The Effects of Candidates' Sex on Hiring Decisions Based on Assessment Center Summaries

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THE EFFECTS OF CANDIDATES' SEX ON HIRING DECISIONS
BASED ON ASSESSMENT CENTER SUMMARIES

BY

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THESIS
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science: Psychology
in the Graduate Studies Program
of Florida Technological University

Orlando, Florida
1977
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Women increasingly are preparing to enter the field of management, a field that has been considered primarily a male province (Schein, 1973, 1975). More than 10% of this year's M.B.A. students are women, and that percentage is expected to double in less than a decade (Patton, 1976). Society is moving to accept a changing role for women in business; companies such as American Telephone and Telegraph have agreed to seek out women who can rise within the organization and to provide development opportunities for them (E.E.O.C. vs. A.T.& T., 1973, 6 F.E.P. cases, 643). The law of the land, specifically Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, has guaranteed equal access for men and women to almost all jobs. Men may be considered equally with women for jobs as nurses and flight attendants; women may now be considered for executive positions within companies.

High ranking managerial positions have been practically inaccessible to women in the past (Sturdivant & Adler, 1976). Although women have been a large part of the work force for a number of years, a study of the relative percentages of females in various job positions shows that women have made little progress since 1900 (Gross, 1968). The conclusion of the study
was that male occupations have become more segregated over the years. Even though the 1964 Civil Rights Act has guaranteed access to all positions, the ratio of male to female corporate chiefs is 600 to 1. Women, who make up 40% of the labor force, represent only 5% of the population of managers (Meyer, 1975).

One of the reasons given for the low numbers of women in management is that it is difficult to find women who are "talented" in this field (Meyer, 1975). A list of necessary traits for managers is similar to those traits which are considered "masculine" (Cecil, Paul & Olin, 1973; Schein, 1973, 1975). This would make it appear that there are more male managers than female managers simply because management requires a man's firmness, aggressiveness, decisiveness, and other masculine traits which most women lack (O'Leary, 1974).

There is now some research evidence which shows that even when women are equally qualified with men the "talents" of women are not recognized or not accorded the same value as the same "talents" of men (Cohen & Bunker, 1975; Levinson, 1975; Rosen & Jerdee, 1974 b). In the first two of these studies, jobs were identified as being, "Male" or "female" jobs. In the Levinson study (1975) the jobs were sex-typed either
by traditional association (receptionist, mechanic) or by wording of the job advertisement ("girl-Friday", waiter). The Cohen and Bunker study (1975) asked students to classify the jobs according to sex prior to the main part of the research. In both studies, women applicants who were equally qualified with male applicants for a "male" job were rejected for that job more often than males. An associated finding was that qualified males were also rejected more often than females when they applied for a "female" job. Rosen and Jerdee (1974 b) did not explicitly type their job choices as male or female; rather, the jobs were considered to be "challenging" or "routine". They found that women were treated in a different manner from men if the job for which they were considered was challenging rather than routine. Although both males and females were less likely to be promoted to a challenging job than to a routine job, the difference between the two jobs was significantly greater for females than for males.

Bias against women in management has been shown to occur in recruitment (Cohen & Bunker, 1975) in telephone inquiries (Levinson, 1975), in decisions made from application blanks (Rosen & Jerdee, 1974 b),
in making salary determinations and work assignments (Terborg & Ilgen, 1975) and in promotion and development decisions (Rosen & Jerdee, 1974 a). These biases have been related to male and female trait stereotypes and to attribution theory (Deaux & Emswiller, 1974; Terborg & Ilgen, 1975). Deaux and Emswiller found success for women on a male-oriented task is attributed to both luck and skill, whereas success for males on the same task is attributed to skill.

A survey of male and female managers in 1965 (Bowman, Worthy, & Greyser) found overwhelming agreement that for a woman to succeed in business she must be overqualified. This information may be related to a study by Pheterson, Keisler, and Goldberg (1971) which found that women who are striving for accomplishment are judged less favorably than men who have identical qualifications. It should follow then that to be judged equal to a man the woman must have superior qualifications. This seems to hold true only until the woman has attained success. When a woman has proven herself, she may expect evaluations that are free from sex-bias.

Rosen and Jerdee (1974 b) reported that when people had to deal with administrative actions that were ambiguous as to their appropriateness, they
tended to discriminate. Those authors suggested that when information is incomplete people may use their own stereotypes as further inputs into the decision-making process. Lee and Alvares (1977) were able to show in a simulated industrial situation that students rated female leaders equal to male leaders. This finding was contrary to their expectations and to earlier research by Bartol and Butterfield (1976). They reasoned that the sexual bias did not occur because the leaders were actually present and raters saw the actual behavior. Since the subjects were reacting to observed behavior rather than a printed description with many details omitted, they did not have to rely on sexual stereotypes to make up for missing information or uncertainty about what had actually occurred. This would suggest that as more information about the candidate and the situation are made available to the decision maker, the less likely it will be that the decision maker will fall back on stereotypes as an aid in reaching a decision.

The assessment center method has shown evidence of being a fair selection procedure for women in management, because it predicts future performance equally well for men and women (Moses & Boehm, 1975). It is being widely used to assess managerial skills (Huck & Bray, 1972). Managerial assessment center reports give summary
information based on behavioral observation of an individual's demonstration of skills which are considered important for specific management positions. These skills are observed by trained assessors as an individual takes part in exercises that are designed to simulate the job for which he/she is being considered. The final reports are generally sent to the line manager, who then makes decisions on selection, placement, or development of the assessed individuals.

While the assessment center itself may be free of discrimination by sex, it has not been clearly shown that the decisions made on the basis of assessment center reports are free of discrimination. There is ample evidence that men and women with identical qualifications are not judged the same (Cohen & Bunker, 1975; Rosen & Jerdee, 1973, 1974 a, 1974 b, 1975; Terborg & Ilgen, 1975). There is also evidence that men and women can be evaluated equally for equal performance (Day & Stogdill, 1972; Deaux & Emswiller, 1974; Pheterson, Keisler, & Goldberg, 1971). The findings have been varied enough that it is appropriate to look at each situation individually. If discrimination occurs when a person is given information contained in an application blank or interview, it is
important to determine if it also occurs when a person is given assessment center information. There is clearly a difference in both the quantity and the quality of input given the decision maker. Application blanks do not provide as much information as assessment center summaries, nor does past job performance provide as much information, unless the past job is similar to the job for which prediction must be made. Although selection of a person for a particular management job must always involve projection from incomplete information to an uncertain future, the assessment center summary reduces the size of the unknown area because it reports actual behavior on important skills for the job under consideration. There is already some evidence that undergraduate college students will not discriminate against females when making a decision on an average candidate based on assessment center data (Steinberger, 1975), but there is no information on possible bias against both females and males for sex-typed jobs, using assessment center data.

This study was designed to determine if the sex of a candidate for a management position affects decisions made when specific behavioral information pertinent to the job is supplied to the decision maker, and to see if there are any differences according to
the sex-type of the job. Although discrimination against females has been most prevalent, it is equally important to determine if discrimination is occurring against males for female-type jobs. For this reason the study investigated both males and females with identical assessment center summaries being considered for a "male", "challenging" job and a "female", "routine" position. It was predicted that there would be no effects due to sex in managerial judgments about selection of employees based on assessment center data.
METHOD

Subjects

Subjects for this study were 86 students enrolled in a graduate class in business at Rollins College. Most of the subjects were in the 25-40 age range (64 subjects) and held full time jobs. There were 17 women and 69 men. All subjects had studied the assessment center as a selection method, and this was done in the same semester in which the study was carried out. They were familiar with the types of exercises described in the data and with some of the validity studies on assessment centers. These subjects were asked to participate in the study because it was believed that their age, work experience, and familiarity with assessment centers would be similar to that of the population of managers who must make decisions using assessment center data. All subjects were asked to participate in research about the decision making process, and class time was made available for the study. Subjects were anonymous, and were simply asked to indicate their age range and sex for purposes of classification. There was no compensation offered for participation, and participation
was voluntary. Originally 96 subjects took part in the research, but data were complete for only 86.

Apparatus

Two job descriptions were written, one for a "challenging" job as manager, the other for a "routine" job. Two psychology classes at Florida Technological University classified the job according to whether they expected the job incumbent to be a male or whether they would expect the job incumbent to be a female. For the challenging job all 13 respondents indicated the incumbent would be a male; for the routine job, 14 respondents indicated they would expect the incumbent to be a female; five, a male.

Two different assessment center summaries were designed for the experiment. One of the summaries was used with the "challenging" job. It described an individual who was rated satisfactory in all skills except "decisiveness", which was rated much more than satisfactory. The job description had specified that the two most important skills for the job were aggressive leadership and decisiveness. The assessment center summary was written to describe an individual who was adequate for the job, but not so outstanding that all subjects would tend to accept the candidate. Two versions of this summary were made; they differed only
in the name and sex of the candidate. One version
described Ann Ward, the other described Dan Ward.
Except for the first name and use of male or female
pronouns to refer to the candidate, the two summaries
were identical.

The second summary was written to go with the
"routine" job description. The candidate was described
as satisfactory in all skills, except sensitivity,
which was rated more than satisfactory. The two most
important skills for this job were sensitivity and
organizing and planning. An Ann Ward Ward version was
made and a Dan Ward version.

All assessment center reports included these
skills: perception, organizing and planning; decision
making, leadership, sensitivity, decisiveness. Each
skill was defined in behavioral terms and each candi­
date's skill level was indicated both by a numerical
score and a description of his or her performance in
that skill. A rating scale and a description of the
exercises referred to in the summary were given to
each subject.

Procedure

Each subject received only one job description and
its accompanying summary; they were not made aware that
other versions of the experimental items existed.
Experimental materials were given out by the class' regular instructor so that subjects would not form hypotheses about the purpose of the experiment based on the appearance of the experimenter. He read the brief instructions in which subjects were asked to read the material and make the decision called for at the end of the material. This decision was to choose one of four alternatives based on the information they had read. These alternatives were: 1) Would hire; 2) Probably would hire; 3) Probably would not hire; 4) Would not hire. In addition each subject was required to write in the full name of the candidate so that the experimenter could be sure the subject had attended to the name and was likely to be aware of the candidate's sex. Before handing back the materials, subjects were asked to indicate their age range and sex. Experimental materials were randomly distributed to subjects.

The independent variables were: sex of the candidate and type of job. The dependent variable was the hiring decision made by the subject
RESULTS

The hypothesis of this study was that there would be no differences in decisions made on hiring men and women using assessment center summary reports. The experimental evidence supports this hypothesis. Subjects' decisions are shown in Table 1. It is readily apparent that subjects found more candidates acceptable than not acceptable; 77.3% of the males and 70.67% of the females were placed in the "Would Hire" or "Probably Would Hire" categories. An overall chi square statistic was computed on the data to determine if there was any difference in the decisions made according to the sex of the candidates and the type of job. The chi square computed on the four by three table was non-significant, \( \chi^2(6) = 9.45, p > .10 \)

There was no significant difference between the way men and women were rated for the routine "female" job and the challenging "male" job. (females \( \chi^2(2) = 2.918 \) \( p < .25 \); males, \( \chi^2(2) = 1.84, p < .5 \)). The frequency table shows an apparent difference between the way men and women were assigned to the top two categories, "Would Hire" and "Probably Would Hire". A chi square computed on these top two categories with the two jobs
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<th>Challenging Job</th>
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<th>Routine Job</th>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would hire</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Probably would hire</td>
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**NOTE:** The categories Probably would not hire and Would not hire were collapsed into one category because all frequencies in the latter category were less than five.
combined, does show a chi square with a probability of less than .02. Such a manipulation takes excessive advantage of chance in this case and cannot be considered a significant finding (McNemar, p. 265).

From this study there is no evidence that men and women will be treated differently in hiring decisions based on assessment center summaries.

When this study was proposed it was expected that all subjects would be male so there was no provision made for comparing the decisions made by male raters with those made by female subjects. Since there did turn out to be 17 female subjects, a chi square statistic was computed on the categories in which males placed subjects and the categories in which females placed subjects. The result was significant at the .05 level \( \chi^2(3) = 8.59 \quad \alpha < .05 \). Female subjects tended to make proportionally more "Would Hire" decisions than males. There was no information available to determine why this occurred.

Although the numbers are too small for statistical consideration, it was noted that the three subjects who decided they would hire the female were all over 40. This was not true for the subjects who placed the male in the "Would Hire" category.
DISCUSSION

The findings of this study support the hypothesis that by using assessment center data based on behavioral observation, hiring decisions will be free of sex-bias. Rosen and Jerdee (1974 a) stated that having subjects make a decision on the disposition of one individual at a time is more realistic than a situation where a comparison of two or more individuals occurs. They also suggested that when making a decision between a male and a female candidate, a person will be less likely to discriminate because he or she will be more aware of the possibility that bias can occur; making a decision on only one person is likely to make the purpose of the study unobtrusive. In addition, having subjects participate in research who are already working in the business community and who have some familiarity with assessment centers assures that they more closely resemble the target population than would a sample of college sophomores. Due to all of these factors, it appears there can be considerable confidence placed in the results.

There was no discrimination apparent in consideration of men for a job that was sex-typed as female, and
clearly identified as routine. This is in contrast with the reported findings of Cohen and Bunker (1975) who used application blanks and interview data to describe candidates for sex-typed jobs. The question of a home career conflict which Rosen and Jerdee (1975) found to result in bias could not be answered by this study since it could not legitimately be included in an assessment center summary that was based on a description of behavior in simulated exercises.

Heneman (1977) found that subjects were more confident about hiring decisions that they made for males who scored high on preemployment tests than decisions made on females with equal scores. This may explain the tendency that subjects in this study had which placed more males in the "Would hire" category than females. "Would hire" and "Probably would hire" are both acceptable categories, but a "Would hire" decision demonstrates more confidence in the decision.

These findings suggest that biased decisions against females are more likely the result of a lack of information on the specific job skills a woman may possess, rather than a question as to how well she may be accepted on the job (Bass et al., 1971). They also tend to lend support to the suggestion that bias occurs as a result of using sexual stereotypes to fill in
missing information, and that as information becomes more complete, the need to use such stereotypes diminishes (Lee & Alvares, 1977).

Jaffee, Bender and Calvert reported in 1970 that one advantage of assessment centers is that they give individuals an opportunity to demonstrate skills in a management situation. This takes on additional value for a woman who may be considered qualified only if her managerial competency is documented. If she is not treated as an equal to a man with equal education and experience, but is treated equal to him when she proves her competence, and if managers accept assessment center summaries as proof of such competence, then the assessment center method is of double value to a woman. This study's results should serve to reassure women that assessment centers are helping to alleviate the bias against them, not only as they are observed and rated in actual exercises, but, equally important, when decisions are being made which are based on assessment center data.
These instructions were read to the class by their instructor:

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

You have been given a job description, an assessment center summary on an individual, a description of the exercises used in the assessment center, and a sheet that gives the skill definitions and rating scale used. Please read the job description, and the assessment center summary, and make the recommendation on this person that is called for at the end of the summary.

The assessment center summary was written from the individual reports from each exercise the candidate completed. It is based entirely on the behavioral observations of the individual in these exercises. Three different raters determined the overall rating to be given to the individual in each skill. The exercises were constructed to resemble the job for which the individual is being considered and to call for the required skills.

Do not be concerned about specific technical skills called for by the job; they have already been taken into consideration.

Please note that you are to write in the candidate's name, not your own.
The exercises referred to in this study are: 1) The In-Basket - this consists of 28 items which might be found in the manager's in-basket: memos, letters, requests, reminders. The individual is given one hour to go through the items and respond to them as if they were found on his/her desk. Some items require immediate attention; some are interrelated; some can be ignored. This exercise allows the person to demonstrate organizing and planning skills, decision making, decisiveness, perception of critical and related elements, leadership by directing others to accomplish certain tasks, and concern for the feelings of others; 2) The Leaderless Group Discussion - this exercise requires five to seven assessees to come to a solution to a problem within a specified time. Each person is given general information about the problem, and an individual position to defend. The candidate must defend this position and try to help the group reach a final decision on one of the positions presented. The individual can show perception of the important facts in the individual data and in the general data; and the candidate can show an ability to achieve leadership when working with peers. There is also the opportunity to organize his/her own presentation as well as to impose some order on the group process. The individual can show decisiveness
and decision making skills, and can also demonstrate an ability to show a concern for the feelings of others who are on the same organizational level; 3) The Problem Analysis Exercise - the individual is given a large amount of written data, including charts, graphs, etcetera. The candidate is asked to review the data and make a recommendation, choosing one of two conflicting views presented in the problem. This exercise gives the individual the chance to show perception of relevant facts when given a large amount of data and the ability to come to a decision based on the facts given. The candidate can also show ability to organize written data. There is an interview at the conclusion of this exercise, and the person may show an ability to defend the decision he/she has made; 4) The Leadership Exercise - two role players are assigned as subordinates to the assessee to help in handling a complicated problem. The candidate must determine the method to be used in working on the problem, assign work, and deal with the subordinates' behavior. This exercise allows the individual to demonstrate skill in directing the work of subordinates, in showing a consideration of their feelings, and in organizing work so that it can be completed by several people. It also calls for the candidate to make a number of decisions and to defend them to
subordinates. Once again the candidate can show perception of the critical elements of the problem.
SKILL DEFINITIONS

PERCEPTION:  The ability to identify, analyze and evaluate the factors essential to problem solution.

ORGANIZING AND PLANNING: The ability to establish administrative goals and plans and to structure situations to solve problems more easily.

DECISION MAKING: The ability to use sound and logical judgment in selecting from alternatives for the solution of problems.

LEADERSHIP: The ability to get people to follow in the solution of a task by directing and coordinating their efforts.

SENSITIVITY: The ability to deal effectively with all types of people through the evaluation and reaction to the needs of others.

DECISIVENESS: The ability to take action when called upon to do so.

RATING SCALE

1. Weak
2. Much less than satisfactory
3. Less than satisfactory
4. Satisfactory
5. More than satisfactory
6. Much more than satisfactory
7. Outstanding
A cosmetics firm, Floralinda, needs a manager to replace the retiring head of their regulatory affairs department. This department is responsible for the writing and editing of cosmetic labels. The department is specifically charged with writing and revising product labels and assessing advertising and promotion to comply with government requirements, and to conform to various restrictive codes. The manager's work is considered to be routine, since the department is small and stable, with a relatively regular pace of work. The manager's primary duties are to represent the company to the department employees; to assure that materials are available and assignments are made for a smooth functioning of the department, and to appraise employees' performance once a year. The manager must work to maintain a work atmosphere that is free of dissension. In addition, the manager oversees all the work that leaves the department, assisting in rewriting and editing, when necessary. The manager must work closely with the manager of the advertising department and the packaging department.

A careful analysis of the job reveals that there are six important skills for successful performance in
in this job. They are: perception, organizing and planning, decision making, leadership, sensitivity, and decisiveness. The most important of these skills are sensitivity and organizing and planning.
ASSESSMENT CENTER SUMMARY
Assessee - Ann/Dan Ward
Date - April 7, 1977

PERCEPTION: This individual, Ann/Dan Ward, displayed a satisfactory level of the skill of recognizing the critical aspects of problems. She/He was seen to be consistent in her/his performance in this skill across the four exercises in which it was measured. In the competitive group exercise, she/he recognized the relevant information in her/his data as well as most of that presented by others. She/He was quick to discard irrelevant information. When working with a large amount of written data, as it was presented in the problem analysis exercise, she/he was able to pick out most of the facts that are necessary for optimal problem solution. In the exercises which required the candidate to deal with subordinates, she/he was able to detect their strengths and weaknesses before the end of the exercise and work with them appropriately. She/He tied together information from different parts of the exercises. Overall, her/his rating was satisfactory, 4.

ORGANIZING AND PLANNING: Ann/Dan Ward was rated satisfactory in her/his ability to organize her/his work and to make specific plans for dealing with the
problems presented to her/him. She/He looked through the in-basket materials and grouped items according to common problems. She/He did the same sort of organizing in the problem analysis exercise, putting together items that gave related information. She/He made some suggestions for organizing the group discussion. When she/he was directing two subordinates, she/he did not use time optimally until the latter part of the exercise, when she/he finally divided up the work to be done. Overall she/he was seen to be satisfactory in this skill, with her/his skill in the two written exercises somewhat higher than in the two face to face exercises. Her/his rating was satisfactory, 4.

LEADERSHIP: This individual, Ann/Dan Ward, was rated satisfactory in the ability to direct and control the activities of others. Her/His skill level was higher in the in-basket exercise, where she/he delegated tasks appropriately and set up meetings with subordinates to discuss progress on assigned tasks. In the group discussion, she/he made several suggestions that were accepted by the group, and she/he started the group activity by setting up a method for presenting individual positions. There were several times when she/he passed up the opportunity to take over the leadership of the group, however. When working with
two subordinates, she/he did forcefully direct them in their task. Overall, her/his skill level was seen to be satisfactory, 4.

DECISION MAKING: The candidate, Ann/Dan Ward, demonstrated a satisfactory level of skill in the ability to make decisions based on the available data. In the in-basket exercise, the decisions she/he made on handling the problems were reasonable in light of the information available to her/him. In the problem analysis exercise, Ann/Dan made a number of small decisions that were sound, and which aided her/him in making the final decision called for in the problem. When working with two subordinates, she/he was hampered by an initial lack of a plan, but once she/he began to formulate a plan, the decisions she/he made were reasonable ones. In the group problem, her/his strategy to have certain priorities adopted would have led to the final decision by others to accept her/his particular position. Her/His decision to utilize that strategy was a sound one. Overall, her/his judgment was seen to be satisfactory, 4.

SENSITIVITY: The candidate, Ann/Dan Ward, demonstrated a more than satisfactory level of the ability to consider the feelings of others. When working with people, she/he asked others' names and introduced
herself/himself. Ann/Dan used the names always when addressing people thereafter. Ms./Mr. Ward sought group consensus and listened attentively to the views of others. When directing two subordinates, she/he asked opinions and carefully explained work that was assigned. In directing and interacting with people, "on paper", the assee used "please", and "thank you", generally. Most of her/his notes were considerate, but occasionally they were rather terse. Overall, she/he was seen to be more than satisfactory in this skill, 5.

**DECISIVENESS:** The candidate, Ann/Dan Ward, was seen to be satisfactory in the ability to take appropriate actions called for by the problems. The skill level in this area was not consistent, since Ann/Dan was more decisive in handling written material than when interacting with people in a face to face situation. In the in-basket, she/he made many decisions on items that needed immediate attention, and Ms./Mr. Ward also made a number of decisions in the problem analysis exercise. When working with people, she/he tended to listen to the opinions of others and agree with their ideas more than trying to convince others of her/his own ideas. Overall, the candidate's skill
in this area was rated as satisfactory, 4.

My recommendation for the candidate, (candidate's name) is as follows:

(Please check one) ________ Would Hire

________ Probably Would Hire

________ Probably Would Not Hire

________ Would Not Hire
A large tobacco company, Wilson-Goldsboro, has just acquired the package firm which has made the paper and cardboard containers for its products. This package company consists of numerous separate plants, each producing the packages for particular products. In the plant where the packages for the majority of the company's cigars and chewing tobacco are produced, the plant manager will soon retire. This is presently the smallest package plant since cigars and chewing tobacco are the smallest part of the company's business. There is a new vice president for this division of Wilson-Goldsboro who sees a large potential market for these products, and who has a goal of a 50% sales increase in two years. He is developing a new advertising campaign for the company's leading cigar, Bravo Champs. Included in the advertising changes will be a new method for packaging the cigars, but the exact changes have not been determined. A second campaign will be designed to change the image of chewing tobacco and will include new product names and new packaging.

The vice president of this division would like to replace the retiring manager of the package plant with someone from the tobacco company who is familiar with product and who has technical expertise.
The job requires that the manager will be responsible for all activities of the plant. Specifically, the manager must assure that materials are available in sufficient supply for the operation demands of the plant, and production of packages meets the demands of the company's packaging department. The manager is responsible for submitting budget requests to the budget committee, and for obtaining the funds necessary to run the plant. The manager must staff the plant, explain company policy to subordinates, train personnel, review personnel performance, initiate requests for salary adjustments, and promote personnel. In addition, the manager must keep individual production statistics, plan and recommend changes in the plant, establish and enforce safety rules, and receive employee recommendations. The manager must also be able to make recommendations on proposed package changes as to cost and feasibility of production. It is a further duty that the manager be able to work with the creative department in determining optimum package designs. This job is considered to be challenging and demanding.

Careful analysis has determined the skills necessary for successful performance in this job. They are: leadership, decisiveness, decision making, sensitivity, perception, and organizing and planning. The six
skills are all important, but the two most demanded skills are **aggressive leadership** and **decisiveness**. These were determined by the nature of the majority of the important work that the manager must carry out.
ASSESSMENT CENTER SUMMARY
Assessee - Ann/Dan Ward
Date - April 7, 1977

PERCEPTION: This individual, Dan/Ann Ward, displayed a satisfactory level in the skill of recognizing the critical aspects of problems. He/She was seen to be consistent in the performance in this skill across the four exercises in which it was measured. In the competitive group exercise, he/she recognized the relevant information in his/her data, as well as most of that presented by others. He/She was quick to discard irrelevant information. When working with a large amount of written data, as it was presented in the problem analysis exercise, he/she was able to pick out most of the facts that are necessary for problem solution. In the exercises which required the candidate to deal with subordinates, he/she was able to recognize their strengths and weaknesses before the end of the exercise, and work with them appropriately. He/She tied together information from different parts of each exercise. Overall, his/her rating was satisfactory, 4.

ORGANIZING AND PLANNING: Dan/Ann Ward was rated satisfactory in his/her ability to organize his/her
work and to make specific plans for dealing with the problems presented to him/her. He/She looked through the in-basket materials and grouped items according to common problems. He/She did the same sort of organizing in the problem analysis exercise, putting together items that gave related information. He/She made some suggestions for organizing the group discussion. When he/she was directing two subordinates, he/she did not use time optimally until the latter part of the exercise, when he/she finally divided up the work to be done. Overall, he/she was seen to be satisfactory in this skill, with his/her skill in the two written exercises somewhat higher than in the two face to face exercises. His/her rating was satisfactory, 4.

LEADERSHIP: This individual, Dan/Ann Ward, was rated satisfactory in the ability to direct and control the activities of others. His/her skill level was higher in the in-basket exercise, where he/she delegated tasks appropriately and set up meetings with subordinates to discuss progress on assigned tasks. In the group discussion, he/she made several suggestions that were accepted by the group, and he/she started the group activity by setting up a method for presenting individual positions. There were several times when he/she passed up the opportunity to take over the
leadership of the group, however. When working with two subordinates, he/she did forcefully direct them in their task. Overall, his/her skill level was seen to be satisfactory, 4.

**DECISION MAKING:** The candidate, Dan/Ann Ward, demonstrated a satisfactory level of skill in the ability to make decisions based on the available data. In the in-basket exercise, the decisions he/she made on handling the problems were reasonable in light of the information available to him/her. In the problem analysis exercise, Dan/Ann made a number of small decisions that were sound, and which aided him/her in making the final decision called for by the problem. When working with two subordinates he/she was hampered by an initial lack of a plan, but once he/she began to formulate a plan, the decisions he/she made for proceeding with the work were reasonable ones. In the group problem, his/her strategy to have certain priorities adopted would have led to the final decision by others to accept his/her particular position. His/her decision to utilize the strategy was a sound one. Overall his/her judgement was seen to be satisfactory, 4.

**DECISIVENESS:** Dan/Ann Ward was rated much more than satisfactory in his/her ability to take the action
that is called for by the problem and to defend the decisions he/she has made. His/her skill was seen to be consistently high across all four exercises. In both of the written data bound exercises, he/she made almost all of the decisions called for by the problem. He/She maintained his/her position and defended himself/herself during the interview that followed each exercise. In the group exercise, Dan/Ann let the group know of several decisions he/she had made, and urged the others to adopt them. Although he/she changed some decisions in the light of new information, he/she defended his/her position in other cases when group members disagreed with him/her. When directing two subordinates, once he/she had organized the information, he/she made a number of decisions on how the work should proceed, and he/she did not let his/her helpers sidetrack him/her. Overall, he/she was rated much more than satisfactory in the skill of decisiveness, 6.

SENSITIVITY: Dan/Ann Ward demonstrated a satisfactory level of the ability to consider the feelings of others. He/She used courteous words such as "please" and "thank you", when requesting work in written memos, but when working with subordinates to complete a task, he/she tended to be somewhat brusque, and to command rather than request. Dan/Ann asked the opinions of
others when working with them, but proceeded in the work primarily according to his/her own plans. He/She called peers by their first names, but interrupted others on several occasions when he/she was trying to get the group to adopt his/her plan. Overall, his/her level in this particular skill was seen to be satisfactory, 4.

My recommendation for the candidate, (candidate's name) is as follows:
(Please check one) 

________ Would Hire

________ Probably Would Hire

________ Probably Would Not Hire

________ Would Not Hire
REFERENCES


Steinberger, A. Effects of attitude toward women in management and applicant information on a male and female applicant for a management position. Unpublished manuscript, Florida Technological University, 1976.