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The Development Of Persuasive Abilities In College Students

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Current Issue

Archives

Editorial Info

Search

Interact

Printer-friendly PDF version

Communication is a field of study that has its roots in the study of persuasion. From Aristotle to present-day scholars, we have centered our attention on the requisite skills and abilities necessary to change attitudes and behaviors. While arguments too numerous to review here have ensued during the development of competing positions, what has been sorely lacking is evidence of whether or not these skills can be taught. While there is a great deal of reporting on various approaches to and measurements of message effectiveness, the communication literature is rather sparse in investigating whether message effectiveness, and particularly, persuasive abilities, can be enhanced. Perhaps this is because few of our theory-oriented persuasion courses set out to effect changes in persuasive abilities, or perhaps because the theoretical underpinnings and measurement issues have consumed the bulk of research interests and time. In any event, it seems past due that we posit questions about how to develop or enhance the person centered abilities research has shown to be effective in a variety of settings including work, friendships, courtships, and marriages. Moreover, the competing explanations for persuasive abilities demand that we ground our questions within a particular theoretical context so that data and claims about findings can be made meaningful.

With this concern in mind, this study embraced a constructivist orientation to communication and more specifically to persuasion. For the past 30 years, numerous attempts have been made to elaborate and measure the relationship of person centeredness to persuasive abilities (for reviews see Burleson, 1987; Burleson & Waltman, 1988; Burleson, 1989; and Applegate, 1990). The constructivist account of persuasion privileges individuals' social construal processes. More specifically, an individual's construct system generates "communication- and goal-oriented beliefs" (Applegate, 1990) that form a person's definition of the situation and guide strategic behavior. Constructivist research has focused on identifying those goals that are intrinsic to the situation, describing how individuals develop strategies to address them, and explaining how individual differences affect communicative choices in developing and implementing the strategies (Applegate, 1990). Individuals who are more persuasive are considered to be more person-centered in that they can and do attend to the social and psychological characteristics of others and incorporate this social knowledge into their goal oriented messages. In effect, more person centered communicators use their perspectives of others' feelings, motives, and intentions to negotiate and navigate social relationships through interaction. Constructivist research views these characteristics as representative of a more complex, more abstract, more integrated construct system. Constructivist research has yielded consistently strong, positive correlations between construct differentiation and person-centeredness and between construct differentiation and more successful communication (for a review, see Applegate, 1990).

Construct system sophistication is considered to be developmental, and like Piagetian psychology and

Werner's orthogenetic principle, individuals are thought to proceed from relatively low and undifferentiated levels of abstraction to higher and thus more developed views of the other. Because of these underlying assumptions, construct system development, which undergirds listener-adapted or person-centered communication, has been considered a rather stable characteristic after late adolescence. It is perhaps the assumed stability of this characteristic that has failed to inspire systematic investigations of the effects of instruction on persuasive ability. We know that young children develop social construal and persuasive abilities as they experience more complex situations and grow in psychological maturity, but we have not systematically questioned the same development in young adults. An exception was an early study by Crockett and associates who found that construct system development changed over the course of four years much more for college students from small towns than for students from more metropolitan areas. While few in the constructivists camp pursued this line of research, the findings suggest that social experiences can mediate construct system development even in young adults.

Given the large amount of time devoted to developing persuasive skills in numerous academic and professional courses across the country, the question of *if* and *how* persuasive abilities can be enhanced is a question that should no longer be neglected.

The relationship of persuasion to the growing number of important consequences that have been identified from it for persons in both social and work contexts makes the answer to the question of whether or not persuasive abilities can be developed as important as our pedagogical concerns.

There is, for example, substantial evidence that persuasive abilities make a significant difference in one's work life and the potential therein. Research has consistently shown that more persuasive employees were positioned in higher levels of the corporation, were promoted more often, were receiving better performance evaluations and were more often than not transformational leaders (Sypher, 1984; Sypher & Zorn, 1986; Haas, 1989; Sypher, 1990; Sypher & Haas, 1991; and Zorn & Leichty, 1993 among others). In light of these findings, a frequently asked question has been, "how do you teach these skills?" With Zorn and Violanti's (1995) findings that more person centered communicators garner higher salaries than their less effective peers, questions regarding how such skills can be developed are not likely to subside.

Those of us engaged in this line of work have devoted considerable time and thought to developing measuring instruments and coding schemes and generating significant outcome related research. Many of us, as well, have developed persuasion courses at the college level, but while we have produced overwhelming evidence that person-centered communication abilities make an important difference in a number of contexts, few, if any, studies have reported the outcomes associated with courses designed to enhance persuasive abilities. One notable exception was an early but related study by Clark, Willinghanz, and O'Dell (1985) who reported moderate success in training fourth graders in compromising and persuasive strategies. They found that with repeated and detailed suggestions of how the young students might construe the psychological make-up of their target (in this case their parents), they were able to learn more person-centered strategies for persuading their parents to let them stay overnight with friends. Given what we know about the psychological development naturally occurring at this age and the usual lack of instruction aimed specifically at developing these skills, their findings were not surprising.

The premise of the present study is that these same skills can be enhanced in young adults with consistent, situation-specific instruction. Therefore, the following research questions were posited:

RQ1: Is there a significant difference between the persuasive ability of students at the start and close of a course designed to enhance audience-centered persuasion?

RQ2: Does cognitive differentiation mediate the degree to which students develop persuasive ability?

RQ3: Is there a significant difference between males' and females' persuasive ability change scores?

Methods

Participants

Participants were 70 (35 female, 35 male) undergraduate students enrolled in four sections of a business communications course at a large Midwestern university. Two instructors each taught two sections of Effective Business Communication, a junior-senior level skills course designed to teach strategies for preparing effective letters of various sorts, business memos, technical reports, press releases, resumes, and the like. In addition to a primary emphasis on writing, students also prepared and delivered informational and persuasive presentations. Enrollment in this class is limited to juniors and seniors.

Measures

Construct differentiation. Data were collected during regular class sessions. The first data were gathered during the second week of the semester. After an introduction to the course, subjects completed two tasks. One was the two-role version of the Role Category Questionnaire (RCQ). Impressions of liked and disliked peers provided in the two-role version of Crockett's (1965) RCQ were scored for number of constructs using procedures outlined in Crockett, Press, Delia, and Kenny (1974). Substantial evidence exists for the validity of the RCQ (O'Keefe & Sypher, 1981). Scores for the two impressions were summed to yield the index of construct differentiation. Interrater reliability for this project was .98. RCQ scores ranged from 5 to 52. For details, see Table 1 below. The mean was 25.3, and the standard deviation was 9.82. For males, the mean was 20.6, with a standard deviation of 9.27 and a range of 5-52. For females, the mean was 30.03, the standard deviation was 7.8, and the range was 15 to 49.

Table 1. RCQ Scores

	Total	Men	Women
Range	5 – 52	5 – 52	15 – 49
Mean	25.3	20.6	30.03
Standard deviation	9.82	9.27	7.8

Persuasive ability. Persuasive ability was measured by a hypothetical business communication task in which study participants composed a letter to persuade a new manager to change a staff-reduction decision and retain their assistant. Detailed information about both the manager and assistant was provided. A copy of this task appears as Appendix A. This same task was administered during the second week of the semester, before any other written assignments were made, and during the last week of classes 13 weeks later. No feedback was provided to students after the first administration. In the 13 weeks between the two administrations, the participants completed 18 other assignments. These included a range of tasks, including letters, memos and oral presentations.

Both sets of messages were coded for the total number of arguments or appeals made, the highest level of argument generated, and dominant level of argument used. Level of argument was coded using a modified version of Delia and O'Keefe (1979). This seven-level hierarchy was adapted by Haas and Sypher (1991) for this specific task. Level one represented a simple request or restatement of request, such as "I wish you would reconsider his termination." Level two arguments supported the request with reasons external to the target's perspective, such as grounding the request in terms of alternatives to dismissing the assistant. Level three arguments provided reasons tied to universal values presumed to be held by humankind, and level four arguments were tied to the needs of any business or the qualities desired in any employee. Level five arguments were specifically tied to the organization and the negative consequences of dismissal. Level six arguments were truncated arguments that explicitly tied the manager's perspective to that of the assistant or the writer. Level seven arguments were elaborated reasons that explicitly tied the manager's perspective to that of the assistant or of the writer. The level used most often was considered the dominant strategy.

Interrater reliability among the three coders on these measures was .93 for total number of arguments generated and .92 for highest level. There was 100 percent exact agreement for dominant strategy used. Scores for number of arguments generated in response to this persuasive task ranged from 3 to 26 with a mean of 10.59 in the pretest and 5 to 22 with a mean of 11.43 in the second. Scores for highest level of argument generated ranged from 5 to 7 in both administrations (mean = 5.34 in time one and 5.29 in time two), and scores for dominant level used ranged from 4 to 6 in both administrations (mean = 4.94 in time one and 4.96 in time two).

Table 2. Persuasive task scores

	Range	Mean	Standard Deviation
Number	3 – 26	10.59	Time 1 3.82
	5 – 22	11.43	Time 2 3.54
Highest level	5 – 7	5.34	Time 1 .61
	5 – 7	5.29	Time 2 .54
Dominant level	4 – 6	4.94	Time 1 .29
	4 – 6	4.96	Time 2 .36

Description of the course

As an upper-level elective, Effective Business Communication is a skills course, presenting opportunities to conceptualize and practice written and oral communication skills used in business. It integrates theory and practice, increasing students' awareness of the role of communication in business. The underlying philosophy guiding the course is that effective business communication utilizes audience-centered rhetorical strategies.

The course focuses on a process that can be applied in a variety of business contexts. A central pedagogical model is John Kennan's (1982) PAFEO concept, which requires communicators to identify, first, the purpose of the communication; then to consider the characteristics of the audience; third, to determine the appropriate format or medium; fourth to evaluate and select evidence; and finally, to choose an organizational plan that is best suited to the writer's purpose. This model parallels a social cognitive approach to communication and a constructivist approach more specifically by presenting a person-centered, goal-oriented explanation of effective communication.

To motivate students and to connect their academic efforts to the professional work they hope to do, the course is focused in large part around each student's selection of a business or organization to investigate and represent during the semester. Students take an in-class role for the term as an employee of this company. One of the first writing tasks confirms this connection to a real audience; students compose and mail direct request letters for company information to a business or organization of their choice. In several subsequent assignments, including an informational oral briefing and written special event plan, they apply the information generated by this request.

Of the 20 course assignments, seven are letters focusing on audiences external to an organization, such as customers or suppliers, and seven are memos or reports in which students must construct messages for a specific audience. Cases are selected based on what element of audience adaptation they require rather than for any business policy component. Students are not assumed to have any business background.

In addition to these assignments, students prepare resumes and application letters directed toward their selected organizations. The final project combines written and oral persuasion; students prepare a formal written memo and an oral presentation attempting to persuade the management of their selected companies to make a specific change within the organization. For the semester, 65% of total points are for written assignments and 15% are for speaking assignments. Virtually every assignment, whether a direct request, a reminder of overdue bills, documentation of a disciplinary situation, or a proposal for organizational policy change, has a persuasive component. Of the total written assignment points, 60% have an explicitly persuasive orientation. The remaining points reflect midterm and final examination points.

Teaching methods

Active student participation is encouraged through lecture, discussion and class case analyses. Case studies are used both as a basis for in-class and take-home writing experience and for class discussion of problem-solving and communication strategies. For example, in one case, students take the role of a University Director of Campus Housing. Their task is to report variances in grade point averages of students living in campus housing and in town to the Dean of Academic Affairs. Class discussion of rhetorical strategy centers around the relationship of the writer and reader, particularly of the common interests that underlie their different positions. Highlighting these common interests reflects an audience-centered orientation.

For each task, students are required to specify the purpose of their communication in the form, "I want (a specific person or persons) to do (a specific thing)." The action that students seek may such things as approving a change, adopting a policy or procedure, having a constituent think well of the company, sending a replacement invoice. Importantly, in each situation, audience receives priority attention; the purpose sentence privileges the target reader.

In another case, students take the role of a middle manager in documenting a disciplinary discussion with a subordinate. Case discussion includes evaluation of the relative merit of addressing Jack and copying the file or of addressing the file and copying Jack. The effects of emphasizing support or discipline also are discussed. Both issues reflect a focus on the relationship with the subordinate and on the manager's strategy to evoke desired behavior. Discussion includes how different companies might approach disciplinary problems.

Detailed written feedback is provided to students, in almost every case by the next class period. Prompt instructor responses complement the progression of writing iterations, each of which presents a more complex task, requiring changed or increased perspective-taking. The emphasis in the feedback is primarily on strategy, including the degree of audience analysis evidenced in writing. Students are exposed to this strategy in their reading and class discussion, in critiquing and revising example letters, and through regular practice of audience-oriented writing.

Throughout the course, students are encouraged to use audience analysis to consider the specifics of the situation. Elements for analysis include the relationship between the reader and writer, the amount of information the reader is likely to have about the subject, the predisposition of the reader to the subject and to the writer, the capabilities of the reader to understand the material in question, and the reader's likely questions or concerns. The pedagogical emphasis is on process and strategic planning. Mechanics and other skills also are critiqued, but the emphasis remains on overall message construction. Instructors offer feedback to stimulate additional thinking and evaluation. Choices are questioned and possible alternative strategies are posed.

Results

This study was undertaken to determine if enrollment in a college business communication course would result in enhanced persuasive abilities. These results suggest that students can learn to generate more persuasive arguments as the result of audience-focused instruction in business communication. Findings are organized around the research questions posited.

RQ1: Is there a significant difference between time one and time two persuasive ability scores?

Persuasive ability was operationalized as the number and quality of arguments produced. In this sample, argument quality was measured in terms of the highest level of strategy produced and the dominant strategy used. For both dimensions, there were no significant differences between time one and time two performances. The range for the level of argument attained was five to seven at both times with mean scores of 5.34 (SD = .61) at time one and 5.29 (SD = .54) at time two. The dominant level used each time also did not vary significantly (means of 4.94 for time one and 4.96 for time two and a range of four to six [SD = .29 and .36 for times one and two respectively] both times). Because of the low variance and lack of change over time in dominant and highest level of strategy, subsequent analyses addressed persuasive ability only in terms of number of arguments produced.

The number of arguments generated increased significantly between the first and second response to the task ($t = 2.15$, $df = 69$, $p < .033$). Scores at time one ranged from 3 to 26 ($M = 10.59$, $SD = 3.82$). Scores at time two ranged from 5 to 22 ($M = 11.43$, $SD = 3.54$).

RQ2: Does cognitive differentiation mediate the degree to which students develop persuasive abilities?

In numerous studies, cognitive differentiation has correlated significantly and positively with both quality and level of arguments produced. This study was no exception. That question, however, was not the focus here, and that relationship was assumed. Of interest here was the degree to which differentiation affected students' persuasive ability change scores.

To answer this question, high and low RCQ groups were determined by dividing the sample into thirds and dropping the middle third from the difference testing. This procedure was a bit more conservative than producing high and low groups based on the standard deviation for the entire sample, which was 9.82. RCQ scores for the low group ($n = 28$) ranged from 5 to 20 ($M = 14.91$) and scores for the high RCQ group ($n = 19$) ranged from 28 to 52 ($M = 36.12$).

Difference testing procedures yielded a significant t of 2.04 ($p < .05$). Those in the low differentiation student group improved their persuasive ability significantly more than their highly differentiated counterparts. That is, the less differentiated students, as evidenced by their change scores, benefited most from the course. The mean number of arguments they generated at time one (range 4-16, $M = 8.82$, $SD = 2.67$) increased significantly at time two (range = 5–19, $M = 10.64$, $SD = 3.08$). The mean scores for time one and time two for the highest differentiated students were 15.26 and 15.32 respectively.

RQ3: Is there a significant difference between males' and females' persuasive ability change scores?

Gender produced a significant difference in the persuasive ability change scores. Males improved significantly more than females ($t = 2.0$, $p < .05$). Females in this study averaged a slightly higher number of arguments at time one ($M = 10.91$) than males ($M = 10.26$), but scores were slightly higher for men ($M = 11.69$) than women ($M = 11.17$) at time two. Analysis of variance showed a main effect for time ($p < .05$) and a significant time by gender interaction effect ($p < .05$) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Analysis of variance results

Source of variation	SS	DF	MS	F	Sig of F
Within + residual	352.64	68	5.19		
Time	24.33	1	24.33	4.69	.034
Gender by time	22.65	1	22.65	4.37	.040

The gender difference finding was not surprising given the relationship between RCQ and change in persuasive ability previously discussed. In prior studies, females have evidenced higher levels of cognitive differentiation and persuasive ability, and this study was no exception. Females' RCQ scores ($\underline{M}$ = 30.02) were significantly higher than males' ($\underline{M}$ = 20.57) in this study ($\underline{t}$ = 4.79, $\underline{df}$ = 68, $p < .01$).

Discussion

The results of this study point to a key conclusion with several practical implications. With time and practice, individuals' persuasive abilities can be developed. In this case, students were able to generate more arguments in response to a persuasive task after a 16-week course emphasizing audience adaptation and orientation. The course taught students to analyze the situation and the target audience, using an audience-centered process for framing strategic messages. One of the key elements in teaching students to use the process was guided practice with frequent and detailed feedback. As in Piaget's (1926) early work with children, interaction about the task is thought to help the student decenter and think from multiple perspectives. Help in imagining multiple perspectives was a central focus throughout the course.

The role of cognitive differentiation in mediating change

While enrollment in this course contributed to an increase in the number of arguments students were able to generate, it did not result in higher levels of audience adaptation. In other words, students evidenced the ability to generate more reasons why the reader should comply with the written request, but they did not produce more sophisticated or more hierarchically organized messages. What we found was that one dimension of persuasiveness was enhanced. Previous research has shown, however, that the size of the repertoire appears to be equally as powerful as repertoire sophistication in predicting work-related outcomes. For example, in the Sypher and Zorn (1986) investigation of social cognition and communication at work, it was the size of the strategic repertoire (or number of arguments produced) that proved a significant predictor of level in the organization and of upward mobility. Haas and Sypher (1991) reported similar findings; the number of arguments in one's strategic repertoire was a significant predictor of positive performance evaluations as well as of upward mobility. The result of completing this course was an increase in the size, rather than in the sophistication, of the strategic repertoire used to persuade. The dimension of persuasion that has been affected is one that has been shown repeatedly to predict work-related outcomes (level in the organization, upward mobility, and salary).

Gender differences in change scores

While women have often evidenced higher levels of cognitive differentiation (Biermann, 1993; O'Keefe, 1988; Sypher & Sypher, 1988), the differences are often under-reported. Given the rather strong and persuasive gender differences found in communication research in general, such differences should not be neglected. Since the less differentiated students improved the most, and men tend to be less differentiated than women, it is not surprising that the men benefited from this course significantly more than the women. The standard account for explaining these differences is experience or socialization. Findings from this study corroborate this account. Through experience, persuasive abilities can apparently be enhanced. This appears especially true for men and less cognitively differentiated individuals since they stand to gain the most.

While this study suggests that there is substantial evidence that persuasive abilities can be developed in adults, the conclusions to be drawn are not without caveats. The changes were a result of a very intensive, more than three-month course that involved detailed instruction, many opportunities to practice, specific and immediate feedback and the incentive of learning hopefully stimulated in most classes. This kind of instruction is time and labor intensive, and we do not know if the developments were sustained over time any more than we know if any college classroom learning is sustained.

Some also might question the absence of a control group, asking, in effect, if those students would develop such specific, targeted abilities anyway. The answer is most likely a resounding no. Since the class was open only to juniors and seniors, students came into this class after having completed a large number and

variety of college courses, and their persuasive abilities at the outset evidenced quite a range. There is little if any reason to expect that simply taking any course would have the same effects as this one very specific, goal-oriented class would have. A follow-up study, however, with a larger sample and a control group could rule out such a possibility. Another concern might be that the students could have simply learned the task after Time 1 and just naturally could perform better in Time 2. Had there been little time in between administrations and little other intervening work, that might be possible. Given that the tasks were administered almost four months apart, and given that the students received 45 hours of instruction and completed 18 other written assignments, it is highly unlikely that the specifics of this task were learned in a way to enhance these specific scores significantly. Moreover, these tasks were administered during the course of the semester when students are expected to learn all kinds of details from various other courses. The repeated measures design is not likely to account for much of the variance in the change scores.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that individuals' person centered persuasive abilities can be developed. Through a semester-long course emphasizing audience adaptation, students learned to generate more arguments in response to a persuasive task. The results have pedagogical, theoretical and practical implications.

First, this study serves as an outcome-based assessment of instructional effectiveness. It provides a useful and more appropriate attempt than the widely-used student ratings to assess student learning as well as instructor effectiveness. One of the goals of the course is to develop written persuasive ability, and these data suggest that goal was generally met. While more than half of the students evidenced some degree of development, those with the least developed skills benefited the most.

Second, this study extends constructivism in at least two ways. It suggests that the skills necessary for competent communication can be taught. It also suggests that social construal processes necessary to produce person-centered communication may not be as stable as previously assumed. With systematic guidance and specific instructions in construing multiple perspectives of the target, students in effect evidenced enhanced persuasive ability. This study also reinforces and extends the constructivist conceptualization of the relationship between social cognitive abilities and persuasive abilities by highlighting what may and may not be enhanced through education. The fact that the highest and dominant level of argument were unaffected by the instruction in this course reinforces the importance of the social and psychological experiences that give rise to advanced social construal processes over an adult's life. Understood as a developmental process we might not expect highest and dominant level argument to be influenced by a semester-long class, no matter how intensive. However, the fact that students learned to generate more arguments suggests that they may be taught to give more attention and cognitive energy necessary in recognizing the persuasion-relevant elements of the situation that might give rise to the production of multiple arguments, if not, higher quality arguments. And, as already noted, this dimension of persuasiveness is a legitimate and important one in and of itself (Sypher & Zorn, 1986; Haas & Sypher, 1991).

Third, this study has implications for teachers and trainers. Much research on persuasion portrays persuasive ability as a relatively stable "trait" or ability, but this study offers encouragement that classroom methods can contribute to improving persuasive ability. As the description of the course presented earlier in this paper details, case studies required students to consider the intentions and concerns of others in specific work situations. Realistic hypothetical persuasive tasks demanded that students anticipate the specific needs of a specific target in a specific situation. Playing the role of an employee in a difficult situation that demanded sophisticated communication helped students understand how people come to define social situations and their places in them. Rehearsal, repetition, and immediate feedback were the cornerstones of this approach.

What this study shows is that learning took place in the classroom, an outcome we all expect but too seldom measure. This study offers a detailed account of a specific type of learning – the development of persuasive abilities. This type of instruction appears to benefit those who stand the most to learn. The less cognitively differentiated males progressed the most and did so in a way that has proven to be advantageous in multiple contexts, especially in terms of important outcomes at work (e.g. level, mobility, favorable reviews and higher salaries). The more highly differentiated students also benefited from this course, perhaps not with similar levels of improvement in the number of persuasive arguments generated, but in identifying contexts

and providing practice in applying audience-centered persuasion. All students stand to gain from the course's emphasis on choice of appropriate business formats, methods of preparing informative and persuasive letters and reports, and improving writing style and speaking skills. A more enhanced understanding and habit of thinking in terms of the other provides the foundation for effectiveness in all kinds communicative attempts.

APPENDIX A

Persuasive Task

SITUATION:

Because of a recent reorganization at NBA, you now have a new manager, Mr. Ed Sutton. Your assistant, Bob Bostrom, and you aren't sure how this will affect your work, but you both are looking forward to a breath of fresh air and hope some of the recent uncertainty about the reorganization at NBA will be resolved. You've heard good things about Sutton, who worked for Humana for 12 years.

In your first meeting with Sutton, he tells you about his plans for changing your division. He says that part of his new assignment was to carry out management's decision to reduce staff size by 20 percent by the end of the year. In his initial review of the staff, he had targeted several individuals to be let go and among those was your assistant and good friend, Bob. While you didn't want to start out on the wrong foot with Sutton, you immediately pointed out that Bob had been with NBA since it was founded and had held a number of different jobs. Even if his position wasn't going to be retained, you felt there were a lot of things he could do well. While pointing this out to Sutton, you were told that nothing was final but that some people would have to be let go and as best Sutton could tell, Bob was a likely candidate.

Sutton told you to put your objections to this possible termination in writing. "Please get this to me by the first of the week," he said. "I want you to be involved in these decisions because I value your opinion."

YOUR TASK IS TO WRITE A LETTER TO ED SUTTON PERUSADING HIM NOT TO TERMINATE BOB BOSTRUM, YOUR ASSISTANT AND FRIEND, WHOM YOU CONSIDER A VALUABLE EMPLOYEE.

What follows is information about Ed Sutton and Bob Bostrom:

ED SUTTON: Ed Sutton previously worked at Humana, where he managed the claims processing group. He is 42 years of age and graduated from the University of North Carolina. He returned to Louisville and worked for Humana until coming to NBA. Although he was very successful at Humana, he did not like the "politics" involved with a large company and applied for a job here at NBA. At Humana, Ed was well known for encouraging his employees to become involved in charity work in the community. Because of his impressive record at Humana, people feel he will be an effective manager here at NBA.

Family background: Ed is married with 3 young children, one boy aged 9 months and two girls aged 4 and 7. He is very proud of his family and has several family pictures in his office.

Miscellaneous information: A. Most admired people: John F. Kennedy, Alan Alda ("Hawkeye" on the TV show M.A.S.H.), and Coach Dean Smith (basketball coach at the University of North Carolina. B. Most admired qualities in people: Loyalty and integrity. C. Favorite saying: The team that works together wins! D. Contributes regularly to the Save the Children Fund (a fund set up to care for orphan children).

BOB BOSTROM: Bob is a Kentucky native who stayed at home and worked his way through college. He graduated from the University of Louisville with a degree in Business Administration. While at U of L,

Bob was a trainer for the basketball team.

Bob has held several different jobs at NBA and is very knowledgeable about the company and its operations. He very much likes the "family" atmosphere at NBA and is regularly heard talking about how much better it is to work at NBA than at many other companies. Bob is well liked by coworkers because of his sense of humor. He often plays (good natured) "tricks" on the other people in his division but knows when it is time to work. Bob has worked at NBA since his graduation from the University of Louisville.

Family background: Bob is married and has recently adopted a baby girl (aged 11 months). Because of the adoption, Bob and his wife have gone into considerable debt.

Miscellaneous information: A. Favorite saying: Good things come to people who work for it. B. Most admired person: Andy Glogower.

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Back to Top
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