

NDR Admissions Writing Exercise

Read the following scenario, and follow the instructions below:

You have worked in the Sales department of a large import firm for the past ten years. Having proved yourself as a salesperson, you worked your way up to the position of junior client manager. You lack university education – you’ve been supporting yourself since you were sixteen – and you know this position may be as high as you will go.

About six months ago the company hired a new junior client manager. He really annoys you – this kid is straight out of business school, and is starting off at the position it took you seven years to earn! He is always talking about his school, and offering you and everyone else the wisdom of his professors. As if that has anything to do with the real world! He’s made annoying comments about your work and personal habits, as if he were your boss – while he himself takes long lunch breaks and is always on the phone. You feel he is stuck-up and disrespectful, and his rich-kid university manners are making the office an unpleasant place to be.

When you complained to the department head, she suggested you teach him how things are done around here. You’ve tried to do so, but he always starts lecturing you about the changes he thinks should be made until you lose patience and walk off. At last week’s staff meeting, he proposed that only managers with MBA’s should be assigned mid-level positions in the department. With your own job threatened, you lost your temper and shouted at him.

(From Ebner, N. & Efron, Y. (2008). “Storm Down in Sales: An Organizational Conflict Management Simulation”. In R. Preziosi (Ed.), The 2009 Pfeiffer Annual of Management Development. San Francisco: Pfeiffer. Used with permission)

You are now considering how to best handle the situation. Complete both Parts I and II.

Part I

- 1) How would you intuitively approach the situation? What would you describe as your gut reactions to the situation or to the other?
- 2) Assuming you were given the luxury of orchestrating your next encounter with your young counterpart, how would you set it up? Where/when might you choose to meet, and what might your opening sentence/s be?

Part II

Not trusting your instincts, you have decided to take a serious and informed approach to resolving this problem. Conduct a search for material relevant to this situation. You may rely on any sources you choose – books, articles, instructional videos, etc. You will know your search is complete when you have identified 3-5 sources that enable you to reflect insightfully on the questions below:

What seem to be the main impediments or challenges to a successful resolution to this situation?

- 3) What frameworks or models have you found which give you a better understanding of the situation (for the purposes of this paper, a framework or a model is a structure for explaining a situation in terms of breaking it down into individual elements and describing how they influence each other)? Discuss their application to the scenario.
- 4) After reflecting on questions (3) and (4), is there anything you might change in the practical approach you proposed for addressing the situation, in your answer to question (2)?

Please write your answer to the questions above in no more than 1000 words. At the end of the paper, please include a list of the references you relied on (this list is not included in the 1000 words limitation).