Case: *Developed Today, Gone Tomorrow*

A large midwestern firm maintains an organizational policy of promoting individuals growth. By offering generous allowances for costs associated with tuition, books, and miscellaneous expenses, employees are supported in their efforts to further their education at the college or training school level. This program is also offered to employees whose goals are graduate-level education, if their fields are ones that could be advantageous to the corporation.

The computer programming department has a high rate of participation in the educational support program. It is generally accepted that this high rate is due to the above-average aptitudes of the personnel in the department has its own in-house set of training courses and purchases “space” in various seminar classes. These programs are geared to making the employee significantly more valuable to the department. The managers in the programming department have been very proud of the development of their personnel and feel that education from all sources has improved departmental performances.

Recently, however, the system seemed to backfire in the programming department. Ezra Brooks, a very bright and aspiring young programmer for whom management had high hopes, quit. Ezra had found that the extensive intraorganization training, the invaluable work experience, and a newly awarded college diploma represented a fairly lucrative portfolio of credentials, which he took to a large national accounting firm. Ezra had expressed a desire to stay, but he was told that there were no anticipated openings at managerial levels in the computer area.

Ezra’s manager had a dilemma. Loss of Ezra meant a ten-month setback for the project Ezra was working on. He also felt that the extensive training Ezra had received at the company’s expense was little utilized compared to what Ezra would have contributed had he remained with the company. However, the manager’s greatest concern was that Ezra was the first in a group of several employees who would graduate from college under company sponsorship in the near future. Ezra had shown to the remaining group that if the firm would not recognize his achievement and aspirations, other employment could be easily found.

**Question**

1. As Ezra’s manager, what would you do to retain him?

2. What changes would you recommend in the educational aid program?