

A CENTER FOR EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT
TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

The Center for Executive Development was established on the Mesa State College campus to provide continuing education for management personnel in the community.

To assist with the process of planning Center activities, the authors surveyed businesses in the community to develop a profile of (1) management-level personnel, (2) a list of useful seminar topics, and (3) an estimate of the number of managers who might use the Center's services.

A questionnaire was mailed to 870 businesses; there were 317 responses (response rate: 36 percent).

Although the one-time mailing without follow-up was informal, the responses provided implications about the populations to be served by the Center and gave direction to Center plans.

Analysis of responses provided information from which the following business community profile was developed.

The business community was predominately made up of retail and professional organizations. Those businesses were either small (gross annual sales of under \$200,000) or quite large

(gross annual sales of over \$500,000). Companies favored the private corporate structure; however, one-third preferred sole proprietorships. A great majority of businesses employed 25 or fewer individuals.

Management personnel were equitably divided by gender at top levels; twice as many women as men were serving as managers at the lower levels. Women managers had less education than their counterparts. More women than men had prepared for their positions by completing liberal arts or business studies.

Most businesses provided on-the-job training for their managers; many used tutorials for training. Few businesses provided off-site training opportunities.

The 317 respondents indicated that they could identify approximately 1,500 potential trainees within their organizations who might become involved in off-site seminars; the preferred seminar topics involved human relations issues.

The suggested direction for initial activities in the Center for Executive Development was to market human relations seminars to retail and professional businesses.