGE CLASSES IN:**

General Psychology (especially during discussion of the topic of Perception). To motivate the viewer to discern the character of one's motives and of others.

Social Psychology (during discussion of prejudice).

General Semantics and Speech. English and Journalism.

Business Administration ... particularly in Behavioral Sciences and Personnel area.

**LAW** ... to demonstrate how the perception of testimony and/or evidence by observers, witnesses, attorneys or judges may be filtered or distorted. (See p. 22)

### **4. HIGH SCHOOL/VOCATIONAL-TECH CLASSES IN:**

Social Studies. Beginning Psychology. Senior Problems.

Secretarial Training.

Voc-Tech Guidance Counselling, English classes.

### **5. FEDERAL, STATE and LOCAL GOVERNMENTS** ... including Military Installations and Commands.

An aid in over-view to new supervisors and non-commissioned officers-especially valuable in top officer, management and development programs.

### **6. MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND HOSPITALS**

General and Social Psychiatry ... In-service Training

Psychiatric Nursing ... Clinical Psychology

### **7. CHURCH GROUPS**

Helpful to ministers, teachers, and other church leaders for use in adult programs, parents' discussion groups, teacher-training and meetings involving various age groups from jr. to sr. high.

### **8. LAW ENFORCEMENT, POLICE/SHERIFF TRAINING, CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS, REFORMATORIES.**

### **9. TEACHERS**

## SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND HOW TO USE THIS FILM

Be certain to view the film yourself before showing it to the group. In fact, two private showings are better, because there is so much in this film that you will find yourself seeing details even after a dozen viewings.

After showing the complete film to your group, you may simply wish to discuss these questions: "What is Michael Gerard really like and why do these different observers see him the way they do?" The discussion will probably be self-generating after these questions are responded to. If not, the provocative questions below (starting on p. 11) will help you and your group to go more deeply into the many learnings which the film can produce.

Some discussion leaders prefer to turn the film off after the opening scene showing the knife, girl on couch, etc. Stop the film and ask the viewers to write down or state what they think has happened. They may commit themselves and, unfortunately, make a pre-mature judgment. This, of course, is part of the learning process.

A more powerful way to use the film is to turn it off at mid-point for discussion. Run the film to mid-point (Michael is standing, the model is prone on the sofa, and the cleaning woman has run out of the studio screaming "Police.") Turn off the projector and turn on the room lights as this is a good point at which to stop, and discuss: "What do you think of Michael Gerard?" Or "Would you hire Michael to work for you?" And, "Why not?"

Group members may bring out a variety of perceptions at this point. . . "He sure is rude to his mother"; "He's a screwball"; "I agree with the waiter," etc. There may be a few group members who are wise enough, or cautious enough, to say something like this: "We can't tell at this point, we haven't seen him directly; it's not fair to judge him with so little evidence; so far, we know him only through the eyes of others." However, in most groups there will be many who feel they do know enough to make a judgment.

*"He who knows others is clever, but he who knows himself is enlightened. -Lao-Tze*

Then ask such questions as the following: "What did Michael do or say that makes you feel he is a screw-ball?" "Which of the different points of view we saw in the film is likely to be nearest the truth? Why?" Very likely some member of the group will volunteer the observation that Michael apparently changes clothes during the film (overcoat over arm when leaving Mother; Cabbie sees him emerge from house with overcoat on, hat brian pulled down; no coat or hat during exchange with Koppelmeyer; both coat and hat on immediately afterward, as he is seen by cleaning woman). If no one mentions this point, ask: "You may have noticed that his clothing changed at various points: How can we account for his wearing a coat and hat in the cab and neither when he is talking to the landlord?" Usually some members of the group will attribute this to the theory that the film is not supposed to be one sequence of events, but that the different beholders are relating how they saw him on different days. Very likely some other group member will

squelch this theory by saying: “The announcer said this all takes place within twelve hours.” Another theory that may be put forward is: “The producer goofed.” However, after a little discussion, most groups will come to the point of view that “We don’t know how he dressed. But the Cabbie, thinking he was a hood, dressed him like Bogart used to dress. And Koppelmeyer had him dressed like a wild-eyed artist.”

The discussion leader can bring this point home by unobtrusively removing his/her necktie (or scarf) while the lights are out during the first half of the film. Then during the discussion of the different perceptions of Michael’s attire, ask: “Was I wearing a necktie (scarf) before this film began? If so, describe it—long or bow? Any tie clasp? Color? Pattern?” Usually a great variety of impressions will come out, some members testifying that it was a long tie, blue and grey, others remembering a red bow, etc. After each member has expressed his/her belief on this, show them the real tie (scarf) again. The parallels between this demonstration and the film’s demonstration of individual differences in perception will be obvious to all the members of the group.

As you prepare to start the film again, ask: “We now have five points of view about Michael. Who else should tell us about him to round out our information?” Some may suggest that they would like to hear the model’s point of view. “Fine. Near the end of the film the model will give us her appraisal of Michael.” Some may suggest that they would like to hear what Esther, the brunette, thinks of Michael. “Unfortunately, we don’t get to hear her directly, but we can pick up some clues about her attitude. What we will hear is Michael’s own point of view, because in the second half of the film we get to interview him. He, of course, has a different point of view from the others (Figure 4).” Turn on the projector and run through the second half without interruption. Then discuss the film using the questions, problems and exercises which follow.

## **FILM SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTER ANALYSIS**

“The Eye of the Beholder” dramatizes the story of twelve hours in the life of Michael Gerard, an artist. After a brief introduction of cartoon illustrations which make the point that we can easily be misled (the old shell game, the top hat illusion, the ambiguous cube figure), we see Michael in his studio, standing amid a disarray of spilled paints and a knife, with an apparently lifeless young woman lying on a couch.

From here, the film flashes back to give the impressions Michael has made in the minds of five people with whom he has come in contact:

*Waiter sees Michael as... “lady’s man”*

The evening before he was in a night club and the waiter testifies to his conviction that Michael is a smooth lady's man. It develops that the waiter had formed this judgment quickly- "When I served him his first drink I could tell he's a lady's man alright"... Having made this judgment, the waiter from there on sees and hears only those things which reinforce this opinion. When the commentator asks why he is so sure that Michael is a smooth operator, the waiter answers that he recognizes a wolf when he sees one because "I know how to get around myself." The waiter (who thinks of himself as a Casanova) is jealous of Michael's technique.

*Mother sees Michael as a . . . 'good boy, but thoughtless"*

Michael's mother says that he is unappreciative, thoughtless and moody, but that at heart he is a good boy. She finds him very hard to understand and believes that he never listens to a word she says (which is really her own failing). From her point of view, as we meet her the next morning at breakfast time, she has gone to the trouble of fixing a nice meal with his favorite dishes, and he is so self-centered that he pays no attention to her concern for his welfare. The mother, whose son could be Jack-the-Ripper but he is her son and therefore "a good boy."

*Cabbie sees Michael as... "a hood"*

*"Never trust in people who always look out at one hole. "-Rabelais*

Michael leaves the house by taxi on his way to his studio. The Cabbie sees a grim, tough Michael, hat brim pulled down, coat collar up, a bulge under the coat... Like the waiter, the Cabbie is an expert at rapid diagnosis "In my business you learn to size up a guy fast... right away, I had him spotted... he's a hood, a real hood." As the Cabbie continues to talk, it develops that while he sees crookedness everywhere and gripes about it, we get the impression the crookedness and graft would be all right if he were included. Being left out of the "easy money" is what hurts. The mechanism of projection becomes particularly transparent when the commentator asks why he is so sure Michael is a hoodlum. The Cabbie answers that he knows what makes a bulge under a coat... at the same time revealing his own revolver. The Cabbie, a frustrated hood who wants desperately to belong.

*Landlord sees Michael as. . ."a looney"*

At the door of the studio building Michael is greeted by the landlord Koppelmeyer, who tells us that his building is full of artists and they are all peculiar, but that Gerard is the maddest of the lot. After a brief encounter, during which Michael seems to the landlord to be raving crazy talk about the nature of reality, the artist runs upstairs to his studio and the commentator asks Koppelmeyer whether he would really recognize an insane person if he met one. To this the landlord replies: "I'm an expert... several members of my family are that way." Again, the mechanism of projection is transparent as Koppelmeyer talks. The landlord, to whom everyone is crazy except, of course, himself.

*Cleaning woman sees Michael as. . . "a murderer"*

The cleaning woman gives the most sinister interpretation of all..."That Mr. Gerard is a murderer." She watches Michael stalk menacingly up the stairs. A few minutes later, the model arrives-a young, sweet, innocent girl as the cleaning woman sees her. The latter, a few minutes later, hears the model's anguished voice..."Don't look at me that way,"... followed by a scream and a crash. The cleaning woman opens the studio door to see the model deathly still on the couch, a knife on the floor beside her, and the monster, Gerard, glaring down at her. The cleaning woman, fearful of everyone and their motives.

We know how five people regard Michael. These varying interpretations could be represented diagrammatically if we let the figure in *FIGURE 1* symbolize the true Michael Gerard. Let this circle be his total personality-his hopes and fears, his job knowledge, working habits, talents, deficiencies, feelings, moods, eye color, physique, hobbies, interests, etc. Since no one, not even Michael himself, knows his true, total personality, we must imagine his true self.

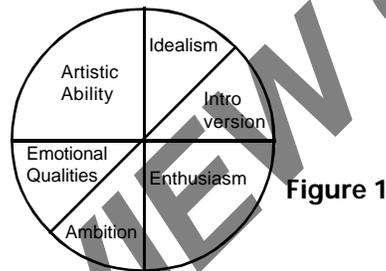


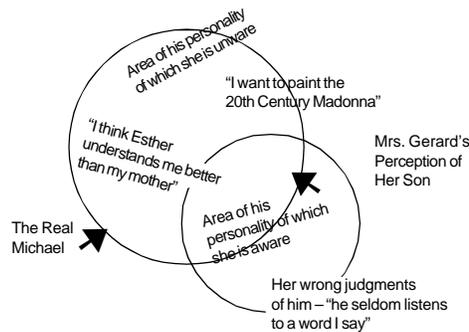
Figure 1

The Real Michael

FOR PREVIEW ONLY

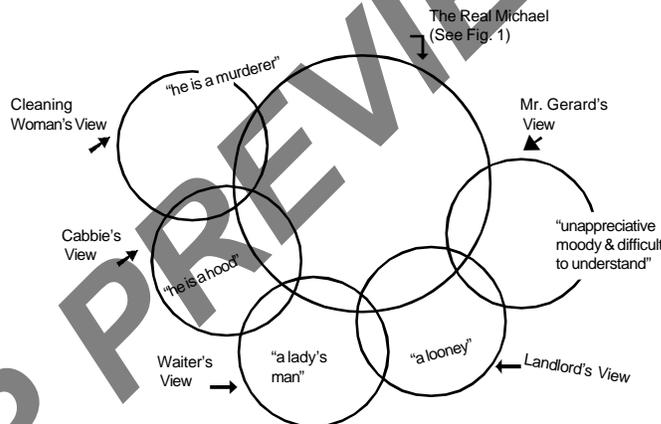
*"I obserue myself, and so I come to know others. "-Lao- Tze7*

In **FIGURE 2** we add his mother's perception of Michael. There are some things about her son which Mrs. Gerard knows correctly-the areas of overlap between the two circles. She has some incorrect ideas about him (we don't know yet what these are). And there is much of his personality of which she is completely ignorant.



**Figure 2**

**FIGURE 3** adds the perception of the others. Each knows a little of the real Michael, each is ignorant of much of the real man, and each thinks some things that are untrue. We have learned very little about Michael, but we do know something about each of the beholders.



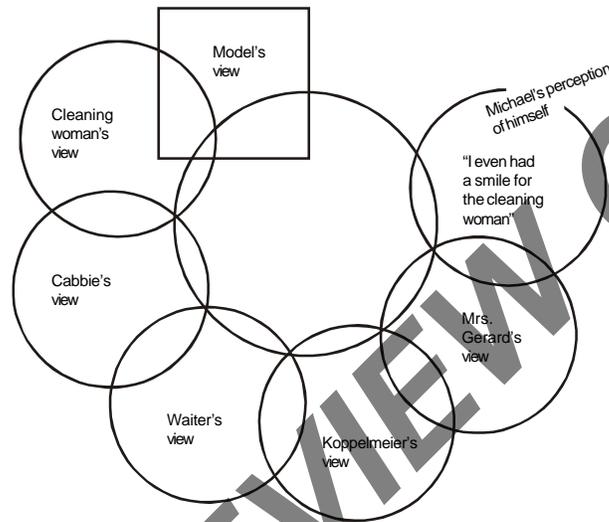
**Figure 3**

*How does Michael see himself?*

In the second half of the film, we "interview" Michael himself and get his point of view. This is represented by **FIGURE 4**. Like the others, he is partly right and partly wrong. He knows his ideals, for example, better than anyone else knows them; but he is apparently unaware of his impact on other people. He sees himself as a dedicated, idealistic artist who is going to paint the Twentieth Century Madonna. From his point of view, his stares at women in the night club are proper because he is looking for the perfect model. When he finds his Madonna, he is much too excited to sleep that night and in no mood for breakfast the next morning. So, his mother's insistence that he eat simply demonstrates that ... "Mom, you haven't heard a word I've said."

The Cabbie with his chatter is simply an annoying distraction. Despite the interruptions, Michael is able to work out his lighting by the time he arrives at the studio and he is in a happy mood as he talks with Koppelmeyer. Seen through Michael's eyes, his conversation with the landlord is reasonable, although Koppelmeyer clearly does not understand the nature of reality.

After a "smile" for the "nosey, old cleaning woman," Michael rushes into his studio to prepare for the sitting. To his dismay, when the model arrives she is drunk and flirtatious. In angry disappointment, he rejects her advances and flings her on the couch. It is at this point that the cleaning woman opens the door and imagines murder.



**Figure 4**

And in the final moments of the film, the model gives her judgment of Michael—"A square"—while he ruefully comments "My Madonna."

By the end of the film we know Michael a good deal better than we did before we heard his point of view. There is still much of him which we do not know, but at least he has emerged as a reasonable, integrated human being.

## **PITFALLS TO AVOID WHEN OBSERVING OTHERS, EVENTS, ISSUES**

A basic learning from the film is that we should be aware of the following:

**1. SNAP JUDGMENTS**-The tendency to form first impressions of others. We should strive towards a flexible approach and obtain further information before we praise, condemn or draw a final conclusion characterizing someone. Remember how the waiter unjustly characterized Michael Gerard as a ladies' man by first impression only? Similar caution is essential in formulating decisions regarding events, situations and issues.

**2. PROJECTION**—The tendency to attribute to others some of our own motives and faults. If we tend to be slow, awkward, lazy, etc., we should make sure that we are not projecting our faults to others. Remember how the cabbie accused Michael Gerard of being a "hood" and then showed his gun and said, "Don't I know a hood when I see one?"

**3. PREJUDICE**—A preconceived judgment caused by past experience or teachings, often based on insufficient knowledge. People, situations, and issues should be evaluated on their merits, with an open mind. Remember all artists are not peculiar as Koppelmeyer, the landlord, states.

**4. PREDISPOSITION**— A tendency to draw conclusions before the facts are presented: to hear what we want to hear, to see what we want to see. Frequently, in decision-making we put the cart before the horse—we make our minds up, then look for evidence to support our position. Remember the cleaning woman accused Michael of being a murderer because she wanted to find something wrong with him.

**5. PREOCCUPATION**—The state of having the mind so busy with other thoughts that it pays no attention to what is going on or what is being said. Good listening and attention to the feelings of others are invaluable tools in human relationships. Remember how Michael's mother was so determined to get him to eat his breakfast that she did not hear a word he said. Remember how Michael was so preoccupied with his project that he really did not understand what others were saying.

**6. LACK OF APPRECIATION FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S DREAMS AND IDEAS**— It is well to realize that other people have their dreams and ideas. If this is not recognized, it is impossible to understand each other, and a sympathetic "meeting of the minds" will not take place. It will also be difficult to lead, control or counsel them if no attention is paid to these factors. Remember what Michael thought of the model when she paid no attention to his idea and dream of a "Modern Day Madonna."

**7. LIMITED PERSPECTIVES**—Awareness is the foundation of good communications. For best results, we must look at others with openness. Remember how Michael could think of the blonde only as a Madonna. Remember how the cabbie was so inflexible in his opinion of Michael.

## PHYSICAL SETTING

In any conference which involves a combination of motion picture viewing and around-the-table discussion, having a conducive physical setting is extremely important. Here are some tips which you can use as a checklist in preparing the facilities.

1. Keep the group small (15 to 20 maximum).
2. Provide an informal setting. Rather than the lecture-hall seating format, use a conference table or possibly a circle of chairs without a table. The use of "buzz groups" (3 to 6 participants per group) may require an added breakout room or two.
3. Check blackout curtains to make sure the room can be made as dark as possible during film showing.
4. Check projector. (Is a spare projection lamp handy?)

5. Is the operator completely familiar with the little quirks of the projector?
6. Do you have a chalk board or flipchart and easel, with the necessary chalk or markers?
7. Will each participant be bringing writing materials? If not, provide them.
8. Test the room for any distracting noises, such as fans, etc., which can be controlled before the meeting begins. Don't forget that the projector, too, makes a distracting noise if it is set down in the middle of the group. Try to place it as far back as possible, or ideally, in a projection booth. (This could be improvised from an adjacent closet or storage room if you can project through its open doorway, or have the time and organization "clout" to get an aperture through a wall!)
9. The use of an auxiliary speaker in front of the audience will significantly improve the projector's audio capability. It will aid in giving your sessions the desired professional look.

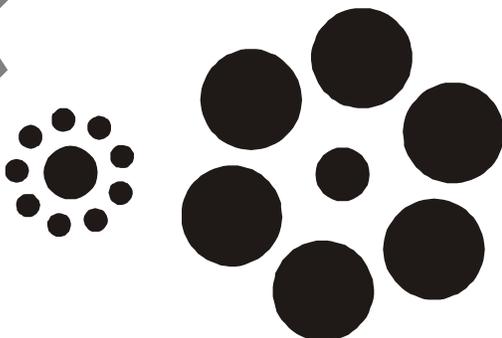
## INTRODUCING THE FILM TO THE PARTICIPANTS

Prepare the group before the showing by a few words about its general background—that this is a film about how we judge people, events, issues, etc. and some of the possible errors in our judgments. The specific wording will vary with the kind of group, e.g., in college and high school psychology classes and in Business Administration vs. with management and supervisory people. For the latter groups it will be well to refer to company policies of employee appraisals, merit reviews and promotion as typical areas involving perception difficulties.

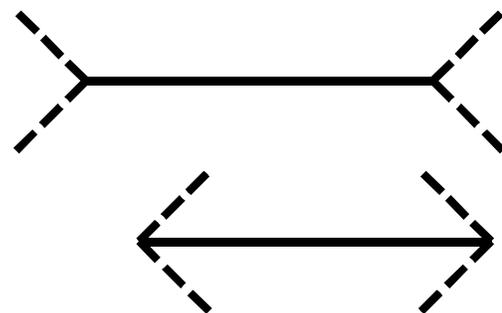
You may wish to mention that the film is about a man named Michael Gerard and that the group will hear and see how he impresses the people with whom he comes in contact. In the first half we do not meet Michael directly, but see and hear only through others. *It is as if the microphone were placed back of their ears and the camera back of their eyes.* We shall find that these different beholders do not agree with each other in what they see and hear. (With management groups add "It is something like a situation in which you are thinking of hiring an assistant. There is a candidate whom you have not met yet, but several different people who know him tell you what they think of him. In all probability they too will not see the same things in him.")

Another way to introduce the film is to show your participants optical illusions such as the following:

Are the inner circles the same size?



Is the top line longer?



Then make the point that grappling for reality is not only a problem for the eye. More typically it is each person's perception of events, issues, self, others, etc., which are presumed to be the only reality, which "does one in." In other words, all of us tend to see what we want to see, hear what we want to hear and believe what we want to believe. This phenomenon occurs not because we are necessarily mean, nasty or stubborn. Rather, it occurs because it is the way our experiences have programmed us. In effect, we have a particularized set of lenses through which we tend to view the world.

But if we are to become effective communicators we must learn the importance of PERCEPTION. For it is our insistence that others should perceive things as we do that bedevils our attempts at communication and effective relations with others. We can't afford to forget that others will (must) see the world differently because they have been and are programmed differently.

*"Who must account for himself and others, must know both."-Herbert*

## **QUESTIONS, PROBLEMS AND EXERCISES**

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS SUITABLE FOR ANY GROUP**

What do you think of this film? (This is a simple, easy way to start a discussion.)

How many people are involved in this story? (Hardly anyone will recall the exact number-demonstrating the importance of visual acuity.)

What can we learn from this film which applies to us as individuals and as a group?

What are the reasons for the colors in the film (if the mood color film version is used)? The Waiter's perceptions in green? The Mother's in orange? The Cabbie's in sepia? The Landlord's in lavender? The Cleaning Woman's in blue?

What did the colors in the second half of the film mean to you?

What are the relationships between color and mood?

How could people learn to know each other better?

Esther, the brunette, seems to understand Michael better than the others do? Why? Does she have a special talent? Or is it because of Michael's different relation to her?

What does the film tell us about listening, communication, human relations, leadership, decision making, etc., etc.?

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT, EXECUTIVE AND SUPERVISORY GROUPS**

How does this film apply to our company or agency?

What kinds of communication took place between Michael and the others?

What were the barriers to communication?

Why did Michael look that way to the waiter? The cabbie? etc.

How would you go about persuading Koppelmeyer (the landlord) that he was mistaken in his judgment of Michael?

How can we avoid making similar mistakes in judgment of people? How can we improve our company (agency) practices in appraisals? Do our perceptions cause us to assess blame, make judgments, etc., prematurely? What are the implications for team work in an organization?

How effective are we as listeners? Can we improve our ability to listen? If so, how? What are the implications for coaching new employees? For career counseling?

(NOTE: More specific questions on various management topics appear on pp. 12-20.)

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT BUREAUS AND MILITARY GROUPS**

What lessons might a military officer or a government official learn from this film?

What might a civilian manager in the armed forces or government agency learn from this film?

What does this film tell us about fair-employment practices?

How do our individual backgrounds and experience affect our perceptions of other people today?

What were Michael's obligations to make himself better understood?

Does it matter if a waiter or cabbie picks up wrong impressions?

What are the obligations of a government/military man in this respect?

Does the film tell us anything about our "P.R." efforts?

## **APPRAISAL OF PERFORMANCE**

1. What is the purpose of the appraisal interview? Its advantages? (Answer: An interview is “a conversation with a purpose.” An appraisal interview may be defined as a conversation between a manager and one of his/her staff at which they examine past achievements and make plans for the future. It is the heart of those appraisal plans that attempt to meet both the individual’s needs and the organization’s needs, and offers the following opportunities:

- a. By sharing perceptions with one’s boss, the individual can establish clearly how well he/she is doing.
- b. The employee can talk about the (perceived) problems which he/she feels are affecting the work. He/she may receive help from the boss to do a better job.
- c. The employee can find out what the future holds in terms of his/her development and possible advancement. Obviously, the boss’ perceptions are indispensable data for this.
- d. The manager can gather further information about performance and can confirm or amend any judgments he/she has already formed; faulty perceptions can be overcome.
- e. The manager can help the individual to overcome erroneous perceptions about results, plan improvements in performance, and can help him/her to cope with any factors that are outside his/her control.
- f. The manager can use the opportunity to improve communication and working relationships with the individual.
- g. The manager can establish what potential the individual has for doing other and perhaps more responsible jobs.
- h. The manager can use it as a chance to provide “psychological rewards” via support, encouragement and praise, something which everyone needs.
- i. The manager can use it as an opportunity to weld the management team, particularly if group goals are reviewed.
- j. For both parties it is an opportunity to secure an overview (via shared perceptions) of the year’s effort and a chance to assess jointly factors or forces which helped and hindered the year’s work. It can also serve as a basis for planning jointly the next year’s work goals.)

*"The only thing a man knows is himself. The world outside he can know only by hearsay."*

*–Alexander Smith*

NOTE: A small group exercise (3-4 persons per group) may be used to elicit the above answers from the total group. Procedure: set up trios or quartets; let them buzz for 10 minutes in response to this question: "What are the benefits of the annual appraisal of performance?"; post answers from small groups on board; then discuss with total group.

2. Early appraisal plans were based on an assessment of personality, the manager being asked to rate an individual on an alphabetical or numerical scale under a number of personality traits. What are the disadvantages of such a system? (Answer:

- a. Personality traits are ill-defined (i.e., as the film shows, they may mean all things to all persons) and thus there are no commonly agreed standards against which people can be assessed. The manager has to make an intuitive judgment (the perception problem) that has very little meaning for anyone else in the company.
- b. There is little evidence to say which personality characteristics are needed to do a particular job successfully.
- c. It is difficult to hold a rational discussion with an individual if he/she has been assessed in this way. Managers also feel uncomfortable "when they are put in the position of playing God" because "it constitutes something dangerously close to the violation of **the integrity of the personality**" (Douglas McGregor).
- d. Even if a character "defect" can be identified and agreed upon, all too often there is little or nothing that the manager and the individual can do to "cure" it; conversely, one can change one's performance or behavior.)

3. Because of the above disadvantages, many organizations have moved away from "personality-based assessments" towards "results-based assessments." Here appraisal is largely restricted to those aspects of the individual's performance that can be measured. What might advantages of such a system be?

- a. The assessment can be expressed in *objective* terms that can be easily understood by the boss, the subordinate and others in the company. In this approach biased perceptions are minimized.
- b. The assessment can be rationally discussed with the individual and used as a basis for job improvement.

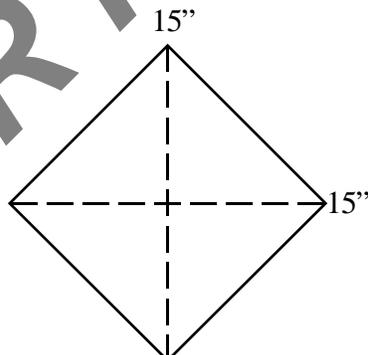
4. What is the nature of a "results-oriented" appraisal system? (Answer: The essence of such a system is that an individual's achievements are assessed against the work targets that have previously been agreed upon with his/her manager.)

## COMMUNICATION

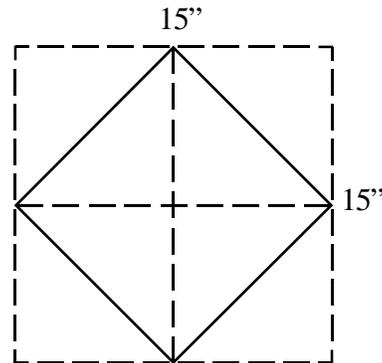
1. What procedure can one use to overcome the problem of differences in perception of messages between senders and receivers? (Answer: Check it out at each stage; i.e., introduce feedback into the communication process.)
2. Flash a one dollar bill before the group. Ask them how many times “one” appears on it. Few will be able to answer this question, despite the fact that they handle the dollar daily. Significance: All of us have a built-in screening system which filters out irrelevant messages. Obviously, we are bombarded constantly with countless stimuli of a visual and oral sort. If we didn’t screen out unnecessary communication, we couldn’t get through the day. However, the same helpful system which screens out the unneeded messages, may also screen out the needed ones. That is to say, we may ignore vital messages because we may assume they are unimportant or that we already know them, or because we don’t feel the sender is reliable or has anything worthwhile to offer, etc.
3. To point up vividly the ideas that meaning are in people (i.e., *our* perception of the message), ask the group to tackle this problem. A homeowner had a garage window which he wished to double in size to let more light in.

*“Compassion will cure more sins than condemnation.” -Beecher*

He measured the window and it was 15" high by 15" wide. He took a saw, and cut around the window and measured it again. The second measurement, with a doubling of the amount of light entering, showed the window to still be 15" by 15". How come? (Answer: the man’s window was *initially* shaped as shown on the left and subsequently shaped as shown on the right. People make the assumption in thinking about the window that it must be placed in the wall in regular square fashion. So here we have the phenomenon of people having the same facts (the window dimensions), but having different perceptions about them.)



Before cutting



After cutting

4. *Exercise.* In small groups (3-5) have your participants come up with a “laundry list” of words used in everyday conversation which are subject to a variety of meanings. Assign to one (or several) group(s) word determinations in these categories: Personality Traits, Time Factors, Quantity, Manager-Employee Relations. As a “starter” give each group an example drawn from the list below. Allow 10 minutes for group work.

Personality Traits	Time Factors	Quantity	Manager-Employee Relations
accurate	late	a lot	impartial
sincere	soon as possible	big	biased
honest	quickly	small	ability
shiftless	tomorrow	many	authority
thrifty	after lunch	few	insubordination
responsible	next few days	some	overworked
creative	by this time next year	a good number	teamwork
	no hurry		morale

Secure small group reports and then discuss significance of results from a perception point of view.

5. *Exercise.* To illustrate the problem of perception, break the total group into small groups (3-5). Have them up with a statement on any one of the following topics:

professional football	the American presidency
the Vietnam war	participative management
drug use in the U.S.	status and managerial effectiveness
sex education in junior high school	intimacy with staff
management development	trust
federal (budget) deficit	openness with others

Secure small group reports and discuss why each group produced a different statement on the same topic.

*“He knoweth the universe and himself he knoweth not.”-La Fontaine*

## **BOSS-SUBORDINATE RELATIONS**

1. *EXERCISE:* A constant source of friction between supervisors and their employees is the absence of agreement on duties and responsibilities, standards of performance, work priorities, actual and anticipated difficulties in the work situation, and the like. To test this assumption out, have each participant *and* his/her boss complete independently (before the training session) the following form and then compare results in class to note degree of agreement-disagreement. (It is assumed that the participant’s boss would not participate in the class analysis and discussion of results; however, if any of the bosses wish to compare results with their subordinates after training’s end, this might be a valuable, unintended benefit of the exercise).

*Participant's Job*

a) List the major job responsibilities:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

b) Now go back and rank these responsibilities in order of importance (one most important, seven least important).

c) What is the toughest (most demanding, most complex) part of the job?

d) What future events, circumstances or problems are likely to affect the work in a significant way?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

When forms from *both* parties are secured, have participants individually study (compare) results; then secure data from participants about the two forms and post on board (use chart below as guide.) Discuss implications from standpoint of perception.

Item	Entirely	Mostly	Generally	Minor	Not at all
Agreement on Nature of Job					
Agreement on Priorities					
Agreement on Job Demands					
Agreement on Future Problems					

2. What can you do when you're not certain what your boss expects of you?

3. If the data in the exercise suggests variances in perceptions about the work between bosses and participants, might there be a *similar* difference in perception between participants and *their* subordinates? If so, how can this problem be resolved?

## DELEGATION PROBLEMS

1. A principle of communication is that the meaning of messages is in the nervous system of the receiver and the sender, not in the message itself. Thus, in the area of delegation, it is not unusual for the supervisor to perceive his/her act of delegation to be one of “deep” or “full” delegation; however, the subordinate may perceive it quite differently. In light of this, what measures can the supervisor take to ensure that the subordinate perceives the delegation the same way?

2. Division X has a large workload. The head of the division is very busy and has tried to delegate work, but the subordinates are reluctant to take on his tasks.

a) Why might the staff resist the manager’s attempts to delegate work to them? What role might perception play in this?

b) What measures can the manager take to overcome this situation?

3. You are a subordinate in a position which you know very well. You feel you can now assume added duties and responsibilities. Your supervisor is reluctant, however, to let go any of his/her authority.

a) What might your boss’ reasons (perceptions?) be?

b) What measures can you take to overcome this?

4. What are the bases for the fear to delegate? Are they real or imaginary? Is this a perception problem?

5. Exercise regarding delegation practices

A. *Individual work* On an individual basis provide answers to the following four questions:

1. *Your* delegation practices

a) What kinds of responsibilities do you find it *easy* to delegate?

b) What are the kinds of responsibilities you would *rarely* delegate to your staff?

“What is most difficult to man? To know oneself.”—Thales

2. Your boss' delegation practices

a) What kinds of responsibilities *does your* boss always delegate?

b) What kinds of responsibilities *should* be delegated?

*B. Small group work* In trios “buzz” (for 30-45 mins.) to discuss individual work, paying particular attention to the role of perception in our determination of our own and our boss' delegation practices. Are we consistent in our perceptions? What are our subordinates' perceptions of our delegation practices?

*C. General discussion* Discuss learnings from the individual and small group work.

## **INTER-GROUP CONFLICT, COOPERATION, COMMUNICATION**

In addition to the all too common communication blocks between individuals and within a group, hostility, rivalry and tension often exist *between* groups. Causative factors at work are differences in values and expectations, which cause differences in perceptions about the other group, coupled with less frequent opportunities for communication. All too often each group thus may perceive the other as “The Enemy” and itself as being on “the side of the angels”—in essence, a classic win-lose situation. Both groups should be encouraged to explore the basis for their differences and to shift from a “win-lose” to a “win-win” orientation. So instead of merely attributing selfish motives to the other group, perceptions about one's group and the other group are candidly exchanged and explored. In time, the available energy is further channeled to such more constructive issues as: Where are we all going? Is there an overriding goal we all can share? How can we all come out on top?

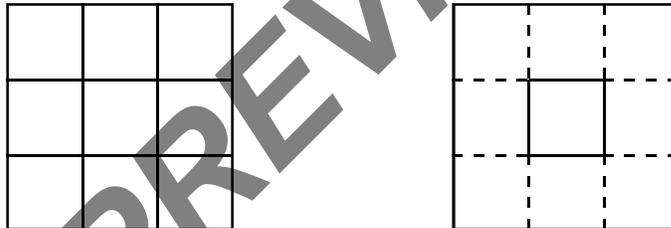
1. Where strong rivalries exist, e.g., between Sales and Production, what are the bases (stated reasons) by the principals involved for these feelings? Why is a group likely to see the best in itself and the worst in other groups? Why would destructive competitiveness of this sort arise in a company when presumably everyone is committed to the same overall goals?
2. Why can a group become so “united” behind its own goals but not around overall corporate goals?

3. Assume you are an outside consultant to a large advertising department. The art group and the copy group are at odds and have been for years. You ask each of the group heads whether there is enough communication, in a general way, between the two groups. The reply you get is: "Look, we talk to them all the time. The problem is that they only see things one way." What might you propose to improve this situation?
4. Management is often aware of inter-group conflicts, but may do nothing about it. Why might this be so?
5. Can conflict between (or among) groups ever be healthy?
6. Inter-group conflict may be resolved by getting each group to broaden its perceptions and look at the "larger goals" -viz., "How can we set things up so we *both* get what we want?" What might examples of this be? (Answers: overcoming a crisis which relates to survival; considering the future growth or success of the firm).

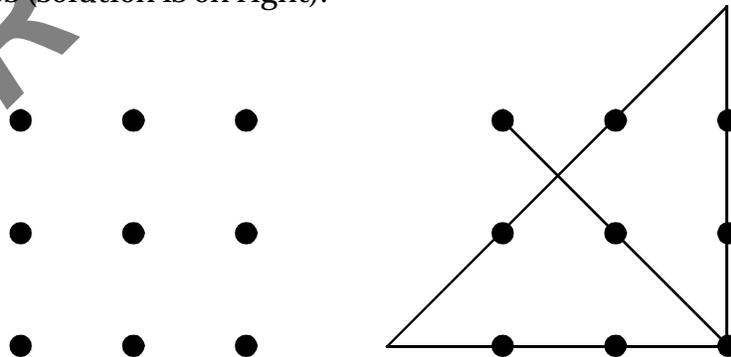
## CREATIVITY

### *Exercises*

- a. Remove 8 toothpicks (or matches), thereby leaving only 2 squares (solution is on right).



- b. Connect all 9 dots with 4 straight lines. Don't lift your pencil from the paper and don't retrace your steps (solution is on right).



NOTE: The above exercises are difficult to solve because of perception. Thus, one makes the wrong assumption at the outset. Our perception of the problem, therefore, can help or hinder our attempts at creativity.

*"There are three things extremely hard: steel; a diamond, and to know oneself."-Franklin*

## **PREJUDICE AND STEREOTYPES**

1. The film obviously deals totally in stereotyped characters: the pre-occupied, intense, self-centered artist; the tough, garrulous cabby; the nosy cleaning woman; the unappreciated mother; the sexy party girl vs. the stable, supportive fiancée; the all-knowing, suave waiter; the materialistic landlord. What are some common stereotypes in our culture? What can we learn from the concept of stereotypes? To what extent do we engage in stereotyping at work and in our everyday concerns off the job? Can we have empathy with others if we tend to stereotype them? How does stereotyping affect our communication and inter-personal relations?

2. To start a discussion regarding prejudice and stereotypes, current attitudes toward women in the work place might be explored. Give your group the following short quiz, secure results by a show of hands, post results on the board, and discuss in relation to these and other stereotypes we tend to have.

*True or False?*

- 1. Men are intellectually superior.
- 2. Men are emotionally more stable than women.
- 3. Men value achievement, promotion and meaningful work more than women.
- 4. Men are inherently more aggressive than women.
- 5. The successful manager possesses masculine attributes.

*Answers to quiz:* All answers, per available research, should be FALSE. Positive (true) answers reflect current "sextyping" based on myths rather than fact (per Robert L. Dipboye as reported in *Personnel Journal*, April 1976, p. 155, from "Today's Executive," a publication by Management Search Inc.). In respect to the five stereotypes used in the quiz the facts are these:

1. Research does not support masculine superiority. In fact, women surpass men in verbal aptitude and tend to excel in memory tests and in scholastic achievement.

2. Research does not evidence any differences in performance of women vs. men as a result of drastic mood swings.

3. Several studies dispute the idea of less intrinsic motivation among women. Available evidence indicates women are as committed to their jobs as men. Little difference exists between the sexes in turnover and absenteeism.

4. A research study of 70 male and 70 female managers showed women adopted active, effective leadership styles and were actually more diverse in their styles than men.

5. Since the “trait theory” of leadership has long since been discredited, possessing masculine traits is not particularly relevant to managerial success. Actually, leadership success depends on the ability to alter one’s style as the situation demands.

3. *Exercise:* Provide all members of the group with a lemon. Instruct each to get to know his or her lemon well (10 minutes). Tell them that a good way to do this is to examine the lemon two ways: (a) with eyes open and (b) with eyes closed. Then assign group members in pairs, each explaining the special characteristics of his lemon to the other and then exchanging lemons for cross-exploration. Then bring two pairs of participants together. Have each person put his initials on his lemon with a magic marker. Then put all lemons in a circle and each, on a blindfolded basis, tries to select his/her own lemon from the four lemons. Most people should be able to identify their own lemon, pointing up that even lemons are *not* all alike!\*

4. What stereotypes do personnel in our organization hold about one another? How does this affect the communication process? relationships? productivity?

5. What is the problem of “allness” in communication? (Answer: Each of us assumes we have “the big picture,” despite the fact we may more likely have only limited facts. The six blind men and the elephant story points up this problem very well—each thought he “saw” the whole situation but did not. Actually each only “saw” a portion of it from his (limited) perspective. This kind of surface analysis of data is common in cases of prejudice; e.g., “all salesmen have 3 martinis for lunch;” “all politicians are crooks;” “all athletes are not too bright;” “all Chinese look alike;” “all promotions in the company go to apple polishers.”)

\*This exercise is similar to one described in J. W. Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training, Vol. III*, University Associates Press, 1971, p. 102.

## TEAM MANAGEMENT

1. To check out perceptions of the team leader and his/her staff re the degree of “teamness” which exists, this quiz may be completed by the total work team. Rank each item below on a 5 point scale, 1 for low (poor), 5 for high (excellent).

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

1. Clarity of our goals

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

2. Staff involvement in overall planning

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

3. Staff involvement in problem solving

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

4. Staff involvement in decision making

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

5. Degree of openness in the unit

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

6. Degree to which team members work together

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

7. Degree to which I feel I'm part of team

/	/	/	/	/
1	2	3	4	5

8. Degree to which we evaluate team functioning

NOTE: To encourage candor it is recommended that the forms be completed unsigned, data tallied and posted on the board, and then discussed. The team leader's attitude in this evaluation of his/her team is all-important. Hence his/her interest should be to learn of attitudes and perceptions and where and why they may differ with his/her own. Obviously, if the unit head engages in argumentation over the data, becomes defensive or punitive, etc., the evaluation will be counter-productive.

## **TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS**

You will find that “The Eye of the Beholder” is an excellent vehicle for discussion of the basic concepts of TA. Analysis of the behaviors in the film will illuminate and enliven your meeting. Here are some illustrative questions:

*“An error is more dangerous in proportion to the degree of truth which it contains.”– Amiel*

### **On the Ego States**

In which of the scenes is the Adult ego most evident?

What are some examples of the Child ego?

How productive or counter-productive are these Child egos?

Where did you notice any Parental ego states appearing?

How productive or counter-productive were these transactions?

In the scene between Michael and Esther in the night club, while they wait for “The Madonna” to appear, what does Esther do to communicate her Adult ego to Michael? To what degree does he communicate his Adult ego to her?

What are some of the illustrations of complementary transactions-e.g., Adult to Adult, or Parent to Child?

What are some of the examples of crossed transactions?

How could the problems resulting from crossed transactions be resolved?

What are some of the ulterior transactions in the film?

### **On Rituals, Games, Pastimes and Work**

What rituals did you observe?

Which of the persons in the film are most likely to concentrate on ritualistic behaviors? Why?

What can be useful about a ritual, such as the way in which Michael and his mother greeted each other in the morning?

Did you notice any useful pastimes?

In which of the scenes is some productive, open, frank work accomplished?

What games are illustrated? How could these be dealt with if we were involved?

When the mother plays “Look How Hard I’ve Tried,” how does Michael respond? Why?

## **On Stroking**

How many examples of stroking did you notice in the film-for example: The “Madonna” and her date?

How would you compare the stroking of Koppelmeyer’s point of view and Michael’s?

Michael thinks he gives a stroke to the cleaning woman when he says-”I even had a smile for the nosy old cleaning woman.” How would you evaluate this stroke? How does Esther stroke Michael?

## **On Scripts**

What is Michael’s script? His mother’s? Etc., etc.

Which of the following is most descriptive of Michael- ‘I’m OK, You’re OK’; ‘I’m OK, You’re not OK’; ‘I’m not OK, You are OK’; or ‘I’m not OK, You are not OK’? What about each of the others?

## **Some References**

Discussion leaders who are not familiar with Transactional Analysis, but would like to acquire some familiarity, will find the following references useful. They are all available in paperback.

Eric Berne, *“Games People Play”*

Eric Berne, *“What Do You Say After You Say Hello?”*

Tom Harris, *“I’m OK, You’re OK”*

James & Jongeward, *“Born to Win”*

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR COLLEGE CLASSES**

What mechanisms of ego defense were apparent in the film?

Did each of the characters in the film show projection? How?

How does this tie up with Gordon Allport’s work on the psychology of rumor?

Michael says to Koppelmeyer: “The man you see in me does not exist”-The film raises some basic questions about reality.

Malinowski wrote of the importance of phatic messages-those communications which say in effect ‘I like you’ and ‘I trust you’. What phatic messages were transmitted in this film?

Is there any relations between general intelligence and the ability to judge others?

What qualities are necessary for good judgment of others?

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR LAW OR PRE-LAW STUDENTS**

How can attorneys help such people as portrayed in the film to interpret what they “see” or “hear”?

Was Michael Gerard’s version true? for legal purposes?

How can attorneys assist understanding between people who “see” the (supposedly) same event differently?

When perceptions differ honestly among people, how can a judge or jury ascertain the truth?

If you were a *prosecuting* attorney bringing an action against Michael Gerard, would you call as witnesses his mother, the cab driver, the cleaning lady, the landlord, etc.? If so, why-or why not?

Why?

If you were Michael Gerard’s *defense* attorney in an action against him, which witnesses would you call?

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND HOSPITALS**

*Social Psychiatry ... Psychiatric Nursing*  
*Clinical Psychology ... In-service Training*

Why do you think each person saw Michael Gerard as a different person?

Describe the major personality characteristics and motivations of the supporting characters, i.e., waiter, mother, cabbie, landlord and cleaning woman.

Discuss the relationship between Gerard and his mother.

What were some of the motivations behind Gerard’s search for the 20th Century Madonna-why the strong reactions in the search, the discovery and the disappointment?

Why did Gerard react differently to each of the supporting characters?

Discuss the reasons why after we reach an initial impression, we do all we can to find evidence to support and defend it.

Discuss some of the factors associated with the observation that we give off many signals that other people see and feel but we ourselves are unaware of them.

Who and what is the real Michael Gerard?

Discuss stereotypes, in particular the one associated with The Artist-how and why do the artist and the public maintain this stereotype?

Note: Each professional grouping will wish to discuss all of these questions; however, each will see different values in each question and will discuss them with one's own professional background in mind.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*EXERCISE:* Arrange with one or two confederates (non-participants, if possible) to suddenly enter the training room and depart rapidly. Their clothing and equipment they are carrying should be out of the ordinary. Ask participants to prepare two comprehensive lists re the visitors' apparel and paraphernalia. Secure totals of items observed, noting exclusions, distortions and additions as well as bona fide inclusions. Discuss results, pointing up the differences in individual perceptions. If this is so, how dogmatic can (should) we be when "we are telling it the way it is?" How reliable can a witness be, despite good intentions?

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

What are the implications of the film for classroom instruction?

To what degree do our perceptions of the learner affect his/her progress?

Are we consistently aware (the perception problem) of individual needs, interests, work habits?

How do our students feel (perception again) about us as a person? Do we come across as warm-cold, interested-alooof, helpful-matter-of-fact, approachable-distant, patient-hurried, open-minded-dogmatic, democratic-autocratic, etc.?

Do these student perceptions matter? If so, how can we learn about them? How can we change them if warranted?

How important is good communication in the classroom-e.g., are our instructions on assignments clear?

Do I really listen to my students?

THOUSANDS of prints of THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER have been sold for use in education and/or training to the following organizations:

High schools

Colleges

Universities

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Church schools

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Correctional institutions

Business

Industry

Trade associations

Local, state and federal government

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and numerous volunteer and  
Social Service organizations