

Chapter 8

Training Managers and Operators

The manager and operators for an upcoming plant should be selected and/or appointed by the community/entrepreneur before the process of installation begins, so that they can participate fully in the installation process. This will increase their knowledge about the names, shapes, characteristics, and functions of the various parts of the whole set-up in general and about the electro-mechanical equipment in particular. They should be taught through actual practice instruction and explanations and assembly and disassembly of various components (e.g., the bearing housing to check or replace a bearing). They should also be informed about what would happen if a unit was not handled or operated properly, and about what the signs of malfunction are. The testing and commissioning phase is particularly important since the installers will be starting, operating, and stopping the plant repeatedly, looking for the faults or problems and removing them. The manager and operator must be fully involved and asked to carry out some of the operations themselves (e.g., starting/stopping, disassembling components, carrying out alignment checks). Some such operations should be repeated for the sole purpose of training these people during the testing and commissioning phase, since this is probably the best opportunity. This training should be given high priority even if it means prolonging the process of testing and commissioning. Adequate training of managers and operators should be one of the clauses in the handing over certificate to be signed by the owner/community leader taking over possession of the plant.

The following main features should be covered in this training.

- Starting and stopping procedures, including what to do if something goes wrong
- Applying and removing the load (all aspects of operation)
- Identification and names of various components, their functions, and operational characteristics
- Familiarity with most sections of the operations and maintenance manual
- Maintenance of all parts
- Basic fault diagnosis and repairs
- Cleanliness and safety
- Basic bookkeeping

The operator is almost like a bus driver. Even minor carelessness on his part may result in a serious breakdown and/or bodily harm. Therefore, the importance of conducting this training should be recognised by all concerned.