

Application Case

Tropical Storm Charley

In August 2004, tropical storm **Charley** hit North Carolina and the Optima Air Filter Company. Many employees' homes were devastated and the firm found that it had to hire almost 3 completely new crews, one for each of its shifts. The problem was that the "Old-timers" had known their jobs so well that no one had ever bothered to draw up job descriptions for them. When about 30 new employees began taking their places, there was general confusion about what they should do and how they should do it. The storm quickly became old news to the firm's out-of-state customers- who wanted filters, not excuses. Phil Mann, the firm's President, was at his wits end. He had about 30 new employees, 10 old-timers, and his original factory supervisor, Maybelline. He decided to meet with Linda Lowe, a consultant from the local universities business school. She immediately had the old-timers fill out a job questionnaire that listed all their tasks, duties & responsibilities. Arguments ensued almost at once- Both Phil & Maybelline thought the old-timers were exaggerating to make themselves look more important, and the old-timers instead that the list faithfully reflected their duties. Meanwhile, the customers clamoured for their filters.

1. Should Phil & Linda ignore that old-timers' protests and write up the job descriptions as they see fit? Why? Why not?
2. How would you have conducted the job analysis? What should Phil do now?