

A Biography of Erwin K. Taylor

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April 2016

Erwin K. Taylor was born in 1913. He began his education at the University of Wisconsin in 1932, but had to drop out and move home to his family in Chicago due to financial difficulties during the depression. He had worked as a sort of unofficial, unpaid undergraduate assistant to Dr. Ross Stagner while he was at Wisconsin. Stagner was, at this point, teaching at People's Junior College in Chicago. When Stagner learned of Taylor's predicament he got Taylor employed as his teaching assistant, which enabled Taylor to enroll at Northwestern University and finish his B.S. He continued on to graduate school at Northwestern and earned his doctorate degree in psychology in 1941. While he worked toward his degree, he was also employed at his family's coffee business, first as a stock boy, truck loader, order clerk, and then route salesman, and eventually as the advertising and personnel manager.

After Taylor received his Ph.D., he worked for a year as an Examiner for the Illinois State Civil Service Commission. Then he worked for the U.S. Army for eight years with the Personnel Research Section of the Adjutant General's Office. Here he was involved in the construction, analysis, and interpretation of selection devices and other tests for military and civilian personnel, as well as other personnel research.

In 1948, Taylor founded *Personnel Psychology*, along with Charles I. Mosier and Frederic Kuder. Taylor himself published some work in the field of supervisory climate and selection, but the majority of his work revolved around problems with performance rating and improving the rating procedure.

In 1951 Taylor left the Adjutant General's Office and moved into academia, holding a dual appointment as Professor of Psychology and as Director of the Personnel Research Institute at Western Reserve University. He left the university in 1955 and founded the Personnel Research and Development Corporation. He was serving as PRADCO's Chairman and Director of Research at the time of his death.

Taylor was a member of the Psychometric Society and the American Psychological Society. He served as the 15th President of the Division of Business and Industrial Psychology in 1959-1960. He was a Diplomat in Industrial Psychology of the American Board of Professional Psychology. He contributed regularly to professional journals.

Erwin K. Taylor died of a heart attack on November 9th, 1975, at the age of 61, in Cleveland, Ohio.

References

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