

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Neil Allen Thomas entitled "An Investigation of an Information Processing Model for Performance Appraisal." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Industrial/Organizational Psychology.

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for Performance Appraisal

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Presented for the  
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Degree  
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## DEDICATION

For my father who was always proud of me.

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to provide a test of an information processing model for performance appraisal proposed by Feldman (1981). Feldman proposed that an observer cognitively categorizes an actor and then uses a category prototype as a cognitive representation of the actor during the appraisal process. Feldman's model suggests that an observer will use either an automatic or controlled process in assimilating information depending on the consistency of information. Feldman's model suggests that an observer will rely on an automatic information processing function if salient attributes of an actor correspond to the attributes associated with an existing cognitive category. However, an observer is expected to use a controlled information processing function to assign the actor to a cognitive category if characteristics of the actor do not easily conform to those of an existing category or the actor exhibits behavior that is inconsistent with the observer's category influenced expectations for the actor.

The present study examined the effects of information inconsistent with an actor's typical behavior on the categorization and evaluation process across time. The sample for this study consisted of 120 graduate teaching assistants at The University of Tennessee. The experimental design was constructed as a partially crossed factorial design consisting of two levels of induced initial attribution conditions (i.e., internal and external), initial performance (i.e., high and low), and instances of discrepant information (i.e., single and multiple) introduced at Time 2

and Time 3. A Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance was employed to test the results of the study against theoretical predictions.

It was proposed in the study, following Feldman (1981), that the participants would use causal attributions for an actor's performance as a source of information in initially assigning the actor to a cognitive category. The participants were also expected to use the characteristics associated with an actor's assigned category (i.e., person impression) when asked to evaluate the actor. It was also expected that sufficient discrepant information about the actor would elicit a change in initial attributions and evaluations (i.e., re-categorization of the actor). It was expected that multiple instances of discrepant information would elicit a change in attributions for participants in the initial external attribution condition at Time 1 to an internal attribution attribution at Time 3; while participants in the initial internal attribution condition would attribute the actor's performance to internal causes at Time 1 and Time 3. It was also expected that changes in the participants' attributions for the actor's performance from Time 1 to Time 3 would be associated with changes in the participants' evaluation of the actor.

Contrary to expectations, the results did not reveal that the participant's responses on the dependent measures varied across time as a function of initial attributions and amount of discrepant information. The results, instead, indicated that the responses of participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information varied across time as a function of initial performance. Participants in the initial low performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information (1) reported that the actor's performance was more a function

of internal causes at Time 3 than at Time 1 and (2) rated the actor higher on the person impression measure at Time 3 compared with Time 1 regardless of initial attributions. Similarly, participants in the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information (1) reported that the actor's performance was more a function of external causes at Time 3 than at Time 1 and (2) rated the actor lower on the person impression measure at Time 3 compared with Time 1. The responses of participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition regardless of initial attributions and initial performance level remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3.

The results of the study seemed to indicate that an observer may use causal attributions as a source of information when initially assigning an actor to a cognitive category. However, the results also suggest that the actor's initial and subsequent level of performance may contribute more strongly to the observer's categorization of the actor. The results are discussed in terms of the suggested need for additional research to investigate the relationship of cognitive information processing and the performance appraisal process as a function of encountered discrepant information.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER                                       | PAGE |
|-----------------------------------------------|------|
| I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .                     | 1    |
| II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .        | 5    |
| Attribution Theory . . . . .                  | 5    |
| Use of Informational Cues . . . . .           | 8    |
| Causal Schema . . . . .                       | 8    |
| Categorization . . . . .                      | 9    |
| A Model of Information Processing . . . . .   | 12   |
| Research Propositions . . . . .               | 15   |
| Hypotheses . . . . .                          | 16   |
| III. METHODS . . . . .                        | 18   |
| Participants . . . . .                        | 18   |
| General Procedure . . . . .                   | 19   |
| Experimental Design and Procedure . . . . .   | 20   |
| Measures . . . . .                            | 31   |
| Evaluation . . . . .                          | 31   |
| Attributions . . . . .                        | 32   |
| Information Search . . . . .                  | 33   |
| Data Analysis . . . . .                       | 34   |
| Power Analysis . . . . .                      | 34   |
| Operational Hypotheses . . . . .              | 35   |
| Evaluation . . . . .                          | 35   |
| Performance Appraisal . . . . .               | 36   |
| Person Impression . . . . .                   | 37   |
| Attributions . . . . .                        | 40   |
| Locus of Causality . . . . .                  | 41   |
| Stability . . . . .                           | 44   |
| Responsibility . . . . .                      | 46   |
| Information Search . . . . .                  | 47   |
| Confidence of Appraisal . . . . .             | 48   |
| Request for Additional Information . . . . .  | 49   |
| Additional Research Issues . . . . .          | 51   |
| IV. RESULTS . . . . .                         | 52   |
| Development of Operational Measures . . . . . | 52   |
| Evaluation Measures . . . . .                 | 53   |
| Attribution Measures . . . . .                | 55   |
| Information Search . . . . .                  | 57   |
| Hypotheses Testing . . . . .                  | 59   |
| Time 1 . . . . .                              | 60   |
| Evaluation Measures . . . . .                 | 60   |
| Attribution Measures . . . . .                | 63   |
| Information Search Measures . . . . .         | 66   |



|                                                                    |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Time 2 . . . . .                                                   | 72  |
| Evaluation Measures . . . . .                                      | 72  |
| Attribution Measures . . . . .                                     | 73  |
| Information Search Measures . . . . .                              | 77  |
| Time 3 . . . . .                                                   | 83  |
| Evaluation Measures . . . . .                                      | 84  |
| Attribution Measures . . . . .                                     | 91  |
| Information Search Measures . . . . .                              | 97  |
| Results of the Repeated Measures Analyses . . . . .                | 102 |
| Evaluation Measures . . . . .                                      | 102 |
| Attribution Measures . . . . .                                     | 114 |
| Information Search Measures . . . . .                              | 127 |
| V. DISCUSSION . . . . .                                            | 142 |
| Summary of the Empirical Results . . . . .                         | 144 |
| Initial Categorization . . . . .                                   | 144 |
| Re-categorization . . . . .                                        | 146 |
| Discrepant Information and Initial Attribution Condition . . . . . | 148 |
| Discrepant Information and Initial Performance Condition . . . . . | 149 |
| Implications for the Information Processing Model . . . . .        | 151 |
| Methodological Issues . . . . .                                    | 153 |
| Practical Implications . . . . .                                   | 155 |
| Conclusion . . . . .                                               | 156 |
| LIST OF REFERENCES . . . . .                                       | 158 |
| APPENDIX . . . . .                                                 | 162 |
| VITA . . . . .                                                     | 181 |

## LIST OF TABLES

|              |                                                                                                                    |     |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Table IV-1.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Evaluation Measures at Time 1. . .              | 61  |
| Table IV-2.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Attribution Measures at Time 1. .               | 64  |
| Table IV-3.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Information Search Measures at Time 1 . . . . . | 67  |
| Table IV-4.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Evaluation Measures at Time 2 . .               | 74  |
| Table IV-5.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Attribution Measures at Time 2. .               | 76  |
| Table IV-6.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Information Search Measures at Time 2 . . . . . | 79  |
| Table IV-7.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Evaluation Measures at Time 3 . .               | 86  |
| Table IV-8.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Attribution Measures at Time 3. .               | 93  |
| Table IV-9.  | Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Information Search Measures at Time 3 . . . . . | 99  |
| Table IV-10. | Results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for the Evaluation Measures . . . . .                        | 104 |
| Table IV-11. | Results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for the Attribution Measures. . . . .                        | 116 |
| Table IV-12. | Results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for the Information Search Measures . . . . .                | 128 |
| Table IV-13. | Expected effects compared with obtained effects for the study. . . . .                                             | 141 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|               |                                                                                                                                                  |    |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure II-1.  | Illustration of the information processing model. .                                                                                              | 6  |
| Figure III-1. | Figurative representation of the experimental design with the average performance of the target actor within quarters. . . . .                   | 21 |
| Figure III-2. | Example performance record sheet for a target actor.                                                                                             | 26 |
| Figure III-3. | Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the performance appraisal measure. . . . .                                                 | 37 |
| Figure III-4. | Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the person impression measure. . . . .                                                     | 41 |
| Figure III-5. | An illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the locus of causality measures. . . . .                                                | 42 |
| Figure III-6. | Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the attribution of stability measure. . . . .                                              | 45 |
| Figure III-7. | Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the attribution of responsibility measure. . . . .                                         | 47 |
| Figure III-8. | Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the confidence of appraisal measure. . . . .                                               | 50 |
| Figure III-9. | Illustration of the proposed hypotheses for the request for additional information measure. . . . .                                              | 51 |
| Figure IV-1.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 1. . . . .              | 63 |
| Figure IV-2.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure at Time 1. . . . .                  | 63 |
| Figure IV-3.  | Illustration of INITIAL ATTRIBUTION effect for the internal/external measure at Time 1. . . . .                                                  | 65 |
| Figure IV-4.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the confidence of appraisal item at Time 1. . . . .               | 68 |
| Figure IV-5.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the request for additional information measure at Time 1. . . . . | 69 |

|               |                                                                                                                                                               |    |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure IV-6.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION effect for the consistency information measure at Time 1. . . . .                                                     | 71 |
| Figure IV-7.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal item at Time 2. . . . .                              | 75 |
| Figure IV-8.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure at Time 2. . . . .                               | 75 |
| Figure IV-9.  | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the responsibility measure at Time 2. . . . .                                  | 78 |
| Figure IV-10. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the distinctiveness information measure at Time 2. . . . .                     | 80 |
| Figure IV-11. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the consensus information measure at Time 2. . . . .                           | 82 |
| Figure IV-12. | Illustration of the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 3. . . . .                        | 87 |
| Figure IV-13. | Illustration of the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure at Time 3. . . . .                            | 88 |
| Figure IV-14. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure at Time 3. . . . .                               | 88 |
| Figure IV-15. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 3. . . . .                           | 89 |
| Figure IV-16. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 3. . . . . | 90 |
| Figure IV-17. | Illustration of the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure. . . . .                                      | 94 |
| Figure IV-18. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure at Time 3. . . . .     | 95 |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                       |     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure IV-19. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the responsibility measure at Time 3. . . . .                                                          | 96  |
| Figure IV-20. | Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the consensus information measure at Time 3. . . . .                                                   | 100 |
| Figure IV-21. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure for the $T_{1,2}$ comparison and the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .                  | 106 |
| Figure IV-22. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure for the $T_{1,2}$ comparison and the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .                      | 106 |
| Figure IV-23. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . .                     | 107 |
| Figure IV-24. | Illustration of a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .                           | 108 |
| Figure IV-25. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal item for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . . | 109 |
| Figure IV-26. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . .  | 110 |
| Figure IV-27. | Illustration of a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . .                           | 112 |
| Figure IV-28. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person/situation measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . .                          | 117 |
| Figure IV-29. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . .                         | 118 |
| Figure IV-30. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the internal/external measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .                            | 119 |

|               |                                                                                                                                                                                   |     |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Figure IV-31. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the stability measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . . .      | 120 |
| Figure IV-32. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction for the responsibility measure for the $T_{1,2}$ comparison. . . . .                                                  | 122 |
| Figure IV-33. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the responsibility measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . .                          | 123 |
| Figure IV-34. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the responsibility measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . . | 124 |
| Figure IV-35. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the confidence of appraisal measure for the $T_{1,2}$ and $T_{2,3}$ comparisons. . . . .                          | 129 |
| Figure IV-36. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the confidence of appraisal measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .               | 130 |
| Figure IV-37. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the confidence of appraisal measure for the $T_{1,2}$ comparison. . . . .                  | 131 |
| Figure IV-38. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the request for additional information measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .                              | 132 |
| Figure IV-39. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the request for additional information measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .    | 133 |
| Figure IV-40. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the distinctiveness measure for the $T_{1,3}$ comparison. . . .                         | 136 |
| Figure IV-41. | Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the consensus measure for the $T_{2,3}$ comparison. . . . .                             | 137 |

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Current approaches to the study of the performance appraisal process view the observer/rater as an information processor. Ilgen and Feldman (1983) for example, presented a model of the performance appraisal process based on social cognition theory. The model is divided into three parts: information acquisition, information storage, and information retrieval. The observer/rater is seen as seeking or acquiring information about a target actor, storing the information in memory, and then recalling the information when appraising the performance of the actor.

A concept central to the information processing model is a cognitive process referred to as "categorization" (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983; Rosch, 1977). Categorization is described as the process by which a stimulus is cognitively identified and grouped with similar stimuli based on the extent to which the features of the given stimulus overlap with those of a category prototype (i.e., an abstract image summarizing family resemblances between members) (Feldman, 1981). Ilgen and Feldman identified the categorization process as one of the key concepts linking the processes of attention, memory storage, and information retrieval.

Before appraisal related information about a person can be processed, it must be attended to and recognized as information (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). An observer is expected to use one of two attentional mechanisms, either automatic or controlled, depending on the informational context (Feldman, 1981). Feldman indicated that as long as a person's

behavior is consistent with a observer's expectations, the behavior should be noted and stored automatically. However, if the target person's behavior departs from the observer's expectations, conscious attention and recognition processes should take over (i.e., controlled processing).

The categorization process is considered important in reducing the amount of information which must be processed and stored (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). Once categorized, however, the behaviors of a person may be recalled less in terms of what the person actually did than in terms of what would be expected for a typical member of the category to which the person was assigned (i.e., evaluations should be based more on the category prototype than on the actual recall of information).

Attention to certain characteristics of an individual (e.g., sex, skin color, style of dress) may be so overlearned that no monitoring would be required (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). Thus, information is processed automatically. However, an automatic process is considered insufficient to function effectively in all situations (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). A controlled categorization process should occur under one of two conditions: (1) no category currently exists in which to easily assign a person, or (2) information about a person is received which is inconsistent with a previous categorization (Feldman, 1981). The first condition would require a search for relevant categories as well as more detailed attention to the person. The second condition would require that the observer search for additional information in order to reconcile the discrepancy or recategorize the person.

Feldman (1981) proposed that attribution theory was a useful theory to infer the characteristics of an observed target, and hence, was useful



in describing the process that occurs when categorization cannot proceed automatically. In part, the argument is based on Kelley (1973), who stated that an observer acts as a "naive" scientist who tries to develop hypotheses to explain the observed behavior of others. Thus, the first stage in the controlled categorization process is hypothesized to be the formation of causal attributions (Feldman, 1981; Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). An observer must decide if an event or behavior is caused by the person or is due to the situation.

Once the observer has made a decision regarding causality, the observer must then assign the target person to a cognitive performance category (Feldman, 1981). Thus, the second stage in the controlled categorization process is regarded as the formation of a dispositional attribution and subsequent category assignment (Ilgen and Feldman, 1981). Feldman argued that the specific category assignment should be a function of the observer's implicit category system, and/or a function of situational factors that make some categories more readily available than others.

Once an observer has cognitively categorized a person, the attributes of the category may become associated with that person (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). As a result, when asked to evaluate the person, the observer may not recall actual observed behavior, but rather, may recall traits associated with the prototype characterizing the category to which the person was assigned. Purely evaluative responses are also thought to be based on stored evaluative impressions associated with the category (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). In fact, Ilgen and Feldman have described the performance appraisal process as more of a memory-based process than a

stimulus-based process. The important implication is that performance appraisal decisions may be biased by the attributes associated with the prototype of a category to which a person was assigned and not accurately reflect the person's performance.

The present study attempted to systematically examine whether an observer actually uses causal attributions for a target actor's performance as a factor in developing a cognitive categorization of the actor. The study also attempted to examine whether the observer would use attributes associated with the category prototype (i.e., person impressions) as a basis for evaluating the target actor. Finally, the study attempted to show that information about the actor that was inconsistent with the initially induced characteristics of the assigned category would elicit a controlled information search process in order to resolve the inconsistency.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The information processing model of performance appraisal proposed by Feldman (1981) views an observer as seeking information about a person, storing the information, and then recalling the accessible information when necessary. Feldman proposed that an observer will develop causal attributions to explain a person's behavior. The observer then is expected to categorize the person based on the inferred causal attributions for the person's performance. Feldman stated that information recalled about the actor may reflect attributes representing the category and not necessarily the person's actual behavior. The information processing model is depicted in Figure II-1. The following sections provide a brief background for the information processing model. The sections provide an overview of attribution theory and the cognitive categorization process as well as a description of the information processing model.

#### Attribution Theory

Lord and Smith (1983) identified three different types of attributional processes: (1) responsibility of outcomes (Hamilton, 1980), (2) personal characteristics (Jones & Davis, 1965), and (3) causality of an event (Kelly, 1973). Responsibility attributions determine whether sanctions should apply to a particular actor (Hamilton, 1980). Lord and

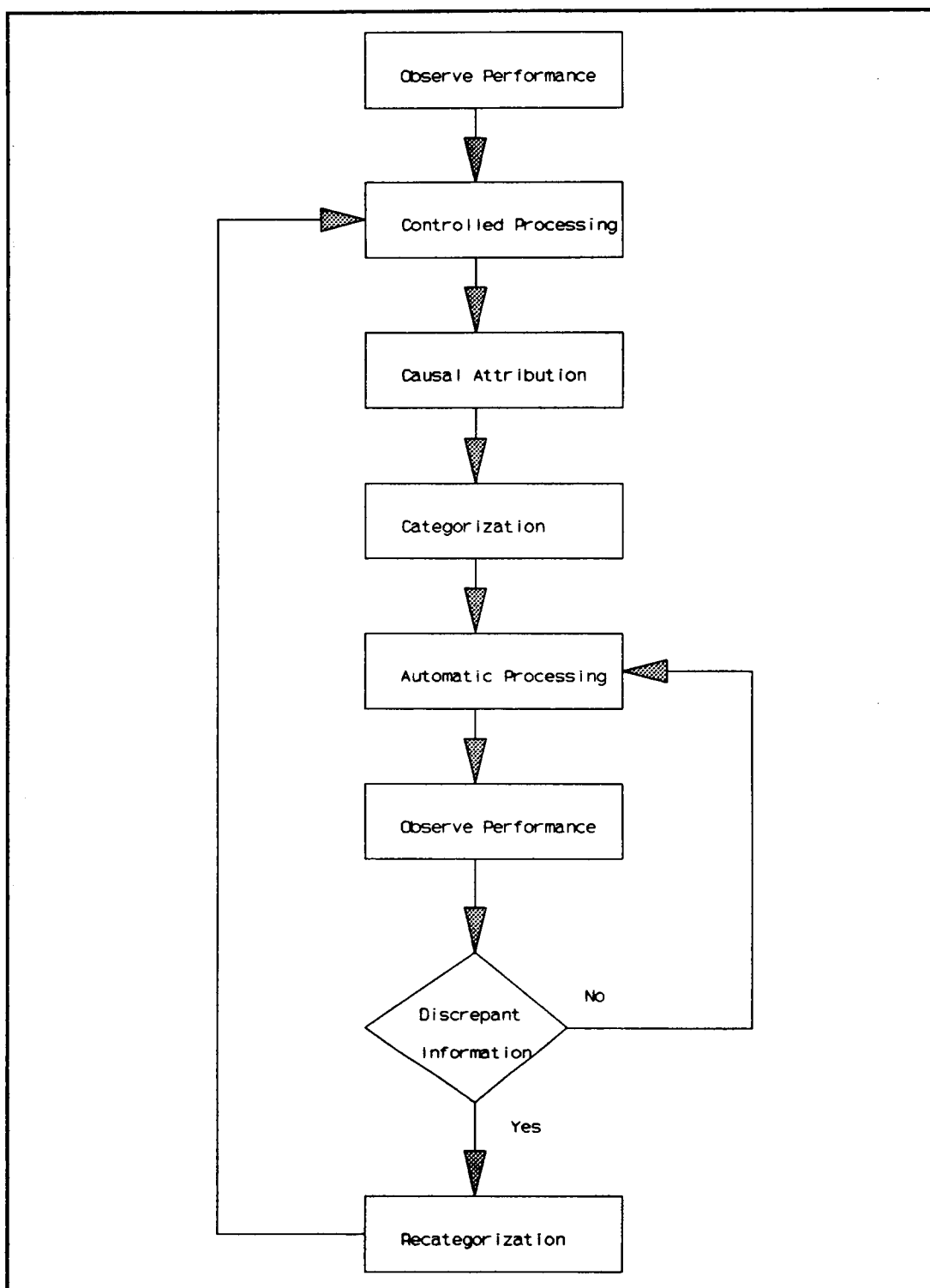


Figure II-1. Illustration of the information processing model.

Smith (1983) suggested that some of the factors that may mitigate responsibility assessments include issues such as the foreseeability, intention, and justification of the action. In addition, Hamilton (1980) specified that responsibility assessments may be made if the actor could have produced a different outcome by behaving differently in the same circumstances.

A second attributional process may involve the attribution of personal qualities to individuals. That is, do particular qualities of individuals generalize across situations and time (Lord & Smith, 1983)? Although personal qualities may be inferred from behaviors and their results (Jones & Davis, 1965), such generalizations may also be based upon characteristics such as race, gender, cultural background, or appearance (Lord & Smith, 1983).

In the third attributional process, people infer attributions involving causal assessments to explain unexpected or puzzling events (Lord & Smith, 1983). Kelley (1973) suggested that people use a principle of covariation, or a mental analysis of variance, to assess causal agents such as actors, situations, or circumstances. The key aspect in determining causality involves deciding whether the event in question would have occurred without the presence of a particular agent or factor (Hamilton, 1980). It is expected that an observer would assign the highest causal priority to necessary factors. As indicated below, Kelley's (1973) model describes rules for determining if an event would have occurred without particular actors, entities, or circumstances, with much of the material following the discussion offered by Lord and Smith (1983).

### Use of Informational Cues

Kelley (1973) proposed that people use three types of informational cues when forming causal attributions. These informational cues consist of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus information. Consistency cues provide information regarding the extent to which an actor has behaved similarly in other contexts (situations) or at other times. In other words, the observer wishes to know if the actor always responds in the same way to a particular stimulus. Similarly, the observer tries to determine if the actor's performance is "distinctive" in response to a particular entity (task). That is, did the behavior occur on this task but not on other tasks? Finally, the observer estimates the extent to which other actors also behave in the same way; i.e., is the behavior unique to this particular actor (low consensus) or common to many actors (high consensus) (Kelley, 1973)?

### Causal Schema

Kelley (1972b) stated that an observer may, at times, employ causal schemata to judge cause and effect. These schemata are derived from experience in observing cause and effective relationships and/or from implicit and explicit cultural norms about the causal structure of the world (Kelley, 1972b). A causal schema allows the observer to make fast and economical attributional analyses by providing a framework in which to fit pieces of data, thus, allowing the observer to arrive at a reasonably good causal inference (Kelley, 1972b).

Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, and Rosenbaum (1972) proposed that individuals use four causal elements for explaining and predicting results of achievement-related tasks. The four causal elements are ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. These causal elements represent two dimensions: stability and locus of causality. In general, an observer uses the informational cues of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus to infer a specific causal element contributing to success or failure on a task (Green & Mitchell, 1979). For example, ability is generally inferred from consistency of performance at a task and generality of performance (low distinctiveness). Similarly, people employ social norms (consensus information) when inferring task difficulty as a causal explanation for performance.

Causal schemata provide a framework which allows an individual to draw (i.e, infer) conclusions regarding the causes of performance from a specific set of information cues. An observer develops a causal schemata based upon data that the observer either collects via experience or infers from the particular situation.

### Categorization

A cognitive category is defined as a "fuzzy set" of objects that are considered to be equivalent. Membership in the set is determined by family resemblance rather than possession of all critical attributes (Ilgen & Feldman, 1983). Cognitive categorization is the method by which individuals assign other stimuli to a category. A prototype is the cognitive representation of a typical category member and exemplifies the

category in memory (Ilgen & Feldman, 1983). The categorization process is considered to reduce the amount of information that must be processed and stored. An important ramification of this process is that an observer, when asked to recall information about an individual, the observer may recall or infer attributes of the category prototype rather than actual behaviors (Feldman, 1981).

Feldman (1981) suggested that people vary in terms of the number and nature of the cognitive categories they possess. Ilgen and Feldman (1983) defined implicit personality theory as one set of categories in which the associated prototypes may be used by an individual to represent, evaluate, and predict the behavior of others. Feldman suggested that an individual's implicit personality theory will, in conjunction with situational factors, determine which aspects of a person will be used in categorization. That is, if characteristics of an individual are consistent with the attributes of an existing category, the individual may be categorized using an automatic process (Feldman, 1981). Further information about that individual will also be automatically interpreted and stored in terms of that same category, providing the information is consistent with the category.

Situations do occur however, in which an observer is unable to automatically categorize a person. In this case, existing category systems must be modified or new category systems must be developed. This implies a controlled, consciously monitored operation of information processing (Ilgen and Feldman, 1983). In addition, the characteristics of people and places change and may no longer be consistent with the attributes of an initially assigned category. A controlled categorization



process allows for the revision of the category systems and, hence, the recategorization of individuals.

A controlled categorization process would be expected to occur if no immediately available category existed in which to assign a person. This situation would require a search by the observer of relevant cognitive categories. A lack of relevant categories would require that the observer pay more detailed attention to the individual. The controlled categorization process would also be expected to occur when the observer receives information that is inconsistent with information associated with the previous category placement (Feldman, 1981). Inconsistent information would require the observer to search for relevant categories with attributes matching both the person's existing category and incorporating the discrepant information.

Feldman (1981) indicated that the first stage in the controlled categorization process should be the formation of a causal attribution. An observer must decide if the causes for a behavior or event are internal to the person in question or are due to some aspect of the situation (i.e., external to the person). Once the observer has determined the locus of causality, a second judgment is then necessary in which the observer must assign the person to a specific category consistent with the inferred causal attribution (Feldman, 1981). The observer's category assignment of the individual should be a function of the observer's implicit personality theory regarding the phenomenon and situational factors that make some categories more relevant than others (Feldman, 1981).

### A Model of Information Processing

It is noted that once an individual reaches a conclusion about the cause for an actor's behavior (e.g., ability), the ascribed causal attribution may be used to categorize the actor (Feldman, 1981). The causal attribution may be considered as one characteristic representative of the cognitive category to which the target was assigned. A category prototype represents the characteristics of a typical member of the category. Thus, one aspect of the prototype should be the causal attributes that an observer develops in order to classify and describe the actor.

Further, once a target person has been assigned to a category, the category prototype is considered to be the basis for further evaluation and decision-making (Feldman, 1981). In this case, additional information processing should be cognitively simplified, and would be considered to be "automatic." This is not to say, however, that the prototype serves as a complete representation of the individual; rather, the prototype provides a framework for deducing various attributes of the person. That is, in the automatic processing mode, the observer is viewed as having all the information considered necessary to explain the actor's behavior. The information is contained in the prototype of the category. The observer, therefore, has no need to engage in an extended causal information search to explain additional behavior of the actor since the prototype already contains the relevant information.

Information processing is thought to become a "controlled" processes, however, when the observed behavior of a person differs

sufficiently from the behavior expected on the basis of the initial categorization (Feldman, 1981). In this situation, the observer is expected to consciously seek out and process information in the controlled processing mode.

A factor that might potentially influence the level of information processing (i.e., automatic or controlled) may be the degree of observed discrepancy between the behavior of an actor and the expectations that an observer holds about the actor (Lord & Smith, 1983; Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1981; Wong & Weiner, 1981). For example, if an actor's behavior conforms to an observer's expectations, the observer should not engage in a "controlled" search for the cause of the actor's behavior. The category prototype already contains the information necessary to explain the actor's performance and therefore the individual need not search any further to accommodate the new information. However, if an actor's performance differs significantly from an observer's expectations, the observer should engage in a new search for potential causal factors to explain the actor's unexpected performance.

Two studies have examined the effects of disconfirming evidence on an individual's causal search (Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1981; Wong & Weiner, 1981). Wong and Weiner (1981) found that individuals were more likely to engage in a causal search when presented with evidence about themselves that was contrary to their prior self-expectations. Pyszczynski and Greenberg (1981), in contrast, examined the effects of an observer's unconfirmed expectancies about another actor's behavior on the observer's causal information search. They found that an observer's causal search was more likely to occur in the presence of unexpected

events than when observed behavior corresponded to the observer's initial expectations. Both studies provided some support for the proposal that individuals will engage in a greater information search when presented with information that is discrepant with prior expectations.

Though Wong and Weiner (1981) examined the effects of discrepant information on self-expectancies, and Pyszczynski and Greenberg (1981) determined the effects of discrepant information upon prior expectations for others, neither study attempted to determine the subject's initial causal attribution (i.e., before the introduction of discrepant information) or the subject's causal attribution after the introduction of discrepant information. In effect, the studies simply determined that the introduction of discrepant information resulted in an information search by the participants.

Feldman (1981) was explicit in suggesting that as long as a target person's behavior fit consistently with an assigned category, the observer should use an automatic processing mode. However, a controlled categorization process should be triggered when new information regarding the target actor reached some threshold of discrepancy (Feldman, 1981). Further, once instigated, the controlled categorization process is expected to continue until a successful resolution of the inconsistency occurs. In particular, the observer should engage in an extended information search for relevant categories or additional information about the actor to accommodate or assimilate the inconsistent information (Feldman, 1981). Research on the effects of stereotyping (Feldman, 1972; Feldman & Hilterman, 1975) support the point that unexpected behaviors may elicit the controlled categorization process (Feldman, 1981); however, a

review of the literature was unable to identify research related to the effects of discrepant information on the categorization process and performance appraisal.

The model described by Feldman (1981) indicated the dynamic nature of the categorization process. Individuals are viewed as operating normally under the automatic processing mode. When necessary, however, they should shift to the controlled processing mode for information seeking and recategorization (Feldman, 1981). After the search for information and recategorization process is completed, the individual is expected to resume automatic processing (Feldman, 1981).

#### Research Propositions

It was attempted in the present research to systematically examine some aspects of the model of information processing proposed by Feldman (1981). Specifically, the dynamic nature of the categorization process was investigated by following an observer's causal attribution for an actor's performance over several time periods. It was expected that the categorization (i.e., person impression) of the actor would conform with changes in the participants' causal attributions for the actor. That is, if the observer's attribution for the actor's performance changed dramatically over time, the observer should express different impressions, reflecting an attempt to recategorize the actor. An attempt was also made to examine the threshold amount of discrepant information necessary to elicit controlled information processing.

The objectives for this research were to investigate: (1) whether an observer used causal attributions about a target actor as a source of information to categorize the actor, (2) if sufficient discrepant information about the actor would elicit a controlled information search to explain the actor's performance, and (3) would whether changes in an observer's causal attribution for a target actor's performance over time be accompanied by changes in the observer's categorization of the actor. Specific research propositions are stated below.

### Hypotheses

1. A specific initial causal attribution (e.g., internal or external) for an actor's performance should result in a particular initial categorization of the actor as reflected in measures of the person impression (i.e., the initial categorization of the actor should vary as a function of initial attribution).
2. Multiple instances of information inconsistent with expected performance should elicit a controlled search for additional information to explain the discrepancy.
3. Observers who engaged in a controlled search for additional information to explain the unexpected performance of a target actor should revise their initial causal attribution and person impression for the target actor in order to incorporate the additional information.

4. Recategorization (i.e., changes in person impression) of the actor should accompany changes in the observer's attribution for the target actor.

The following chapter (i.e., Chapter III) presents the particular aspects of the method of investigation. An explanation of the operational hypotheses derived from the above propositions is also presented.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

#### Participants

The participants in the study were graduate students at the University of Tennessee. All participants were required to have at least one quarter's teaching experience. The rationale for requiring teaching experience was that the experimental manipulation required the participants to evaluate a target actor's performance on a series of exams within a classroom scenario. The participants were provided with an information packet containing the experimental scenario with a description of the performance of the target actor and two other comparison others on a series of exams. Using graduate students with teaching experience was expected to increase the likelihood that the participants would be familiar with the experimental scenario.

Information packets were distributed to 180 students. One hundred and thirty were returned, for a response rate of 72%. Of the 130 students who returned questionnaires, 10 were eliminated because of missing data or failure to follow instructions. Elimination of faulty data resulted in a final sample of 120 respondents.



### General Procedure

Green and Mitchell (1979) stated that the more the cause of a target actor's performance is seen to be stable, the more that future performance is expected to be consistent with past performance. They further proposed that an observer would develop causal attributions to explain the actor's performance using internal attributions to explain consistent performance and external attributions to account for inconsistent performance. Green and Mitchell also proposed that discrepant performance information for an actor would lead to greater uncertainty for an observer regarding the inferred attribution. Furthermore, an increase in uncertainty for an observer is likely to result in an increase in the observer's information search to explain the actor's discrepant performance.

Feldman (1981) proposed a model of information processing in which observers assign an actor to a category and then use the category prototype as the basis for recalling information about the actor. Feldman (1981) also proposed that when an observer is presented with discrepant information about a particular actor, the observer would be more likely to engage in a search for additional information to explain the actor's performance.

It was expected that the participants in the present study would form causal attributions to account for the target actor's performance in response to a specific configuration of information cues. An attempt was also made to establish a participant's person impression for an target actor, presumably based on the participant's categorization of the actor. In addition, the study introduced a discrepant performance information

condition. Over time the target actor's performance changed from an initial performance level to a different performance level. It was expected that the introduction of discrepant performance information would increase the uncertainty of the participant's attribution for the actor's performance and lead to a search for additional information to account for the change in the actor's performance.

Participants in the study received an information packet containing a cover letter describing the experimental scenario, task information, and the response questionnaire. The information packet is presented in Appendix A. Portions of the questionnaire were designed to measure the participant's evaluation of the target actor's performance, the participant's person impression of the actor, causal attributions for the target actor's performance, and desire for additional information. An attempt was made throughout the study, whenever feasible, to incorporate scales previously used in research to measure the major variables.

### Experimental Design and Procedure

Figure III-1 illustrates the experimental design. The design consisted of three time periods, two levels of induced initial attribution cues, two levels of initial performance cues, and two levels of discrepant information. The factors of time, initial attribution cues, and initial performance cues were fully crossed in the experimental design. The discrepant information factor was present only in the third time period where it was fully crossed with initial attribution and initial

performance. The participants were randomly assigned to the experimental conditions.

| Performance cues | Attribution cues |                |                |                | Discrepant Information |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|
| High             | Internal         | $\bar{X} = 95$ | $\bar{X} = 90$ | $\bar{x} = 95$ | Single                 |
|                  |                  |                |                | $\bar{x} = 50$ | Multiple               |
|                  | External         | $\bar{X} = 95$ | $\bar{X} = 90$ | $\bar{x} = 95$ | Single                 |
|                  |                  |                |                | $\bar{x} = 50$ | Multiple               |
| Low              | Internal         | $\bar{X} = 50$ | $\bar{X} = 55$ | $\bar{x} = 50$ | Single                 |
|                  |                  |                |                | $\bar{x} = 95$ | Multiple               |
|                  | External         | $\bar{X} = 50$ | $\bar{X} = 55$ | $\bar{x} = 50$ | Single                 |
|                  |                  |                |                | $\bar{x} = 95$ | Multiple               |
|                  |                  | Time 1         | Time 2         | Time 3         |                        |

Figure III-1. Figurative representation of the experimental design with the average performance of the target actor within quarters.

Each participant was presented with an information packet consisting of performance data for three unidentified students covering three academic quarters in two courses, an evaluation questionnaire, a performance record sheet, and evaluation answer forms for each quarter. The experimental scenario asked the participants to provide an evaluation for one of the three students, in one of the two courses, at the end of each quarter. The course content was not identified for either course. The participants were informed only that the two courses represented different subject matter. The data were presented to the participants as the students' scores on five exams for each course during the quarter. The participants did not receive any additional information about the

students beyond their exam scores. In addition, the participants did not receive any information regarding the criteria for success on the exams.

The participants were required to record the exam scores for each student and course during a quarter on a separate sheet (i.e., the Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet). Once the participants had recorded the scores for each student for a specific quarter, the participants were asked to complete the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire for a specific student. The participants were asked to evaluate a specific student's performance in one of the two courses for the previous quarter. The student to be evaluated by the participant was not identified until the participant had completed recording all the students' exam scores in both courses for a quarter. However, the same student was evaluated for all three quarters.

The participants required approximately 45 minutes to complete the entire exercise. The information packet was distributed to the graduate teaching assistants with the request to return the completed questionnaires within two weeks. Participants who did not return the completed questionnaires within two weeks were contacted by telephone. The information packets were distributed over a two year period. The participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that confidentiality would be maintained.

The questionnaire was designed to assess the participants' evaluation of the target actor, including the evaluation of performance and the participants' person impression for the target actor, causal attributions for the actor's performance, and desire for additional information about the target actor. One performance evaluation item was

designed to measure the participants' appraisal of the target actor's actual performance. The person impression section asked the participants to imagine the target actor and then describe the actor by rating several paired adjectives in a semantic differential format. The causal attribution items were designed to assess the participants' perceived causes for the performance of the target actor. The desire for additional information measures consisted of a measure of the participants' confidence of their appraisal, a request for additional information item, and the type of information that might be required to explain the target actor's performance.

As shown in Figure III-1, the information presented to the participants consisted of initial performance cues, initial attribution cues, and discrepant information cues. The initial performance cues were the five test scores for each of the unidentified students in both courses during the first quarter. The performance cues were manipulated such that the target actor's performance was either lower than the other two students (i.e., initial low performance condition) or higher than the other two students (i.e., initial high performance condition).

Kelley (1973) suggested that observers rely on consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus information in forming causal attributions for an actor's performance. The observer uses information concerning the extent to which the actor has behaved in a particular fashion under other situations or at other times (i.e., consistency information). An observer tries to determine if the performance occurred on a specific task and not on other tasks (i.e., is the performance *distinctive* to a specific task).

Finally, an observer estimates the extent to which other actors also perform in the same fashion (i.e., consensus information).

Weiner et al. (1972) proposed that observers utilize four main elements for explaining performance. The four causal elements of ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck are seen as representing the two dimensions of locus of control and stability. The locus of control dimension represents the source of an actor's performance. Is the cause of the actor's performance internal to the actor or external to the actor? Ability and effort are considered to be internal causes for an actor's performance. Task difficulty and luck are considered to be external causes for an actor's performance. The stability dimension represents how stable a cause is for an actor's performance. Ability and task difficulty are considered stable causes for an actor's performance while effort and luck are considered unstable causes. Green and Mitchell (1979) indicated that ability is generally inferred from consistency of performance on a specific task and from generality of performance (i.e., low distinctiveness). Similarly, consensus information is used to infer task difficulty as a causal explanation. A third dimension assessed in this study was the attribution of responsibility. The attribution of responsibility reflects the degree to which an observer believes that a target actor is directly responsible for the outcome of the actor's performance.

The performance cues (i.e., test scores) were presented to the participants in the form of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus performance information (i.e., attributional information cues). The participants received performance cues for the target actor and two other

students at three different time periods. Figure III-2 illustrates one form of the performance cues for the target actor and the two other students for the three academic quarters.

At Time 1, the initial performance cues for the target actor were presented as being highly consistent (i.e., the actor performed the same way on all five exams within a course during the quarter). In some cases, the cues were also structured as highly distinctive cues (i.e., the actor's level of performance differed between the two courses during the quarter), and in others as low distinctive cues (i.e., the actor's level of performance was the same in each of the two courses during the quarter). Similarly, in some cases the cues were structured as high consensus cues (i.e., the actor's level of performance was similar to the performance of the other two students in both courses during the quarter), while in others as low consensus cues (i.e., the actor's level of performance was different from the performance of the other two students in the two courses during the quarter).

The manipulations of the configuration of the initial performance cues were designed to induce either an initial external attribution or an initial internal attribution in the participant to account for the student's performance. Under the initial external attribution condition, all three students consistently performed at the same level for one specific course (i.e., high consistency, high consensus, and high distinctiveness information). In the initial internal condition, the target actor consistently performed at a different level than the other two students for both courses (i.e., high consistency, low consensus, and low distinctiveness performance information).

# Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet (CPRS)

Recorded by: 430

Student Code #: ILM

|         | Fall      |           |           |           |           | Winter    |           |           |           |           | Spring    |           |           |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Trial # | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Task A  | <u>50</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>53</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>51</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>95</u> |
| Task B  | <u>50</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>53</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>51</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>48</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>51</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>48</u> |

Student Code #: BRT

|         | Fall      |           |           |           |           | Winter    |           |           |           |           | Spring    |           |           |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Trial # | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Task A  | <u>93</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>93</u> |
| Task B  | <u>94</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> |

Student Code #: JDS

|         | Fall      |           |           |           |           | Winter    |           |           |           |           | Spring    |           |           |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Trial # | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Task A  | <u>97</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>99</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> |
| Task B  | <u>97</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>99</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>96</u> |

Figure III-2. Example performance record sheet for a target actor. Student Code #: ILM represents the initial low performance condition under the initial internal attribution condition with multiple discrepant performance cues at Time 3.



Participants in the study also received discrepant performance information for the target actor at Time 2 and Time 3. The discrepant information cues consisted of a change in test performance for the target actor in only one of the two courses. At Time 2, the target actor's performance continued at the baseline established at Time 1 until the introduction of a single instance of discrepant performance information for target actor's last exam score. At Time 3, the target actor's performance either returned to the initial baseline established at Time 1 or continued at the level established by the single instance of discrepant performance introduced at Time 2.

Thus, the discrepant performance information conditions consisted of either a single instance of discrepant information introduced at Time 2 where the student's performance changed relative to the baseline established during Time 1 (e.g., a student who normally exhibited low performance would perform high for a single instance), or multiple instances of discrepant information continued throughout Time 3 (e.g., an initially low performing student would exhibit high performance cues for the entire third quarter). That is, all participants received the single instance of discrepant performance information during the second quarter. That is, the last exam score (out of five) for the quarter was the reverse of the baseline performance level established during the first quarter (i.e., participants receiving the initial high performance cues throughout Time 1 received a single low performance cue for the last exam during Time 2 and participants receiving the initial low performance cues throughout Time 1 received a single high performance cue for the last exam during Time 2). During the third quarter, however, half of the

participants continued receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information, while the other half received performance information similar to the initial baseline performance. Thus, during the third quarter, half of the participants receiving the initial high performance cues under each of the initial attribution conditions received low performance cues and half of the participants under each of the initial attribution conditions who had received the initial low performance cues received high performance cues.

Feldman (1981) suggested that the introduction of discrepant information for an actor should elicit a search for additional information by an observer to explain the change in the actor's performance. Wong and Weiner (1981) have also empirically shown that when observers are presented with discrepant information they will engage in a search for additional information to explain the discrepant information. However, neither Feldman nor Wong and Weiner identified the threshold amount of discrepant information necessary to elicit a controlled search for information.

Green and Mitchell (1979) in summarizing research by Kun and Weiner (1973) pointed out that "multiple sufficient" schema may be used to explain common events. For example, success at an easy task (i.e., an external attribution) could also be caused by ability or effort (i.e., an internal attribution); similarly, failure at a difficult task could also be caused by lack of ability or lack of effort. For these specific examples, an external attribution would be expected for the actor's performance because the task difficulty level is known while the actor's level of ability and level of effort is unknown. However, "multiple

necessary" schema indicate that a number of causes are believed necessary to produce an effect. For example, success at a difficult task would require effort and ability, while failure on an easy task may be perceived as caused by a lack of both effort and ability. Therefore, under these conditions, an observer would be expected to make an internal attribution for an actor's performance.

The current study provided the participants with an initial pattern of informational cues (i.e., consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus) that were designed to elicit a specific causal attribution at Time 1. The pattern of informational cues at Time 1 designed to elicit an initial *external* attribution presented either an actor's failure on a difficult task or an actor's success on an easy task. The configuration of informational cues designed to elicit an *internal* attribution presented an actor that succeeded on a difficult task or an actor that failed on an easy task. It was expected that the participants would use their attributions as a source of information to assign the actor to a cognitive category. Thus, different causal attributions (i.e., internal or external) inferred by the participants were expected to elicit different cognitive classifications of the target actor.

The pattern of informational cues changed from Time 1 to Time 3 for participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance condition. Specifically, the actor's performance in the initial low performance condition increased and the actor's performance in the initial high performance condition decreased (i.e., a change in the consistency cue from Time 1 to Time 3). The causal attribution principle of covariation suggests that the perceived cause of an event is found among

the conditions varying with the occurrence of the event rather than among those conditions that remain the same (Ilgen & Feldman, 1983). Since the level of task difficulty should appear to remain the same from Time 1 to Time 3 (i.e., as inferred from the consensus cue), the change in the actor's performance was expected to be attributed to internal causes (i.e., the actor) rather than external causes. Therefore, participants in the initial external attribution condition were expected to report that the cause of the actor's performance was more a function of internal causes at Time 3 than at Time 1. In contrast, participants in the initial internal attribution condition were expected to remain relatively constant in their report of an internal causal attribution for the actor's performance from Time 1 to Time 3.

The current study provided two levels of discrepant performance information (i.e., a single instance or multiple instances of discrepant information). The points noted above suggest that levels of discrepant information should have a greater effect on participants under the initial external attribution condition than on participants under the initial internal attribution condition. It was expected that a single instance of discrepant performance would elicit a temporary controlled search for information by participants under the initial external attribution condition but would not elicit a search for information by participants under the initial internal attribution condition. Similarly, it was expected that multiple instances of discrepant performance information would elicit a controlled search for additional information for participants under the initial external attribution condition, but would

not be sufficient to elicit a search for additional information under the initial internal attribution condition.

### Measures

#### Evaluation

The evaluation measures consisted of a performance appraisal item and a person impression measure. The performance appraisal item required the participants to evaluate the target actor's performance for a specific course during the quarter. That is, the participant was asked to assess the student's performance based on the exam information that the participant had recorded for the quarter using the item, "How would you describe the individual's level of performance for the most recent period?" Responses were made on a "very poor" to "very good" five point scale.

The person impression measure asked the participants to imagine the person that they were evaluating and then describe that person by rating several adjective pairs (i.e., 40 item pairs) in a semantic differential format. Participants were asked to rate the target actor on a seven point scale for each adjective pair. The adjective pairs were selected to be roughly consistent with the evaluative, potency, and activity dimensions identified by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1967); e.g., "good - bad", "strong - weak", and "active - passive".

### Attributions

The participants were also asked to respond to a series of items designed to measure the perceived causes for the target actor's performance. One item required the participants to rate the contribution to the target actor's performance of some personal quality of the actor (e.g., "The individual's performance is most probably due to some personal quality or characteristic"). A second item required the participants to rate the contribution of the situation to the actor's performance (e.g., "The individual's performance is most probably due to some situational factor"). The person and situation items were rated on a five point "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" scale.

Three other items assessed the participants' attribution of responsibility for the actor's performance (e.g., "the individual is clearly responsible for his/her performance"). The participants responded to these questions on a five point "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" scale.

Four additional items assessed the participants' specific attributions for the student's performance. The participants were asked "To what extent is each of the following factors likely to account for the individual's most recent level of performance". The factors were effort, ability, nature of the task, and luck. The participants rated each item on a five point "very likely" to "very unlikely" scale.

### Information Search

The information search measures included an item assessing the participants' level of certainty regarding the performance appraisal. The measures also included a request for additional information, types of additional information requested, and perceived usefulness of the additional information types. The certainty item was, "How confident are you in your appraisal and in your accounting of this individual's performance?" The responses were on a five point "highly confident" to "not confident" scale.

The participants were given the opportunity at the end of each time period to request additional types of information that might be used to explain the target actor's performance. The participants' search for information was assessed by three types of measures: (1) the participants' request for additional information, (2) the type of information requested, and (3) the perceived usefulness of the requested information. The participants were required to indicate on the request for additional information item whether they would like additional information about the target actor or not (i.e., yes or no). If the participants indicated that they would like additional information about the target actor, they were asked to rate twenty types of information items that might be useful (e.g., information about the target actor's past performance on this task; other actors performance on the same task). The questionnaire was logically constructed to reflect the information domains of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus (Kelley, 1973). The consistency items were concerned with the target actor's performance across time (e.g., "I would like to know more about the individual's past

performance on this task"). The distinctiveness items referred to the target actor's performance across tasks (e.g., "How does the individual perform on other, similar tasks?"). The consensus items referred to the actor's performance relative to other individuals (e.g., "How did other people perform on this task?"). The participants rated each item on a five point scale ranging from "not useful" to "highly useful".

### Data Analysis

Within-time period Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) were performed for the dependent measures. In addition, Repeated Measures Analyses of Variance (RMANOVA) were conducted for all conditions to assess any changes in the participants response across TIME periods.

### Power Analysis

A power analysis was conducted to assess the study's statistical power for the within-time Analysis of Variance and Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance. A small to medium effect size (i.e.,  $es = .20$ ) was estimated for the investigation (Cohen, 1979). The result of the power analysis indicated that for an alpha level of .05 and sample size of 120, the power was at least .80 for all the statistical analyses.



### Operational Hypotheses

The present study was concerned with the effect of discrepant information on evaluations (i.e., performance appraisal and person impression), attributions (i.e., locus of causality, stability, and responsibility), and information search (i.e., uncertainty, request for additional information, type of additional information, and perceived usefulness of additional information). The following section outlines the general expectations for each of the research areas of interest (i.e., the research propositions), followed by the operational hypotheses which propose the specific expectations. The operational hypotheses are stated as comparisons between time periods (i.e., Time 1 and Time 2, and Time 2 and Time 3) and include the effects expected from a Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMANOVA) for the area of interest.

#### Evaluation

The performance appraisal measure required the participant to evaluate the target actor's actual performance for a specific time period. In contrast, the person impression measure required the participant to provide a more subjective evaluation of the target actor. Generally, it was expected that high performers would receive better evaluations than low performers. In addition, it was expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would be more extreme in their responses for high and low levels of performance than would participants in the initial external attribution condition (Knowlton and Mitchell, 1980).

Performance Appraisal. In addition to the above expectations, it was expected that single instance of discrepant information would not elicit a change in the participants' performance appraisal of the target actor over time. However, it was expected that participants receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information would change their performance appraisal at Time 3 compared with their responses at Time 2 and compared with other participants at Time 3 that did not receive multiple instance of discrepant performance information.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. It was expected that there would be no change from Time 1 to Time 2 in the participant's reported performance appraisal of the target actor. Consequently, a Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMANOVA) should not reveal any effects for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison.

Expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. Participants at Time 3 under the initial low performance condition receiving multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., high) performance information were expected to report higher performance appraisal ratings compared with their responses at Time 2. Participants at Time 3 under the initial high performance condition receiving multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance information were expected to report lower performance appraisal ratings compared with their performance appraisal ratings at Time 2. In addition, participants at Time 3 under the initial low performance condition receiving multiple instances of discrepant (i.e.,

high) performance information should report higher performance appraisal ratings compared with participants at Time 3 under the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance information. Figure III-3 illustrates the expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. Consistent with this hypothesis, the results of a RMANOVA should reveal: (1) a significant effect for the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction; (2) a significant effect for the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction; and (3) as illustrated in Figure III-3, a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction.

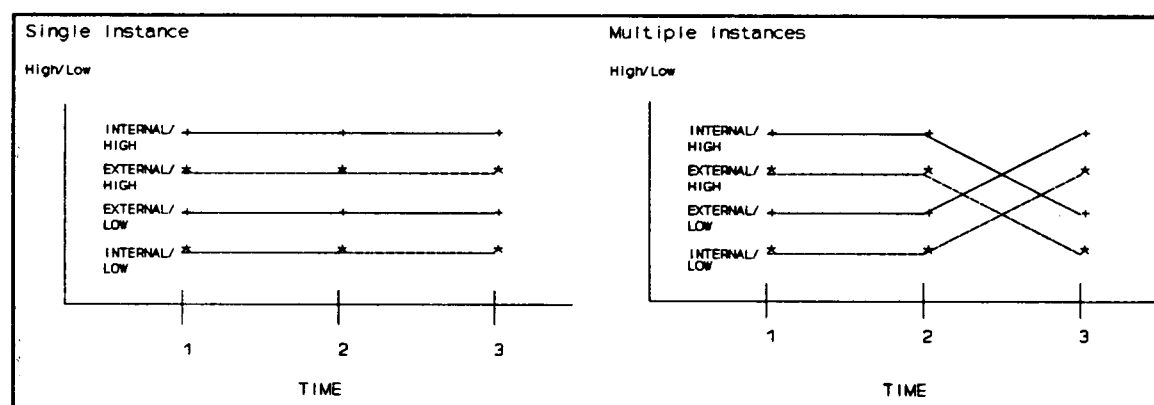


Figure III-3. Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the performance appraisal measure.

Person Impression. Feldman (1981) indicated that observers use causal attributions as a basis for categorization of the actor, and then use the category prototype to represent the actor and provide a simplified description of the actor. Ilgen and Feldman (1983) also suggested that

evaluative responses for an actor are thought to be based on evaluative impressions associated with an actor's specific category.

This study relied on a person impression measure to represent the participants' description of the target actor. It was expected that the participants would rely on their categorization of the target actor to complete the person impression measure. In addition, the participants were provided with different levels of performance for the target actor (i.e., high and low performance cues). Thus, participants that received high performance cues should evaluate the target actor higher than would participants that received low performance cues. In addition, it was expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would be more extreme in their evaluation for high and low levels of performance than would participants in the initial external attribution condition (Knowlton and Mitchell, 1980).

Feldman (1981) also suggested that observers would not alter their categorization of an actor unless presented with sufficient discrepant information (i.e., sufficient instances of discrepant information should elicit a recategorization process). During the recategorization process, the participants should alter their initial causal attributions which, according to Feldman, should result in a change in the participants' categorization of the actor, and therefore, a change in the person impression measure. A single instance of discrepant information was not expected to elicit a change in the participants' person impression of the target actor. However, it was expected that participants receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information for the target actor at Time 3 would change their person impression of the target actor

compared their reported person impression at Time 2 and compared with other participants at Time 3 that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant performance information.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. There should be no change from Time 1 to Time 2 in the participants' reported person impression of the target actor. Consequently, a RMANOVA should not reveal any effects for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison.

Expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. Multiple instances of discrepant performance should affect the participants' categorization of the target actor. Therefore, the participants' response on the person impression measure should change from Time 2 to Time 3 under the multiple instances of discrepant information. Specifically, it was expected that for participants in the initial external attribution condition, multiple instances of discrepant performance would elicit a change to an internal attribution to explain the participants performance (Green and Mitchell, 1979). For participants in the initial internal attribution condition, multiple instances of discrepant performance should not affect the participants' initial internal attribution to account for the participants performance. It was also expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would be more extreme in their evaluation of the target actor than would participants in the initial external attribution condition for high and low levels of performance (Knowlton and Mitchell, 1980).

Participants at Time 3 under the initial low performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., high) performance information were expected to report higher person impression ratings compared with their person impression ratings at Time 2. Participants at Time 3 under the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance information were expected to report lower person impression ratings compared with their responses at Time 2. In addition, participants at Time 3 under the initial low performance condition receiving multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., high) performance information should report higher person impression ratings compared with participants at Time 3 under the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance information. Figure III-4 illustrates the expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. The results of a RMANOVA should reveal: (1) a significant effect for the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction; (2) a significant effect for the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction; and (3) as illustrated in Figure III-4, a significant effect for the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction.

### Attributions

A single instance of discrepant performance was expected to elicit a causal attribution to explain that specific instance of discrepancy at Time 2 but should not effect a change in the participants' initial causal attribution at Time 3. Multiple instances of discrepant performance were expected to elicit a change in the participants' causal attribution at

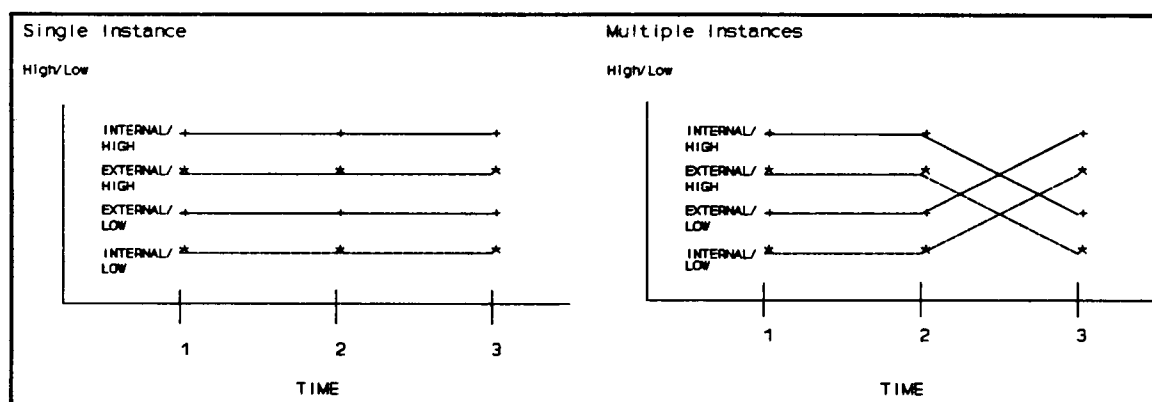


Figure III-4. Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the person impression measure.

Time 3 when compared with the participants' initial causal attribution. A single instance or multiple instances of discrepant performance should have a greater effect on participants in the initial external attribution condition than on participants in the initial internal attribution condition (Green and Mitchell, 1979).

Locus of Causality. The locus of causality dimension represented the source of an actor's performance. If the actor's performance was perceived by the participant as being due to some factor within the actor then the locus of causality was considered to be *internal* to the actor. If the actor's performance was perceived as being due to some situational factor then the locus of causality was said to be *external* to the actor.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. The participants in the initial external attribution condition were expected to report at Time 2 that the cause of the target actor's performance was more a function of internal causes than a function of external causes compared with their responses at Time 1. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition in contrast, were expected to continue to report the target actor's performance as more a function of internal causes than a function of external causes at Time 2. Figure III-5 illustrates the operational hypotheses. A RMANOVA should reveal: (1) a main effect for TIME to verify that an overall change had occurred between Time 1 and Time 2 and (2) a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction suggesting that the change across time was stronger in the initial external attribution condition than in the initial internal attribution condition.

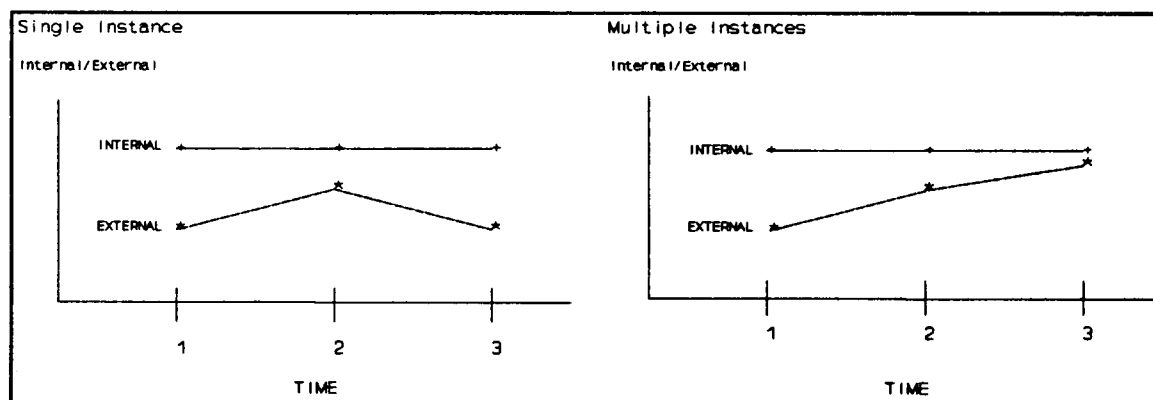


Figure III-5. An illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the locus of causality measures.



Expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. Figure III-5 illustrates that the participants in the initial external attribution condition that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant performance information at Time 3 were expected to continue to report the target actor's performance as more a function of external causes than internal causes compared with their responses at Time 2. Similarly, the participants in the initial internal attribution condition who did not receive multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3 were expected to continue from Time 2 to report the actor's performance as more a function of internal causes than external causes.

In contrast, participants in the initial external attribution condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3 should ascribe the target actor's performance as more a function of internal causes than a function of external causes compared with their responses at Time 2. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3 however, should continue to ascribe the actor's performance as more a function of internal causes than external causes. The hypotheses suggest that a RMANOVA should reveal a significant effect for the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction suggesting that multiple instances of discrepant performance information had a stronger effect across time for participants in the initial external attribution condition than multiple instances of discrepant information had for participants in the initial internal attribution condition.

Stability. The stability dimension represents how stable an attributed cause is for an actor's performance. A stable causal attribution can be internal to the actor (e.g., ability) or external to the actor (e.g., task difficulty). It was expected that instances of discrepant information (either single or multiple) would affect the stability of the participants' causal attribution for the target actor's performance corresponding to an increase in the uncertainty of the attribution.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. Participants at Time 2 should report the cause of the target actor's performance as being less stable after receiving a single instance of discrepant information compared with their response at Time 1. Consistent with this hypothesis, a RMANOVA should reveal a main effect for TIME suggesting that the cause of the target actor's performance was more stable at Time 1 compared with Time 2.

Expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. As illustrated in Figure III-6, participants that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant performance information at Time 3 should report the cause of the target actor's performance as being more stable at Time 3 compared with their response at Time 2. However, participants who received multiple instances of discrepant performance at Time 3 should report the cause of the actor's performance as being less stable at Time 3 compared with their response at Time 2. The hypotheses suggest that a RMANOVA would reveal a significant TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction

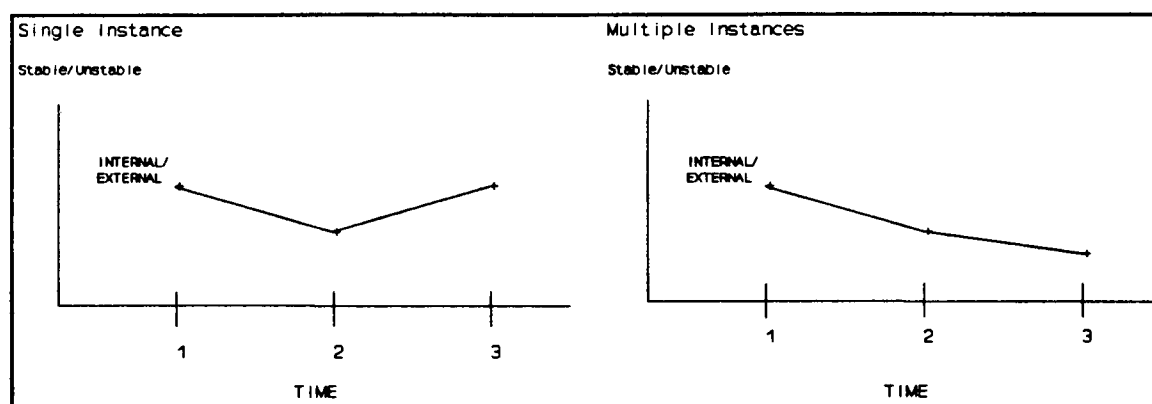


Figure III-6. Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the attribution of stability measure.

implying that multiple instances of discrepant performance information had a stronger effect at Time 3 compared with Time 2.

Responsibility. The attribution of responsibility reflects the degree to which an observer believes that a target actor was directly responsible for their performance (Green and Mitchell, 1979). It was expected that participants in the internal attribution condition would report a higher attribution of responsibility for the target actor than would participants in the external attribution condition. In addition, it was expected that instances of discrepant performance information would effect participants in the internal attribution condition differently than participants in the external attribution condition.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. Participants in the initial external attribution condition that received a single instance of

discrepant information at Time 2 should rate the target actor as being more responsible for the performance at Time 2 compared to Time 1. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition that received a single instance of discrepant performance information, in contrast, should rate the target actor as being less responsible for the performance at Time 2 compared to Time 1. Consequently, a RMANOVA should reveal a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction suggesting that initial attribution cues had a stronger effect on the participants' attribution of responsibility at Time 1 compared to Time 2.

Expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. As illustrated in Figure III-7, participants in the initial external attribution condition who did not receive multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3 should rate the target actor as being less responsible for the performance at Time 3 compared to Time 2. In contrast, the participants in the initial internal attribution condition who did not receive multiple instances of discrepant performance information should rate the target actor as being more responsible for the performance at Time 3 compared to Time 2.

Participants in the initial external attribution condition that received multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3, however, should rate the target actor as being more responsible for the performance at Time 3 compared to Time 2. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition that received multiple instances of discrepant performance at Time 3 should also rate the target actor as being more responsible for the performance at Time 3 compared to Time 2. The

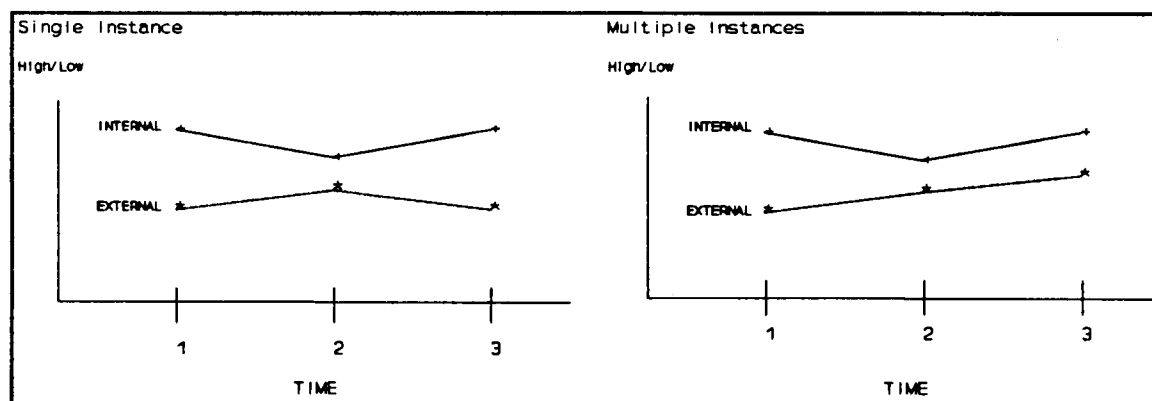


Figure III-7. Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the attribution of responsibility measure.

hypotheses suggest that a RMANOVA would reveal a TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the responsibility measure demonstrating that the discrepant information condition had a stronger effect at Time 3 compared to Time 2. In addition, the RMANOVA should reveal an effect for the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction suggesting that the initial attribution condition had a stronger effect at Time 3 for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition compared with participants in the multiple instance of discrepant information condition.

### Information Search

The information search measures included the participants' level of confidence in their performance appraisal, a request for additional information, types of additional information requested, and the perceived usefulness of additional information types. Discrepant information was

expected to reduce the participants' confidence of their appraisal, and hence, increase their information search. A single instance of discrepant information at Time 2 was expected to elicit an increase in the participants search for additional information to explain the target actor's performance from Time 1 to Time 2. Multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3 were also expected to elicit an increase in the participants search for additional information from Time 2 to Time 3.

Confidence of Appraisal. Consistent with Green and Mitchell (1979), it was expected that the presence of discrepant information would increase the participants' uncertainty of attribution. It was also expected that discrepant information should have a stronger effect for participants in the external attribution condition compared with participants in the internal attribution condition.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. Participants in the internal attribution condition should be more confident of their appraisal than participants in the external attribution condition at Time 1 and Time 2. Participants in the external attribution condition should also be less confident of their appraisal at Time 2 compared to Time 1. Participants in the internal attribution condition should maintain the same level of confidence for their appraisal from Time 1 to Time 2. A RMANOVA should reveal a main effect for TIME as well as a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction suggesting that the change across time was

stronger in the initial external attribution condition than in the initial internal attribution condition.

Expectation for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. Participants in the external attribution condition that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant performance information should report being more confident of their appraisal at Time 3 than at Time 2. Participants in the internal attribution condition that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant performance information should not change their confidence of appraisal from Time 2 to Time 3. However, as illustrated in Figure III-8, participants that received multiple instances of discrepant performance information should report being more confident of their appraisal at Time 2 than at Time 3. A RMANOVA should reveal a main effect for TIME to verify that an overall change had occurred between Time 2 and Time 3. A RMANOVA should also reveal a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction suggesting that multiple instances of discrepant information had a stronger effect for participants in the initial attribution conditions at Time 3 compared to Time 2 or for participants who received a single instance of discrepant performance information at Time 3.

Request for Additional Information. The request for additional information item examined whether the participants would like to have more information about the target actor. It was expected that discrepant information would increase the participant's uncertainty about the target actor's performance, and that as the participant's uncertainty increased,

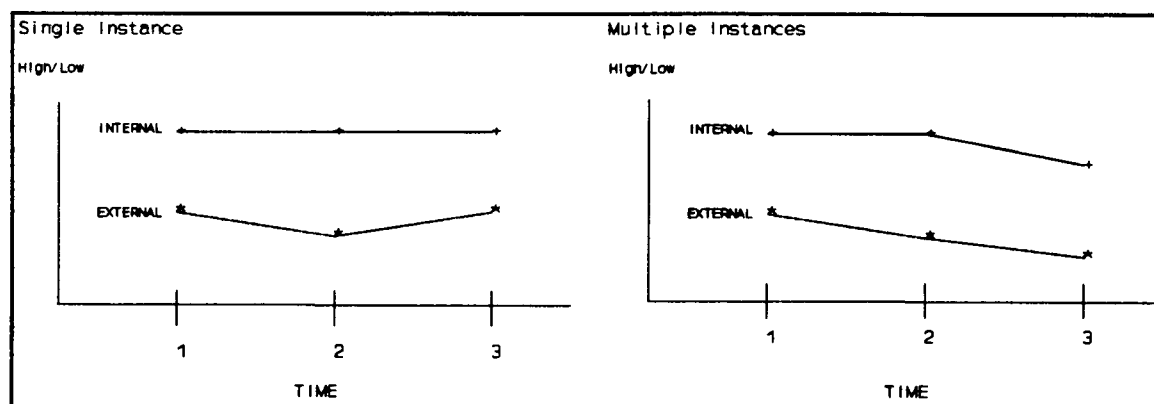


Figure III-8. Illustration of the expected hypothesized effects for the confidence of appraisal measure.

they would request more additional information to help explain the change in the target actor's performance.

Expectations for the Time 1 and Time 2 comparison. The participants should request more additional information to explain the target actor's performance at Time 2 compared to Time 1. A RMANOVA should reveal a main effect for TIME to verify that participants requested more additional information at Time 2 compared to Time 1.

Expectations for the Time 2 and Time 3 comparison. Figure III-9 illustrates that participants that received multiple instances of discrepant information should request more additional information to explain the target actor's performance than participants that received a single instance of discrepant performance information. A RMANOVA should reveal a significant effect for a TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION



interaction implying that multiple instances of discrepant information had a stronger effect on the change from Time 2 to Time 3 than a single instance of discrepant performance information.

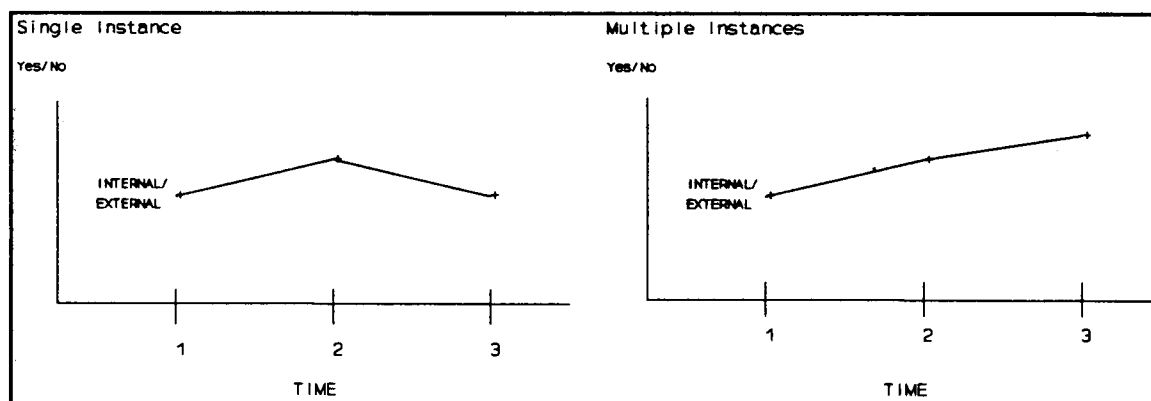


Figure III-9. Illustration of the proposed hypotheses for the request for additional information measure.

Additional Research Issues. The participants were provided with the opportunity to rate the usefulness of twenty types of information. The information types were constructed to represent the information domains of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus information (Kelley, 1973). Although there were no specific operational hypotheses associated with the types of information and their perceived usefulness it was hoped that this study would provide some insight into the types of information that an observer would search in order to explain an actor's discrepant performance.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

In this chapter, the results of the analysis for the experimental hypotheses are reported. The chapter focuses on the development of the operational measures and the presentation of data relevant to the hypothesized relationships. Data relevant to the hypothesized relationships include the descriptive data (e.g., means and standard deviations), the results of the within-time period Analyses of Variance, and the results of the between-time periods Repeated Measures Analyses of Variance.

#### Development of Operational Measures

This section focuses on the development of the operational measures for the study. The operational measures assessed the participants' responses in the areas of: evaluation (i.e., performance appraisal and person impression); attribution dimensions (i.e., locus of causality, stability, and responsibility); and information search (i.e., uncertainty, request for additional information, type of additional information, and perceived usefulness of additional information).

### Evaluation Measures

The evaluation measures addressed two specific areas of interest: performance appraisal and person impression. The performance appraisal measure required the participants to evaluate the target actor's actual performance for a specific time period. The person impression measure required the participants to provide a more subjective evaluation of the target actor.

Performance Appraisal. The performance appraisal measure consisted of a single item which asked the participants to describe the target actor's level of performance for the most recent period on a scale from "very poor" to "very good". The reliability estimate for the performance appraisal item was  $r_{xx} = .89$ . Test - retest reliability coefficients using data from Time 1 and Time 2 were used to estimate the reliability of the performance appraisal item. Time 1 and Time 2 were selected for the test - retest reliability calculations because the experimental conditions between Time 1 and Time 2 differed only with respect to the inclusion of a single instance of discrepant performance introduced in Time 2. Test - retest reliability calculations were not estimated using Time 3 data since half of the participants received multiple instances of discrepant performance information, while the remaining half received the original baseline information.

Person Impression. The person impression measure originally consisted of a questionnaire containing 40 item pairs in a semantic differential format representing the evaluative, potency, and activity dimensions identified

by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957). The results of a preliminary principal components factor analysis identified nine factors with the first factor accounting for more than 60% of the total variance among the adjective pairs. From the factor analysis, ten items were identified as being factorially simple and loading on the major factor. However, an inspection of the items that loaded on the major factor revealed that they included items corresponding to the evaluative, potency, and activity dimensions identified by Osgood et al. (i.e., "good - bad", "strong - weak", and "active - passive").

In a further attempt to establish the three dimensions identified by Osgood et al., subscales were constructed logically using the guidelines established by Osgood et al., for the development of semantic differential scales. Nine adjective pairs were selected from the semantic differential scale to correspond to the dimensions of evaluative, potency, and activity (e.g., evaluative: "good - bad", "successful - unsuccessful", and "optimistic - pessimistic"; potency: "strong - weak", "dominant - submissive", and "constrained - unconstrained"; and activity: "active - passive", "intentional - unintentional", and "excitable - calm"). The coefficient alphas calculated for the subscales at Time 1 were: evaluative,  $\alpha = 0.82$ ; activity,  $\alpha = 0.44$ ; and potency,  $\alpha = 0.52$ . However, the subscales were considered to be highly intercorrelated (i.e.,  $r^2_{xy} = 0.70$ ) and did not represent independent dimensions.

Contrary to previous research (Osgood et al., 1957), the results of the factor analysis and the development of logical scales indicated that the items were highly related. Therefore, the decision was made to construct a single evaluative subscale consisting of the item pairs;

"good - bad", "successful - unsuccessful", and "optimistic - pessimistic". These item pairs were selected from the ten items that loaded on the first major factor and were considered being factorially simple. In addition, these three items had previously been identified by Osgood et al., as corresponding to the evaluative dimension. The coefficient alpha for the evaluative subscale at Time 1 was  $\alpha = .82$ .

### Attribution Measures

The attribution dimensions included: locus of causality, stability, and responsibility. The locus of causality dimension represented the source of an actor's performance and was either internal to the actor or an aspect of the situation (i.e., external to the actor). The stability dimension represented how stable a cause was for an actor's performance. The responsibility dimension was concerned with the degree to which an actor was perceived as being responsible for the actor's performance.

Locus of Causality Dimension. Two measures were constructed to represent the locus of causality dimension: person/situation and internal/external. Two items, person (e.g., "the individual's performance is most probably due to some personal quality or characteristic") and situation (e.g., "the individual's performance is most probably due to some situational factor"), were logically combined to form a composite person/situation measure. Examination of the correlations between the person item and the situation item revealed a low intercorrelation between the two items ( $r^2_{xy} = .03$ ). The participants' response for the situation item was subtracted from the participants' response for the person item to form the

composite person/situation measure. Weiner et al. (1972) proposed that effort and ability represent an internal attribution while task and luck represent an external attribution. The internal/external measure was constructed by summing the internal items (i.e., effort and ability) and subtracting the external items (i.e., task and luck).

Stability Dimension. Weiner et al. (1972) also proposed that ability and task are considered to be stable while effort and luck are considered to be unstable. The stability measure was constructed by summing the stable factors of ability and task and subtracting the unstable factors of effort and luck.

Inspection of the correlations between the four factors showed significant correlations between effort and ability ( $r^2_{xy} = .58$ ,  $p = .0001$ ), ability and task ( $r^2_{xy} = .40$ ,  $p = .0001$ ), and task and luck ( $r^2_{xy} = .29$ ,  $p = .001$ ) but nonsignificant correlations between effort and task, effort and luck, and ability and luck. The reliability estimates of the composite measures of person/situation, internal/external, and stability were calculated using the method of linear combinations identified by Nunnally (1978). This method is considered appropriate when computing the reliability of a composite measure containing items with high and low intercorrelations such as the intercorrelations between person and situation or effort and task (Nunnally, 1978). The reliability estimates for the attribution measures at Time 1 were person/situation ( $r_x = .77$ ), internal/external ( $r_x = .80$ ), and stability ( $r_x = .70$ ).

Responsibility Dimension. The three items designed to measure the participants' assessment of the target actor's responsibility for performance (e.g., "The individual is clearly responsible for his/her performance") were summed to form a responsibility composite measure. Internal consistency estimates of reliability in the form of coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951) were computed for the responsibility measure. As noted by Cronbach (1970) and Lord and Novick (1968), alpha represents a lower bound estimate of reliability, especially when there are few items in the scale. The coefficient alpha estimates of reliability for the responsibility composite measure at Time 1 was  $\alpha = .80$ .

#### Information Search

The information search area of interest contained measures for: the participants' certainty of performance appraisal; request for additional information; types of additional information; and perceived usefulness of additional information types.

Confidence of Appraisal. The confidence of appraisal item asked the participants how confident they were in their appraisal and in their accounting of the target actor's performance. The participants were asked to respond on a five point scale from "highly confident" to "not confident". Test - retest reliability coefficients using data from Time 1 and Time 2 were used to estimate the reliability of the confidence of appraisal item. The reliability estimate for the confidence of appraisal item was  $r_{xx} = .89$ .

Request for Additional Information. The request for additional information measure consisted of a single item indicating the participant's desire for additional information (e.g., scored yes = 1 and no = 0). The participants were asked if they desired further information about the target actor. The test-retest reliability estimate for the request for additional information item was  $r_{xx} = .57$ .

Types of additional information. The additional information consisted of twenty types of information items that might be useful to help the participants account for the target actor's performance. The information items were rated on a five point "highly useful" to "not useful" scale. A preliminary principal components factor analysis identified three factors corresponding to the information domains of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus. A subset of the twenty information type items were grouped into the three subscales based on the factor analysis results. The consistency subscale was constructed by summing items reflecting the target actor's performance across time (e.g., "I would like to know more about the individual's past performance on this task). The distinctiveness subscale was constructed by summing items pertaining to the target actor's performance across tasks (e.g., "How does the individual perform on other, similar tasks?"). The consensus items was constructed by summing items that referred to the actor's performance relative to other actors (e.g., "How did other people perform on this task?"). The coefficient alpha for each subscale at Time 1 for consistency was  $\alpha = .88$ ; for distinctiveness,  $\alpha = .95$ ; and for consensus,  $\alpha = .90$ .



### Hypotheses Testing

The present section reports data relevant to the testing of the hypotheses. The operational hypotheses were formulated to represent changes over time in the participants' evaluation of the target actor, including the appraisal of the target actor's performance and the participants' person impression of the actor, the participants' causal attributions for the actor's performance, and the participants' information search when the participants were presented with discrepant performance information. The results of the within-time period Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMANOVA) between-time periods are presented in this section.

Implicit in the experimental design was the concept that within each time period certain events were expected to occur. These events were not expressed as part of the operational hypotheses but are implicit within the hypotheses. This section presents the expectations implicit within the operational hypotheses for each time period. Following the statement of the implicit expectations are the results of the within-time period ANOVA for the measures.

The results of the between-time period analyses follows the presentation of the results of the within-time period analyses. The operational hypotheses are summarized and then the results of the RMANOVAs are presented.

### Time 1

The participants were randomly assigned to one of four initial conditions at Time 1 as illustrated by Figure III-1 (page 20). Each participant at Time 1 received a pattern of informational cues (i.e., consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus) designed to produce either an internal attribution or an external attribution to explain the performance of the target actor. In addition, the performance cues were structured such that the participants received either high or low performance cues for the target actor relative to the other actors. The results of the ANOVA at Time 1 address the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations.

Evaluation Measures. The evaluation measures of performance appraisal and person impression were expected to reflect the initial attribution condition and the initial performance cues. It was expected that the participants in the high performance condition would report higher ratings on the performance appraisal measure and the person impression measure than participants in the low performance condition. It was also expected that participants in the internal attribution condition would be more extreme in their evaluation for high and low performers than would participants in the external attribution condition for both measures. Table IV-1 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 1 and the results of the Time 1 Analyses of Variance.

Performance Appraisal and Person Impression Table IV-1 shows a significant effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE for the performance appraisal

Table IV-1. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates  
for the Evaluation Measures at Time 1.

|                      | Performance<br>Appraisal | Person<br>Impression |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Groups               | Means (SD)               |                      |
| Internal Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 1.27 (0.45)              | 3.37 (0.67)          |
| High Performance     | 4.93 (0.25)              | 5.23 (0.58)          |
| External Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 2.30 (1.00)              | 4.49 (0.73)          |
| High Performance     | 4.17 (1.09)              | 4.70 (0.77)          |
| Conditions           | F ratio (df)             |                      |
|                      | (3, 116)                 | (3, 116)             |
| Attribution (A)      | --                       | 4.46*                |
| Performance (P)      | 359.00***                | 67.99***             |
| A * P                | 37.99***                 | 43.17***             |
| $r_{xx}$             | .89 <sup>a</sup>         | .82 <sup>b</sup>     |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 30. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>Reliability estimated by test-retest method. <sup>b</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

( $F = 359.00$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and person impression ( $F = 67.99$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) measures. The results were consistent with the expectations for the experimental manipulations. That is, participants receiving the high performance cues rated the target actor higher compared with participants receiving the low performance cues (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE).

In addition, the results indicated that participants in the initial external attribution condition rated the target actor higher on the person impression measure compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition ( $F = 4.46$ ,  $p < .05$ ). That is, participants in the initial external attribution condition evaluated the target actor as being more "good", "successful", and "optimistic" compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition.

The results also indicated an INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 37.99$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and the person impression measure ( $F = 43.17$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Consistent with Knowlton and Mitchell (1980), the participants that received the initial internal attribution cues were more extreme in their appraisal of the target actor's performance (either high or low) than were the participants that received the external attribution cues. That is, as illustrated in Figure IV-1 and Figure IV-2, initial performance had a stronger effect under conditions designed to induce an internal attribution than under conditions producing an external attribution (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction).

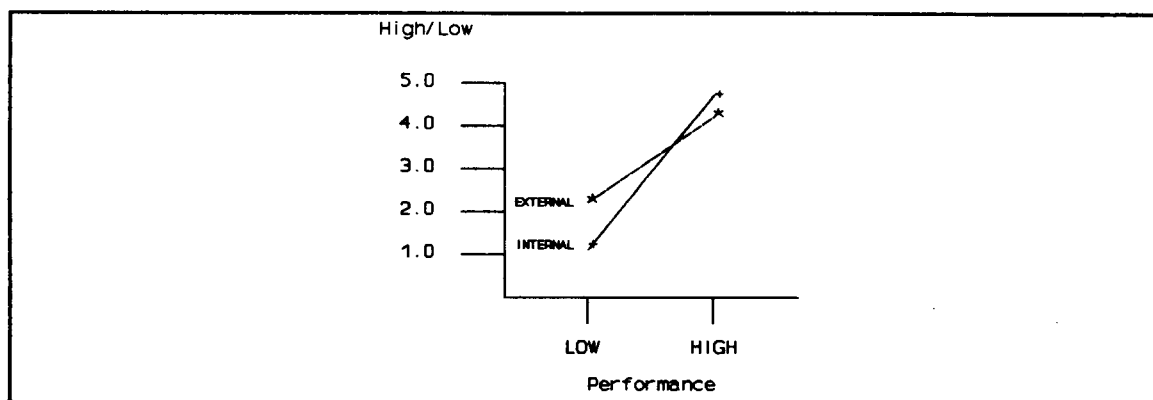


Figure IV-1. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 1.

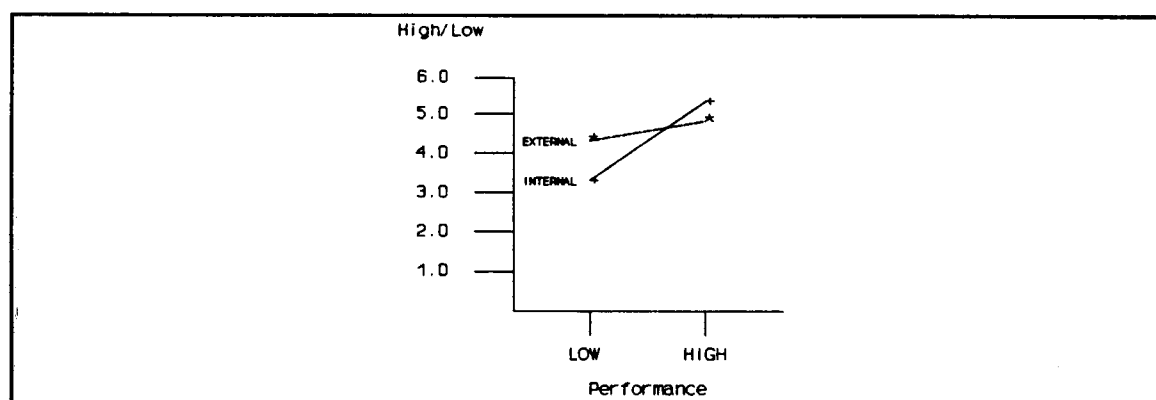


Figure IV-2. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure at Time 1.

Attribution Measures. It was expected that participants at Time 1 in the initial internal attribution condition would rate the target actor's performance as more a function of internal or person causes compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. It was also expected that there would be no difference between the initial internal

attribution condition and initial external attribution condition for the measure of the stability dimension at Time 1. In addition, it was expected that participants at Time 1 in the initial internal attribution condition would report that the target actor was more responsible (i.e., on the measure of the responsibility dimension) for the actor's performance than would participants in the initial external attribution. Table IV-2 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 1 and the results of the Time 1 Analyses of Variance.

Table IV-2. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Attribution Measures at Time 1.

|                      | Person/<br>Situation | Internal/<br>External | Stability        | Responsibility   |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <hr/>                |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Groups               | Means (SD)           |                       |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance      | 3.20 (0.50)          | 3.75 (0.50)           | 3.35 (0.41)      | 3.57 (0.66)      |
| High Performance     | 3.40 (0.50)          | 3.72 (0.38)           | 3.30 (0.34)      | 3.71 (0.43)      |
| External Attribution |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance      | 3.08 (0.70)          | 3.44 (0.51)           | 3.33 (0.39)      | 3.19 (0.93)      |
| High Performance     | 3.00 (0.59)          | 3.49 (0.47)           | 3.36 (0.44)      | 3.53 (0.63)      |
| Conditions           | F ratio (df)         |                       |                  |                  |
|                      | (3, 116)             | (3, 116)              | (3, 116)         | (3, 116)         |
| Attribution (A)      | 6.03*                | 9.85*                 | --               | 4.91*            |
| Performance (P)      | --                   | --                    | --               | 3.80             |
| A * P                | 1.81                 | --                    | --               | --               |
| <hr/>                |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| $r_{xx}$             | .77 <sup>a</sup>     | .80 <sup>a</sup>      | .70 <sup>a</sup> | .80 <sup>b</sup> |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 30. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>Reliability estimated by linear combination method. <sup>b</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

Locus of Causality Dimension. The results of the analysis for the locus of causality dimension revealed a main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION for the person/situation measure ( $F = 6.03$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the internal/external measure ( $F = 9.85$ ,  $p < .005$ ). The results were consistent with the experimental manipulation. Inspection of the means showed that the participants receiving a specific combination of information cues (i.e., consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus) designed to elicit an internal attribution rated the target actor's performance as being more a function of internal (i.e., person) causes compared with the participants that received a specific combination of information cues designed to produce an external attribution. Figure IV-3 illustrates the main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION for the internal/external measure.

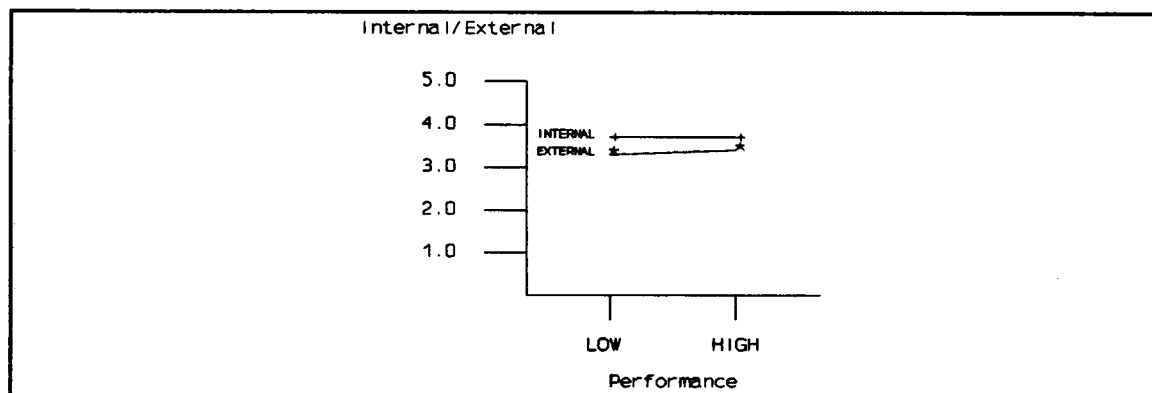


Figure IV-3. Illustration of INITIAL ATTRIBUTION effect for the internal/external measure at Time 1.

Stability Dimension. Consistent with the expectations for this study, there were no effects reported for the stability measure at Time 1.

Responsibility Dimension. Analysis of the responsibility measure at Time 1 revealed a significant effect for the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION condition ( $F = 4.91, p < .05$ ) and the INITIAL PERFORMANCE condition ( $F = 3.80, p < .05$ ). These results indicated that the participants under the initial internal attribution condition rated the target actor as being more responsible for his performance than did the participants receiving the external attribution cues (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION). In addition, the participants receiving the high performance cues rated the target actor as being more responsible for his performance compared with the participants receiving the low performance cues (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE).

Information Search Measures. It was expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would be more confident (i.e., more certain) of their appraisal of the target actor's performance than would participants in the initial external attribution condition. It was also expected however, that there would be no difference in the request for additional information at Time 1 between the participants in the initial internal attribution condition and the participants in the initial external attribution condition because this was the participants' initial exposure to the manipulation. It was expected that although participants in the internal attribution condition would report being more confident of their appraisal than participants in the initial external attribution



condition they would still request additional information to support their decision. Participants in the initial external attribution condition were expected to request additional information to help account for the target actor's performance at Time 1. Table IV-3 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 1 and the results of the Time 1 Analyses of Variance.

Table IV-3. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Information Search Measures at Time 1

|                               | Confidence<br>of Appraisal | Additional<br>Information | Consistency      | Distinctiveness  | Consensus        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Groups                        | Means (SD)                 |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>a</sup>  | 2.60 (1.54)                | 0.80 (0.41)               | 4.10 (0.70)      | 2.93 (1.03)      | 3.14 (1.08)      |
| High Performance <sup>b</sup> | 3.38 (1.54)                | 0.63 (0.49)               | 4.16 (1.02)      | 3.44 (1.01)      | 3.31 (1.03)      |
| External Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>c</sup>  | 2.53 (1.04)                | 0.67 (0.48)               | 3.73 (1.01)      | 3.38 (0.89)      | 3.88 (0.63)      |
| High Performance <sup>d</sup> | 2.70 (1.44)                | 0.83 (0.38)               | 3.63 (0.81)      | 3.21 (0.98)      | 4.05 (0.75)      |
| Conditions                    | F ratio (df)               |                           |                  |                  |                  |
|                               | (3, 116)                   | (3, 116)                  | (3, 84)          | (3, 84)          | (3, 84)          |
| Attribution (A)               | 6.42*                      | --                        | 5.61*            | --               | 5.35*            |
| Performance (P)               | 8.74**                     | --                        | --               | --               | 6.07*            |
| A * P                         | 5.07*                      | 4.28*                     | --               | 2.62             | 2.48             |
| $r_{xx}$                      | .89 <sup>e</sup>           | .57 <sup>e</sup>          | .88 <sup>f</sup> | .95 <sup>f</sup> | .90 <sup>f</sup> |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. The number of observations (n) for the confidence of appraisal and additional information measures was 30 for each group. The number of observations (n) for the consistency, distinctiveness and consensus measures varied between groups and is noted. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>n = 24. <sup>b</sup>n = 18. <sup>c</sup>n = 20. <sup>d</sup>n = 25. <sup>e</sup>Reliability estimated by test-retest method. <sup>f</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

Confidence of Appraisal. The ANOVA results for the confidence of appraisal item demonstrated significant effects for the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION condition ( $F = 6.42, p < .05$ ), INITIAL PERFORMANCE condition ( $F = 8.74, p < .005$ ), and the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 5.07, p < .05$ ). The participants receiving the internal attribution cues reported that they were more confident of their appraisal of the target actor's performance than were the participants receiving the external attribution cues (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION). The participants also reported that they were more confident of their appraisal under the initial high performance cue condition than under the initial low performance cue condition (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE). Figure IV-4 also illustrates that participants in the internal attribution condition reported that they were more confident of

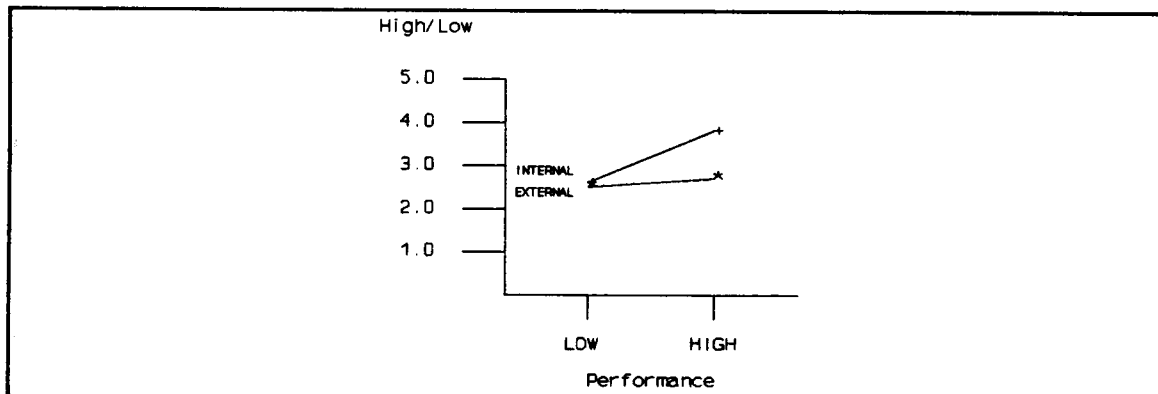


Figure IV-4. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the confidence of appraisal item at Time 1.

their appraisal compared with the participants in the external attribution condition in the high performance condition; there was no difference in confidence of appraisal as a function of attribution cues in the low performance conditions (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction).

Request for Additional Information. The analysis of the request for additional information item revealed a significant effect for the interaction between INITIAL ATTRIBUTION and INITIAL PERFORMANCE conditions ( $F = 4.28, p < .05$ ). Figure IV-5 illustrates that the initial attribution condition had a stronger effect for participants in the initial high performance condition compared with participants in the initial low

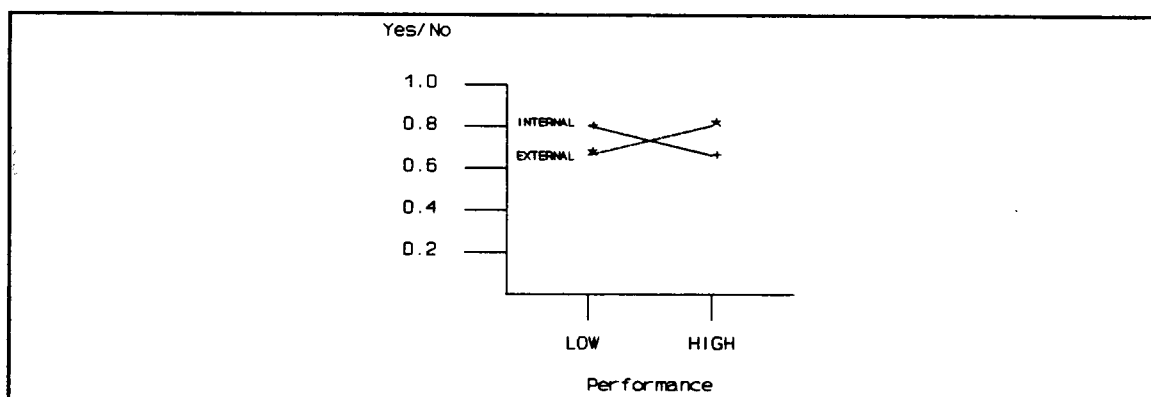


Figure IV-5. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the request for additional information measure at Time 1.

performance condition. Inspection of the means revealed that participants in the initial external attribution condition requested more additional information compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition in the high performance condition.

Types of Additional Information. Participants requesting additional information about the target actor were asked to rate how useful they might find the additional information items of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus to explain the actor's performance. As indicated in Table IV-1 (page 60), the results of the analysis of the consistency measure revealed a significant effect for the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION condition ( $F = 5.61, p < .05$ ). Figure IV-6 illustrates that the participants in the initial internal attribution condition rated consistency information as being more useful than did participants under the initial external attribution condition. There were no significant effects at Time 1 for the distinctiveness measure.

The analysis of the consensus measure showed significant effects for the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION ( $F = 5.35, p < .05$ ) and INITIAL PERFORMANCE ( $F = 6.07, p < .05$ ) conditions. Inspection of the means revealed that on average those in the initial external attribution conditions reported that consensus information would be more useful in understanding the actor's performance than those in the internal attribution conditions (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION). Furthermore, participants receiving initial high performance cues rated the usefulness of consensus information higher than participants receiving initial low performance cues (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE).

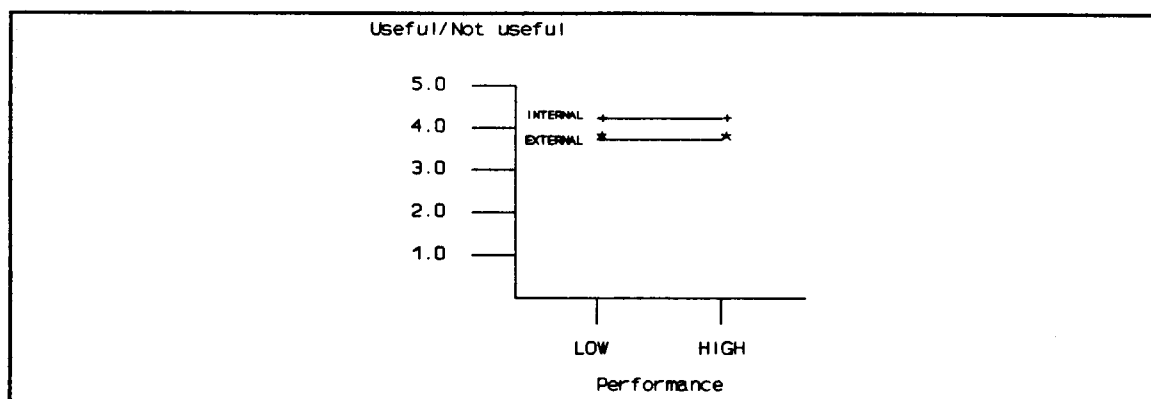


Figure IV-6. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION effect for the consistency information measure at Time 1.

In summary, the results of the within-time analyses for Time 1 were generally consistent with the experimental manipulations. The results revealed that participants who received a pattern of information cues designed to produce an internal attribution reported on the locus of causality measures (i.e., person/situation and internal/external) that the target actor's performance was more a function of internal factors compared with participants who received a configuration of information cues designed to elicit an external attribution. As expected, the results also indicated that there was no difference in the responses for the request for additional information measure between the participants in the initial internal attribution condition and participants in the initial external attribution condition. Finally, participants in the initial high performance condition reported higher evaluations (i.e., on the performance appraisal and person impression measures) of the actor compared with participants in the initial low performance condition.

Furthermore, as expected, participants in the initial internal attribution condition were more extreme in their evaluation of the actor's performance (e.g., high and low) compared to participants in the initial external attribution condition.

The results of the analyses for the types of additional measures showed that participants in the initial internal attribution condition rated consistency information as being more useful in explaining the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. However, participants in the initial external attribution condition reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the actor's performance compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition. There were no effects reported for distinctiveness information.

### Time 2

At Time 2 all participants received a single instance of discrepant performance information. That is, the target actor's performance for the first four exam scores of the second quarter continued as it had during Time 1. However, for the last exam score, the participants who had received the initial high performance cues received a single low performance cue while participants who had received the initial low performance cues received a single instance of high performance.

Evaluation Measures. It was expected that the introduction of a single instance of discrepant performance information would not affect the performance appraisal or person impression measures. Participants that

received high performance cues were expected to report higher scores for the target actor's performance at Time 2 than participants that received low performance cues. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition were also expected to be more extreme in their evaluation for high and low performers compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. Table IV-4 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 2 and the results of the Time 2 Analyses of Variance.

Performance Appraisal and Person Impression. The results revealed an effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 158.85$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and person impression measure ( $F = 37.93$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Inspection of the means showed that participants in the initial high performance condition rated the target actor higher on both the evaluation measures compared with participants in the initial low performance condition.

The results also demonstrated an INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for performance appraisal ( $F = 63.66$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and person impression ( $F = 42.63$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). As illustrated in Figure IV-7 and Figure IV-8, the participants in the initial internal attribution condition were more extreme in their evaluation of the target actor's performance (e.g., either high or low) than were the participants in the initial external attribution condition.

Attribution Measures. It was expected that participants in the initial internal condition would report that the target actor's performance was more a function of internal factors (e.g., person) than external factors

Table IV-4. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates  
for the Evaluation Measures at Time 2

|                      | Performance<br>Appraisal | Person<br>Impression |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Groups               | Means (SD)               |                      |
| Internal Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 1.33 (0.48)              | 3.58 (0.53)          |
| High Performance     | 4.30 (0.65)              | 5.10 (0.55)          |
| External Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 2.67 (0.92)              | 4.53 (0.68)          |
| High Performance     | 3.33 (0.99)              | 4.49 (0.83)          |
| Conditions           | F ratio (df)             |                      |
|                      | (3, 116)                 | (3, 116)             |
| Attribution (A)      | 1.62                     | 2.06                 |
| Performance (P)      | 158.85***                | 37.93***             |
| A * P                | 65.66***                 | 42.63***             |
| $r_{xx}$             | .89 <sup>a</sup>         | .79 <sup>b</sup>     |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 30. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>Reliability estimated by test-retest method at Time 1 only.

<sup>b</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.



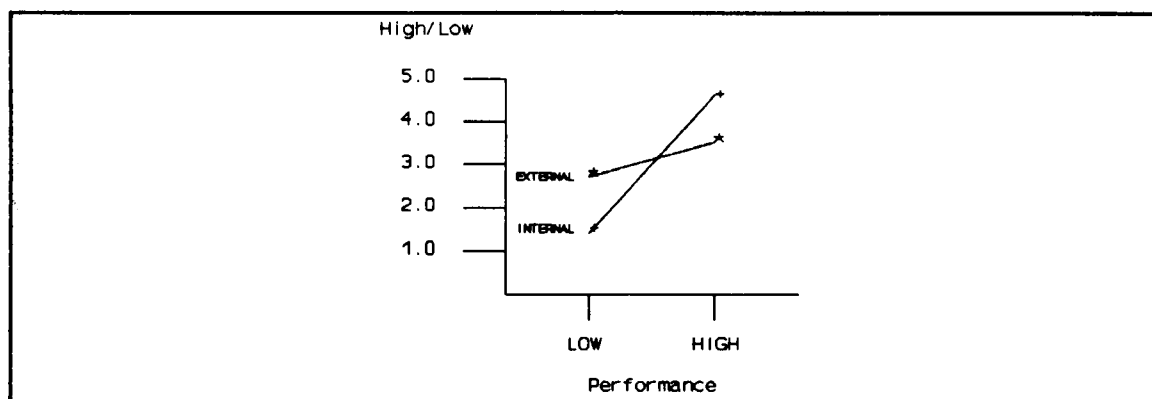


Figure IV-7. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal item at Time 2.

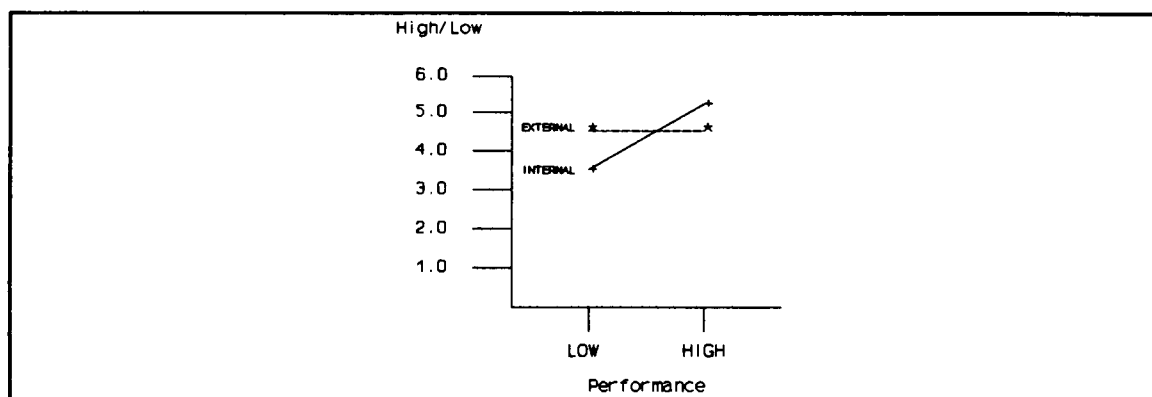


Figure IV-8. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure at Time 2.

(e.g., situation) compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. It was also expected that there would be no difference in response on the stability measure at Time 2 for those under the initial internal attribution condition compared with the participants under the initial external attribution condition. Participants under the

initial internal attribution condition however, were expected to report that the actor was more responsible for the actor's performance compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. Table IV-5 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 2 and the results of the Time 2 Analyses of Variance.

Table IV-5. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates for the Attribution Measures at Time 2.

|                       | Person/<br>Situation | Internal/<br>External | Stability        | Responsibility   |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Groups</b>         | <b>Means (SD)</b>    |                       |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution  |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance       | 3.20 (0.62)          | 3.72 (0.37)           | 3.39 (0.40)      | 3.83 (3.39)      |
| High Performance      | 3.25 (0.34)          | 3.62 (0.33)           | 3.39 (0.26)      | 3.39 (0.98)      |
| External Attribution  |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance       | 3.02 (0.65)          | 3.53 (0.41)           | 3.37 (0.41)      | 3.48 (0.79)      |
| High Performance      | 2.88 (0.41)          | 3.44 (0.37)           | 3.39 (0.39)      | 3.61 (0.68)      |
| <b>Conditions</b>     | <b>F ratio (df)</b>  |                       |                  |                  |
|                       | (3, 116)             | (3, 116)              | (3, 116)         | (3, 116)         |
| Attribution (A)       | 8.29**               | 7.68*                 | --               | --               |
| Performance (P)       | --                   | 2.01                  | --               | 1.15             |
| A * P                 | --                   | --                    | --               | 3.95*            |
| <b>r<sub>xx</sub></b> | .75 <sup>a</sup>     | .71 <sup>a</sup>      | .69 <sup>a</sup> | .87 <sup>b</sup> |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 30. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>Reliability estimated by linear combination method. <sup>b</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

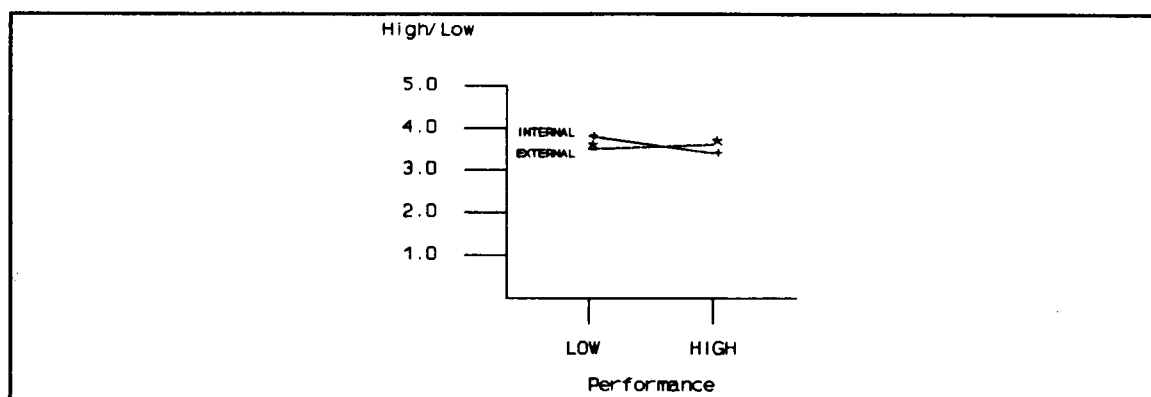
Locus of Causality Dimension. The results of the analysis at Time 2 for the locus of causality dimension revealed an effect for INITIAL

ATTRIBUTION on the person/situation measure ( $F = 8.29$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and the internal/external measure ( $F = 7.68$ ,  $p < .05$ ). An inspection of the means showed that the participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported the cause of the target actor's performance as due more to internal (i.e., person) factors than the participants in the initial external attribution condition.

Stability Dimension. As expected, there were no effects identified for the stability measure.

Responsibility Dimension. The ANOVA results for the responsibility measure at Time 2 demonstrated a significant INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 3.95$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The results indicated that the participants receiving the initial internal attribution cues were more extreme in their assessment of responsibility as a function of initial performance than were the participants receiving the initial external attribution cues. Figure IV-9 illustrates that initial performance had a stronger effect for participants in the initial internal attribution condition compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction).

Information Search Measures. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition were expected to be more confident of their appraisal for the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. It was also expected that



**Figure IV-9.** Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the responsibility measure at Time 2.

there would be no difference in information search for participants in the initial internal attribution condition compared with participants in the initial external condition. Table IV-6 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 2 and the results of the Time 2 Analyses of Variance.

Confidence of Appraisal. The ANOVA results for the confidence of appraisal item revealed a significant effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION ( $F = 12.39$ ,  $p < .005$ ) at Time 2. The participants under the initial internal attribution condition reported that they were more confident of their appraisal of the target actor's performance than the participants under the initial external attribution condition.

Request for Additional Information. There were no significant effects evident for the request for additional information item.

Table IV-6. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates  
for the Information Search Measures at Time 2

|                               | Confidence<br>of Appraisal | Additional<br>Information | Consistency      | Distinctiveness  | Consensus        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Groups                        | Means (SD)                 |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>a</sup>  | 3.17 (1.05)                | 0.63 (0.49)               | 4.70 (0.29)      | 2.83 (1.01)      | 3.37 (1.10)      |
| High Performance <sup>b</sup> | 3.57 (0.86)                | 0.67 (0.48)               | 4.52 (0.59)      | 3.87 (0.82)      | 4.00 (0.88)      |
| External Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>c</sup>  | 2.73 (0.94)                | 0.80 (0.41)               | 3.97 (0.80)      | 3.36 (0.58)      | 4.12 (0.60)      |
| High Performance <sup>d</sup> | 2.63 (1.38)                | 0.67 (0.48)               | 4.12 (0.65)      | 3.18 (0.96)      | 4.00 (0.75)      |
| Conditions                    | F ratio (df)               |                           |                  |                  |                  |
|                               | (3, 116)                   | (3, 116)                  | (3, 79)          | (3, 79)          | (3, 79)          |
| Attribution (A)               | 12.09**                    | --                        | 16.85***         | --               | 4.19*            |
| Performance (P)               | --                         | --                        | --               | 5.34*            | 1.88             |
| A * P                         | 1.62                       | --                        | --               | 10.70**          | 4.19*            |
| $r_{xx}$                      | .89 <sup>a</sup>           | .57 <sup>a</sup>          | .91 <sup>b</sup> | .96 <sup>b</sup> | .90 <sup>b</sup> |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

**Note.** The number of observations (n) for the confidence of appraisal and additional information measures was 30 for each group. The number of observations (n) for the consistency, distinctiveness and consensus measures varied between groups and is noted. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>n = 19. <sup>b</sup>n = 20. <sup>c</sup>n = 24. <sup>d</sup>n = 20. <sup>e</sup>Reliability estimated by test-retest method. <sup>f</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

Types of Additional Information. The results of the analysis for the consistency measure showed a significant effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION ( $F = 16.85$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Further examination of the means showed that participants in the initial internal attribution condition rated consistency information as being more useful in understanding the target actor's performance than participants in the initial external attribution condition.

The analysis of the distinctiveness measure at Time 2 showed significant effects for the INITIAL PERFORMANCE condition ( $F = 5.34$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and an INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 10.70$ ,  $p < .005$ ). Inspection of the means associated with the main effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE revealed that participants in the initial high performance condition reported distinctiveness information as being more useful in understanding the actor's performance compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. In addition, as shown in Figure IV-10, initial performance cues also had a stronger effect under conditions designed to produce an internal attribution than under conditions designed to induce an external attribution (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction).

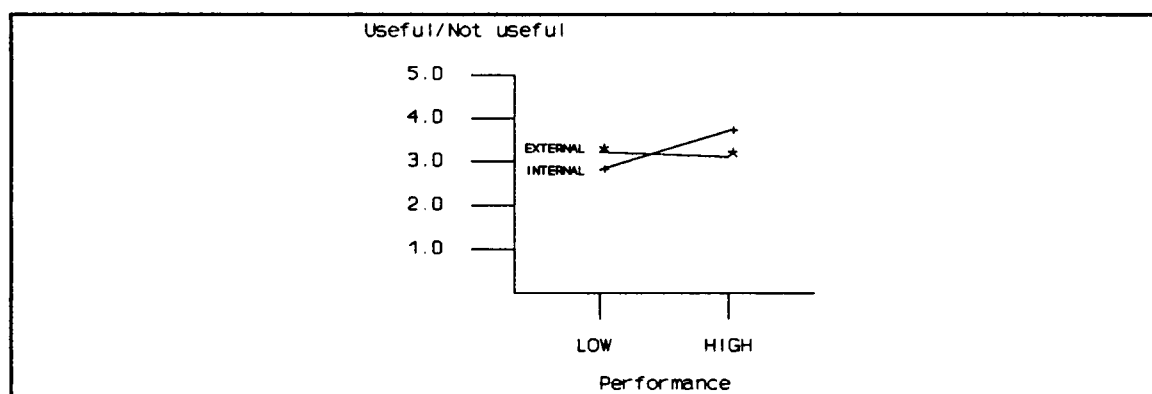


Figure IV-10. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the distinctiveness information measure at Time 2.

The results for the consensus measure at Time 2 revealed significant effects for the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION condition ( $F = 4.19, p < .05$ ) and an interaction between the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION and INITIAL PERFORMANCE conditions ( $F = 4.19, p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means associated with the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION effect showed that participants in the initial external attribution subgroups rated consensus information as being more useful in understanding the performance of the target actor than participants receiving the initial internal attribution cues. In addition, Figure IV-12 illustrates that initial performance cues had a stronger effect for participants in the initial internal attribution condition compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction). Specifically, participants in the initial high performance condition reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial low performance condition in the initial internal attribution condition. There was no difference by performance conditions reported for participants in the initial external attribution condition.

In summary, the results of the analyses at Time 2 for the evaluation measures (i.e., performance appraisal and person impression) revealed that participants in the initial high performance condition reported higher evaluations of the actor compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. Furthermore, as expected, participants in the initial internal attribution condition were more extreme in their evaluation of the actor's performance (e.g., high and low) compared to participants in the initial external attribution condition.

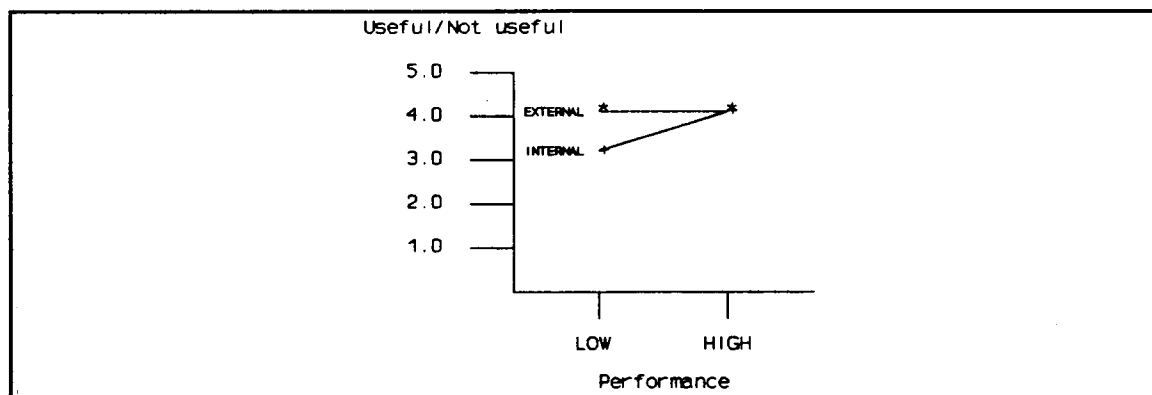


Figure IV-11. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the consensus information measure at Time 2.

The results of the within-time analysis of the locus of causality measures (i.e., person/situation and internal/external) revealed that participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported that the actor's performance was more a function of internal factors compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. As expected, the results of the request for additional information measure did not indicate that participants in the initial internal attribution condition requested more additional information compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition.

The results of the analyses of the types of additional information measures showed that participants in the initial internal condition preferred consistency information to help explain the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition; while participants in the initial external attribution condition preferred consensus information to help explain the target



actor's performance compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition. However, participants receiving the initial high performance cues reported distinctiveness information as being more useful to explain the actor's performance compared with participants in the initial low performance condition with participants in the initial internal attribution condition being more extreme in their responses for high and low performance cues than participants in the initial external attribution condition.

### Time 3

At Time 3, the experimental design introduced a discrepant information condition (e.g., multiple instances of discrepant information and no instances of discrepant information) which was crossed with the initial performance cues and initial attribution cues; i.e., half of the participants received multiple instances of discrepant performance information. Specifically, half of the participants under the initial attribution conditions receiving high performance cues received multiple instances of low performance while the other half of the participants under the initial attribution conditions receiving high performance continued receiving high performance cues. Similarly, half of the participants under the initial attribution conditions receiving low performance cues received multiple instances of high performance information while the other half of the participants under the initial attribution conditions receiving low performance cues continued to receive low performance cues.

Evaluation Measures. It was expected that participants in the initial high performance condition who received a single instance of discrepant information would evaluate the target actor higher on the performance appraisal and person impression measures than participants in the similar initial low performance condition. It was also expected that participants in the initial high performance condition that received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance cues would rate the target actor lower on the performance appraisal and person impression measures compared with participants in the initial low performance condition that received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., high) performance information. Thus, the results of an ANOVA should show an effect for the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction. In addition, participants who made internal attributions to explain the target actor's performance were expected to be more extreme in their evaluation for high and low performers compared with participants who made external attributions to explain the actor's performance (i.e., an INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction).

A main effect was not expected for INITIAL PERFORMANCE at Time 3 for the performance appraisal measure or the person impression measure since half of the participants in the initial high performance condition received high performance cues while the other half received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance cues. Similarly, half of the participants in the initial low performance condition received low performance cues (i.e., no discrepant information at Time 3) while the other half received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., high) performance cues. Therefore, no difference was expected between the

aggregate means for the initial high performance condition and the aggregate means for the initial low performance condition. Table IV-7 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 3 and the results of the Time 3 Analyses of Variance.

Performance Appraisal and Person Impression. The results of the analyses of the evaluation measures revealed an effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE on the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 12.33, p < .005$ ) and the person impression measure ( $F = 10.22, p < .001$ ). Inspection of the means showed that participants in the initial low performance condition rated the target actor higher on the performance appraisal measure compared with participants in the initial high performance condition. In contrast, participants in the initial high performance condition evaluated the actor higher on the person impression measure at Time 3 than participants in the initial low performance condition.

The results also revealed an effect for the DISCREPANT INFORMATION condition for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 16.78, p < .0001$ ). The results indicated that participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition rated the target actor's performance higher compared with participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition.

INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interactions for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 191.78, p < .0001$ ) and the person impression measure ( $F = 25.23, p < .0001$ ) were also evident. Figure IV-12 illustrates that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on the

Table IV-7. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates  
for the Evaluation Measures at Time 3

|                      | Performance<br>Appraisal | Person<br>Impression |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Groups               | Means (SD)               |                      |
| Single Discrepant    |                          |                      |
| Internal Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 1.07 (0.26)              | 3.40 (0.87)          |
| High Performance     | 3.93 (1.58)              | 5.31 (0.64)          |
| External Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 2.40 (0.91)              | 4.16 (0.64)          |
| High Performance     | 3.07 (1.53)              | 4.44 (0.39)          |
| Multiple Discrepant  |                          |                      |
| Internal Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 4.67 (0.62)              | 3.76 (1.16)          |
| High Performance     | 2.13 (0.64)              | 4.60 (0.58)          |
| External Attribution |                          |                      |
| Low Performance      | 4.93 (0.26)              | 5.09 (0.76)          |
| High Performance     | 1.53 (0.64)              | 3.76 (0.54)          |
| Conditions           | F ratio (df)             |                      |
|                      | (7, 112)                 | (7, 112)             |
| Attribution (A)      | --                       | --                   |
| Performance (P)      | 12.33**                  | 10.22***             |
| Discrepant (D)       | 16.78***                 | --                   |
| A * P                | 20.12***                 | 50.39***             |
| A * D                | 1.37                     | 1.26                 |
| P * D                | 191.78***                | 25.23***             |
| A * P * D            | 3.80*                    | --                   |
| $r_{xx}$             | .89 <sup>a</sup>         | .82 <sup>b</sup>     |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 30. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

performance appraisal measure for participants that received multiple instances of discrepant performance information than for participants that received a single instance of discrepant performance information. Figure IV-13, in contrast, shows that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on the person impression measure for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition compared with participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition.

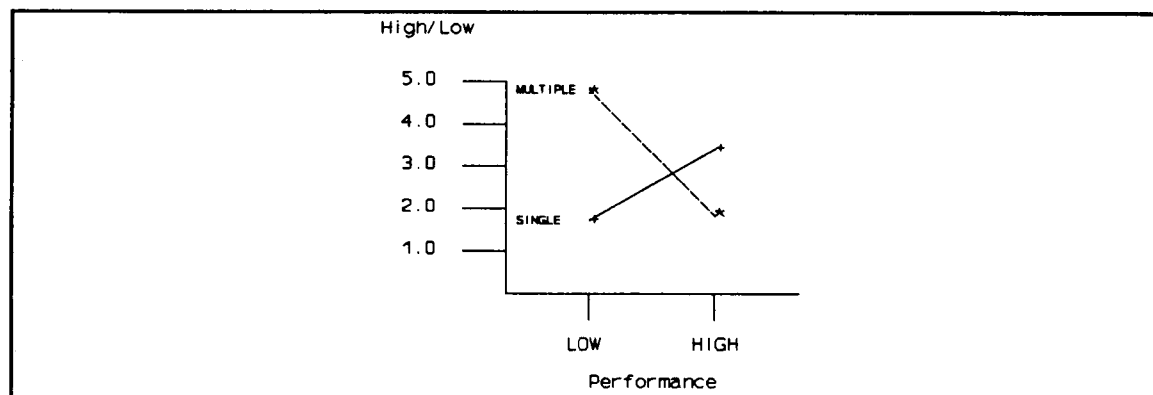


Figure IV-12. Illustration of the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 3.

The results also indicated INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interactions for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 20.12$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and the person impression measure ( $F = 50.39$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Figure IV-14 shows that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on the person impression measure under conditions designed to elicit an internal attribution compared with conditions designed to produce an

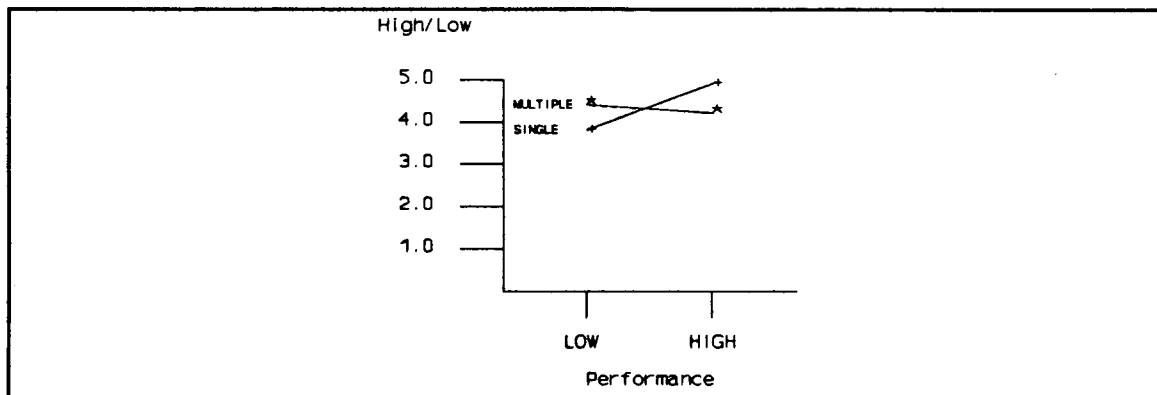


Figure IV-13. Illustration of the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure at Time 3.

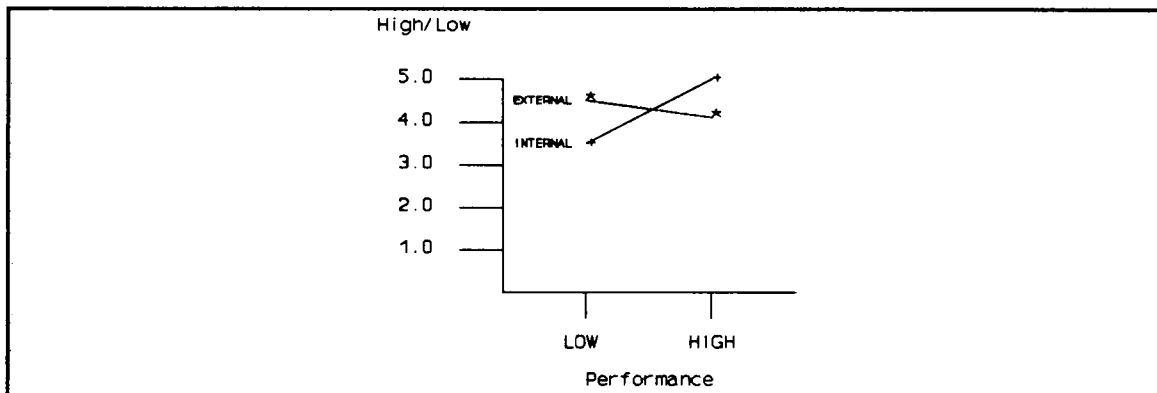


Figure IV-14. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure at Time 3.

external attribution. Figure IV-15 illustrates, contrary to expectations, that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on the performance appraisal measure under conditions designed to elicit an external attribution compared with conditions designed to produce an internal attribution.

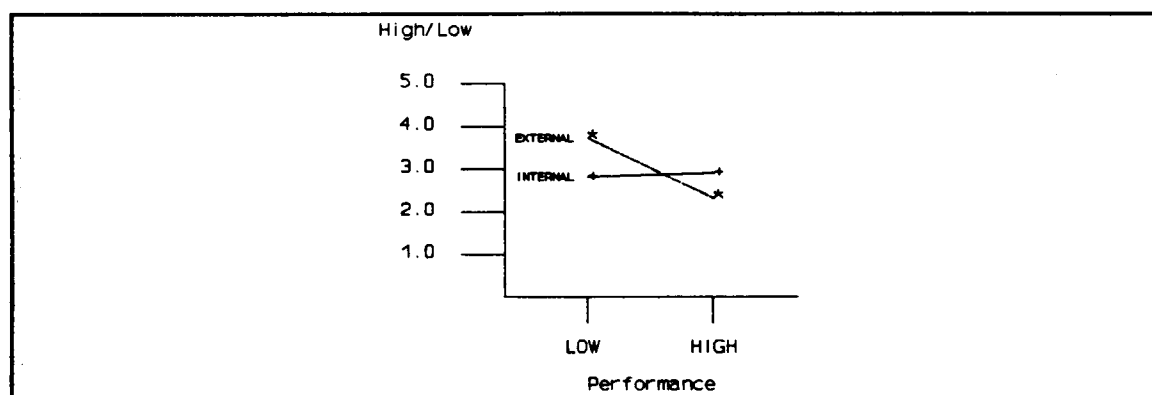


Figure IV-15. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 3.

In addition, Figure IV-16 shows that the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction varied within discrepant information conditions for the performance appraisal measure [i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 3.80, p < .05$ )]. That is, for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition, initial performance cues had a stronger effect for participants in the initial internal attribution condition compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. In contrast, performance cues were found to have an opposite effect and stronger effect under conditions designed to produce an external attribution compared with conditions designed to elicit an internal attribution for participants that received multiple instances of discrepant information condition.

To summarize, the results of these ANOVAs revealed the expected INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE and INITIAL PERFORMANCE by

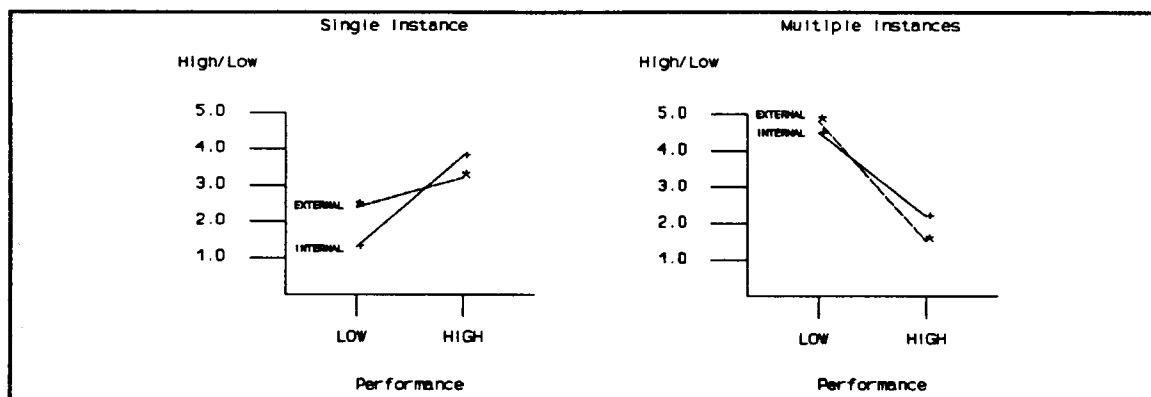


Figure IV-16. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal measure at Time 3.

DISCREPANT INFORMATION interactions for the performance appraisal measure and person impression measure. However, the results for the performance appraisal measure also showed that the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction varied with discrepant information conditions: initial performance cues were found to have a stronger effect on participants in the initial external attribution condition than on participants in the initial internal attribution condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information; while under a single instance of discrepant information condition, initial performance cues had a stronger effect in the initial internal attribution condition than in the initial external attribution condition.

Contrary to expectations, the analysis also showed a significant effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE in which participants in the initial low performance condition rated the performance appraisal measure higher than



participants in the initial high performance condition, while they rated the person impression lower than participants in the initial high performance condition.

Attribution Measures. It was expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would report that the cause of the target actor's performance was more a function of the person (i.e., internal) than a function of the situation (i.e., external) compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. Since external attributions for an actor's performance are more likely to be affected by discrepant information than are internal attributions (Green and Mitchell, 1979), it was also expected that multiple instances of discrepant information would have a stronger effect on the measures of locus of causality for participants in the initial external attribution condition than for participants in the initial internal attribution condition. Participants that only received a single instance of discrepant information were also expected to report the attributions as more stable than participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information. Finally, it was expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would report that the target actor was more responsible for the actor's performance than would participants in the initial external attribution condition. In addition, it was expected that initial attribution condition would have a stronger effect for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition than for participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition, i.e., participants receiving a single instance of

discrepant information should be more extreme in their attribution of responsibility by initial attribution conditions than participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information. Table IV-8 contains the descriptive data for each measure at Time 3 and the results of the Time 3 Analyses of Variance.

Locus of Causality Dimension. The results of the analysis for the locus of causality revealed an effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION for the person/situation ( $F = 7.30$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the internal/external ( $F = 9.69$ ,  $p < .005$ ) measures. The results showed that participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported that the target actor's performance was more a function of internal (i.e., person) factors compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition.

The results also indicated effects for INITIAL PERFORMANCE on the person/situation ( $F = 6.46$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and internal/external ( $F = 4.55$ ,  $p < .05$ ) measures. Inspection of the means showed that participants in the initial low performance condition reported that the actor's performance was more a function of internal (i.e., person) factors compared with participants in the initial high performance condition.

The analysis also revealed an effect for an INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure ( $F = 9.84$ ,  $p < .005$ ). Figure IV-17 illustrates that initial performance cues had a stronger effect for participants who received multiple instances of discrepant performance information than for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition. That is, participants that received multiple instances of discrepant information

Table IV-8. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates  
for the Attribution Measures at Time 3.

|                      | Person/<br>Situation | Internal/<br>External | Stability        | Responsibility   |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Groups               | Means (SD)           |                       |                  |                  |
| Single Discrepant    |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance      | 3.33 (0.67)          | 3.77 (0.36)           | 3.47 (0.31)      | 4.02 (0.57)      |
| High Performance     | 3.30 (0.37)          | 3.58 (0.39)           | 3.28 (0.23)      | 3.78 (0.54)      |
| External Attribution |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance      | 3.00 (0.71)          | 3.28 (0.30)           | 3.38 (0.38)      | 3.13 (1.06)      |
| High Performance     | 2.90 (0.43)          | 3.60 (0.42)           | 3.33 (0.42)      | 3.82 (0.84)      |
| Multiple Discrepant  |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance      | 3.43 (0.59)          | 3.90 (0.40)           | 3.47 (0.31)      | 4.22 (1.12)      |
| High Performance     | 3.07 (0.42)          | 3.58 (0.28)           | 3.45 (0.22)      | 3.58 (0.77)      |
| External Attribution |                      |                       |                  |                  |
| Low Performance      | 3.33 (0.56)          | 3.77 (0.35)           | 3.47 (0.30)      | 3.78 (0.54)      |
| High Performance     | 2.77 (0.73)          | 3.38 (0.40)           | 3.22 (0.48)      | 3.71 (1.01)      |
| Conditions           | F ratio (df)         |                       |                  |                  |
|                      | (7, 112)             | (7, 112)              | (7, 112)         | (7, 112)         |
| Attribution (A)      | 7.30*                | 9.07**                | --               | 3.57             |
| Performance (P)      | 6.46*                | 4.55*                 | 1.52             | --               |
| Discrepant (D)       | --                   | 2.27                  | 1.87             | --               |
| A * P                | --                   | 2.26                  | 1.52             | 6.10*            |
| A * D                | --                   | --                    | 2.70             | --               |
| P * D                | 3.64                 | 9.84**                | --               | 3.57             |
| A * P * D            | --                   | 4.55*                 | --               | --               |
| $r_{xx}$             | .76 <sup>a</sup>     | .72 <sup>a</sup>      | .64 <sup>a</sup> | .89 <sup>b</sup> |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 15. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>Reliability estimated by linear combination method. <sup>b</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

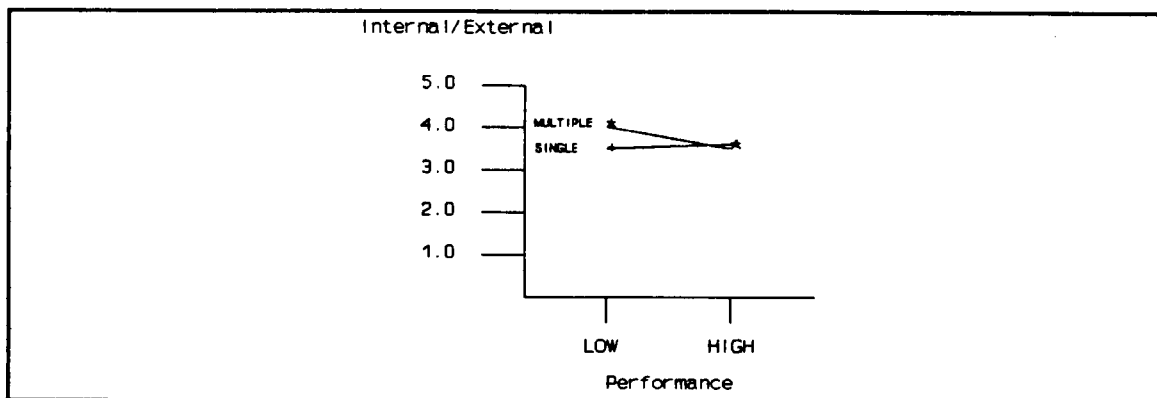


Figure IV-17. Illustration of the INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure.

were more extreme in their response as a function of initial high and low performance cues than were participants that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant information. In the low performance condition, participants that received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., high) performance information attributed the target actor's performance as more a function of internal causes than external causes compared with participants that did not receive discrepant information. In the initial high performance condition, however, participants that received multiple instances of discrepant (i.e., low) performance information attributed the target actor's performance as more a function of external causes relative to internal causes than participants that did not receive discrepant information at Time 3. Figure IV-18 also illustrates that initial attribution had a stronger effect on participants under the initial low performance condition in the single instance of discrepant information condition compared with participants in the multiple instances of

discrepant information condition (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction).

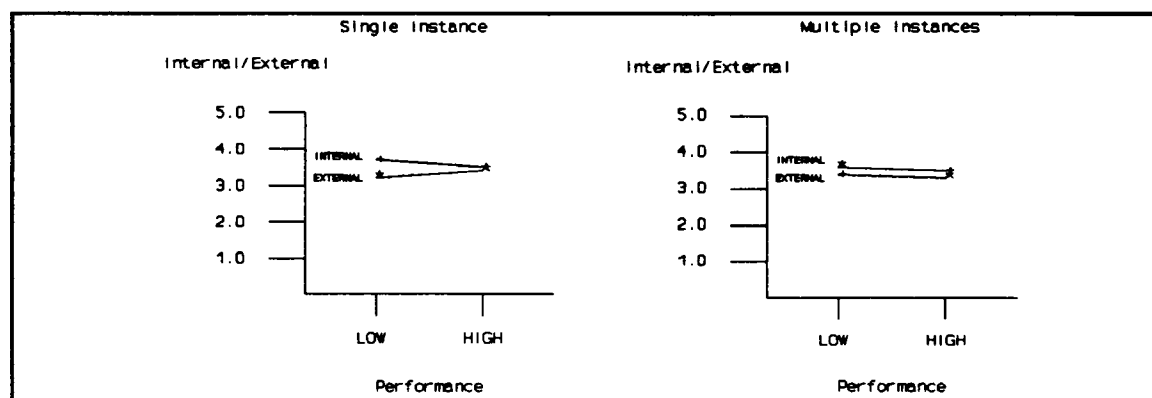


Figure IV-18. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure at Time 3.

Stability Dimension. There were no significant results evident for the stability measure at Time 3.

Responsibility Dimension. The results for the responsibility measure at Time 3 showed a significant effect for the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 6.10, p < .05$ ). Figure IV-19 illustrates that initial attribution conditions had a stronger effect for participants in the initial low performance condition compared with participants in the initial high performance condition.

In summary, the results of these analyses were not completely consistent with the expectations for the locus of causality measures. The

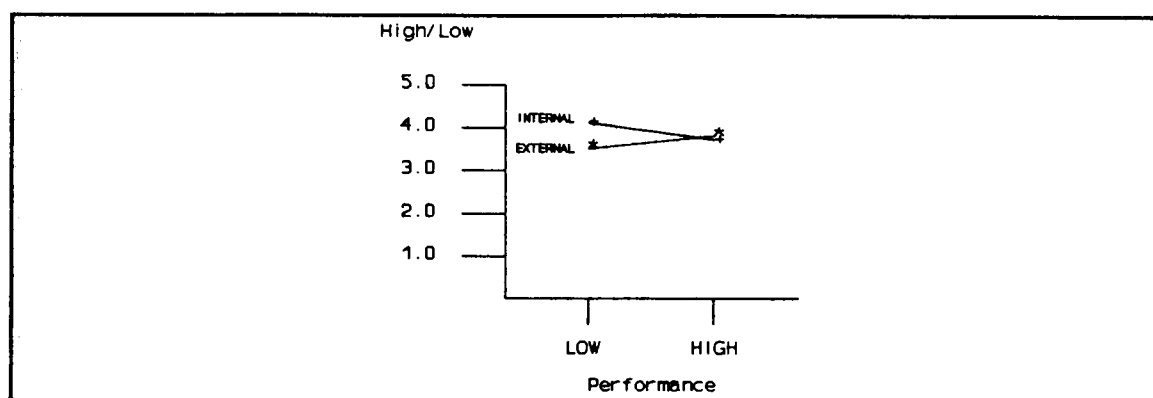


Figure IV-19. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the responsibility measure at Time 3.

results indicated, as expected, that participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported that the target actor's performance was more a function of the person (i.e., internal) than a function of the situation (i.e., external) compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. However, the results did not show that the discrepant information condition had a stronger effect on participants in the initial external attribution condition than on participants in the initial internal attribution condition. Instead, the results indicated that initial performance cues had a stronger effect for participants that received multiple instances of discrepant performance information compared with participants that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant information. Specifically, participants in the initial low performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information reported that the cause of the actor's performance was more a function of internal (i.e., person) causes than external (i.e., situation) causes

compared with participants in the initial high performance condition. Contrary to expectations, there were no effects reported for the stability dimension measure.

The results of the analysis for the responsibility measure were partially consistent with the expectations for Time 3. As expected, initial performance cues had a stronger effect on participants in the initial internal attribution condition compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. No support was reported, however, for the expectation that discrepant information would have a stronger effect on ratings of responsibility for participants in the initial external condition compared with those in the initial internal condition.

Information Search Measures. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition were expected to be more confident of their appraisal for the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. Consequently, participants in the initial external attribution condition were also expected to request more additional information to explain the target actor's performance than participants in the initial internal attribution condition. It was also expected that multiple instances of discrepant information would increase the participants uncertainty regarding their evaluations of the target actor's performance. Thus, participants who received only a single instance of discrepant information should report being more confident of their appraisal than participants that received multiple instances of discrepant performance information. Similarly, participants that received multiple instances of discrepant information

should request more additional information to explain the target actor's performance compared with participants that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant information. Table IV-9 contains the descriptive data for the information search measures at Time 3 and the results of the Analyses of Variance.

Confidence of Appraisal. The results for the confidence of appraisal measure showed a significant effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION at Time 3 ( $F = 16.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Inspection of the means showed that participants receiving the initial internal attribution cues reported being more confident in their appraisal of the target actor's performance than participants receiving the initial external attribution cues.

Request for Additional Information. The results of the analysis for the request for additional information measure showed a significant effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE ( $F = 4.26$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means revealed that the participants receiving the initial high performance cues requested more additional information at Time 3 than participants receiving low performance cues.

Types of Additional Information. The analysis for the consistency measure showed a significant effect for DISCREPANT INFORMATION ( $F = 4.25$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Consistent with the experimental manipulation, inspection of the means showed that the participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information rated consistency information as being more useful



Table IV-9. Descriptive Data, ANOVA Results, and Reliability Estimates  
for the Information Search Measures at Time 3

|                               | Confidence<br>of Appraisal | Additional<br>Information | Consistency      | Distinctiveness  | Consensus        |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Groups                        | Means (SD)                 |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Single Discrepant             |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>a</sup>  | 3.73 (1.03)                | 0.40 (0.51)               | 4.56 (0.78)      | 2.87 (0.47)      | 2.28 (0.57)      |
| High Performance <sup>b</sup> | 4.33 (0.72)                | 0.40 (0.51)               | 3.83 (1.33)      | 3.07 (1.03)      | 4.22 (1.59)      |
| External Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>c</sup>  | 3.13 (1.19)                | 0.40 (0.51)               | 3.78 (0.34)      | 3.47 (0.88)      | 3.67 (1.19)      |
| High Performance <sup>d</sup> | 2.73 (1.33)                | 0.47 (0.52)               | 3.52 (1.25)      | 2.91 (1.01)      | 3.71 (0.85)      |
| Multiple Discrepant           |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Internal Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>e</sup>  | 3.93 (0.70)                | 0.27 (0.46)               | 4.42 (0.50)      | 3.75 (0.85)      | 3.50 (0.19)      |
| High Performance <sup>f</sup> | 3.53 (1.06)                | 0.87 (0.35)               | 4.51 (0.72)      | 4.03 (0.67)      | 4.33 (0.62)      |
| External Attribution          |                            |                           |                  |                  |                  |
| Low Performance <sup>g</sup>  | 3.60 (1.35)                | 0.53 (0.52)               | 4.08 (0.43)      | 3.10 (0.73)      | 4.17 (0.31)      |
| High Performance <sup>h</sup> | 2.67 (1.50)                | 0.60 (0.51)               | 4.44 (0.37)      | 3.40 (0.91)      | 4.11 (0.50)      |
| Conditions                    | F ratio (df)               |                           |                  |                  |                  |
|                               | (7, 112)                   | (7, 112)                  | (7, 51)          | (7, 51)          | (7, 51)          |
| Attribution (A)               | 16.57***                   | --                        | 3.02             | --               | 2.24             |
| Performance (P)               | 1.84                       | 4.26*                     | --               | --               | 9.80**           |
| Discrepant (D)                | --                         | 2.85                      | 4.25*            | 4.79*            | 6.35*            |
| A * P                         | 3.37                       | 1.72                      | --               | --               | 9.91**           |
| A * D                         | 1.43                       | --                        | --               | 3.70             | --               |
| P * D                         | 3.37                       | 2.85                      | 2.80             | 1.08             | 1.88             |
| A * P * D                     | --                         | 2.85                      | --               | --               | 1.30             |
| $r_{xx}$                      | .89 <sup>i</sup>           | .57 <sup>i</sup>          | .91 <sup>j</sup> | .97 <sup>j</sup> | .92 <sup>j</sup> |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. The number of observations (n) for the confidence of appraisal and additional information measures was 15 for each group. The number of observations (n) for the consistency, distinctiveness and consensus measures varied between groups and is noted. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

<sup>a</sup>n = 6. <sup>b</sup>n = 6. <sup>c</sup>n = 6. <sup>d</sup>n = 7. <sup>e</sup>n = 4. <sup>f</sup>n = 13. <sup>g</sup>n = 8. <sup>h</sup>n = 9. <sup>i</sup>Reliability estimated by test-retest method at Time 1 only. <sup>j</sup>Reliability estimated by coefficient alpha.

in understanding the behavior of the target actor at Time 3 compared with participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition.

The results of the analysis for the distinctiveness measure also showed a significant effect for DISCREPANT INFORMATION ( $F = 4.79$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means at Time 3 showed that participants under the multiple instances of discrepant information condition rated distinctiveness information as being more useful than participants who did not receive discrepant information at Time 3.

Analysis of the consensus measure at Time 3 showed significant effects for INITIAL PERFORMANCE ( $F = 9.80$ ,  $p < .005$ ); DISCREPANT INFORMATION ( $F = 6.35$ ,  $p < 6.35$ ); and an interaction between INITIAL ATTRIBUTION and INITIAL PERFORMANCE ( $F = 9.91$ ,  $p < .005$ ). As illustrated in Figure IV-20, participants in the initial high performance condition

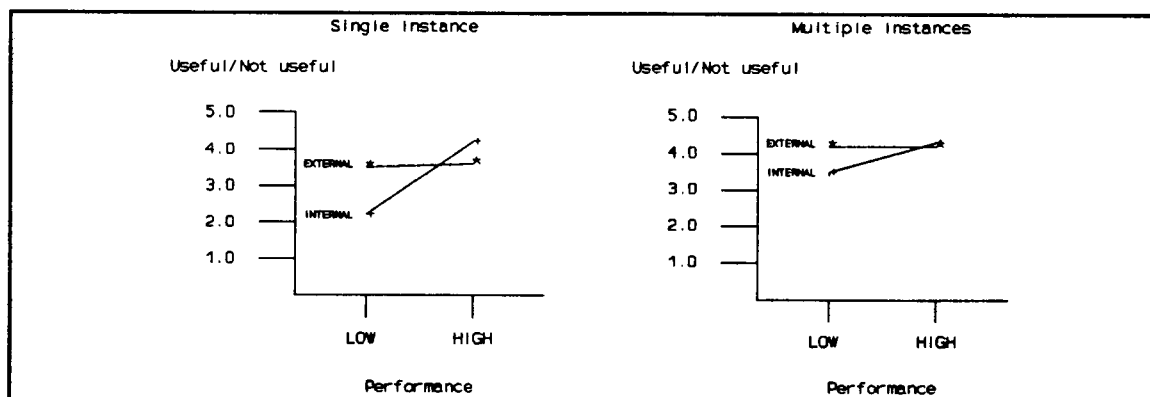


Figure IV-20. Illustration of the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the consensus information measure at Time 3.

rated consensus information as being more useful than participants in the initial low performance condition (i.e., the main effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE). Participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information also reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance than participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition. Figure IV-20 also shows that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on the perceived usefulness of consensus information for participants in the initial internal attribution condition than for participants in the initial external attribution condition (i.e., the INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction).

To summarize, the results of the analysis of the confidence of appraisal measure were partially consistent with the expectations for Time 3. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported being more confident of their appraisal compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition. However, participants in the initial high performance condition requested more additional information than participants in the initial low performance condition. The results also showed that participants that received multiple instances of discrepant information reported that all the types of additional information (i.e., consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus information) would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance compared with participants that did not receive multiple instances of discrepant information.

### Results of the Repeated Measures Analyses

The operational hypotheses were formulated in terms of changes over time in the participants' evaluations (i.e., performance appraisal and person impression), attributions (i.e., locus of control, stability, and responsibility), and information search (i.e., uncertainty, request for additional information, type of additional information, and perceived usefulness of additional information) as a function of initial performance and attributional conditions, and the introduction of discrepant information. Repeated measures analyses were used to reject or fail to reject the research hypotheses. The comparisons of interest were: Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 ( $T_{1,3}$ ); Time 1 and Time 2 ( $T_{1,2}$ ); and Time 2 and Time 3 ( $T_{2,3}$ ). The results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMANOVA) for the Time 1, Time 2, and Time 3 ( $T_{1,3}$ ) comparison for each measure are presented first. These results are then followed by the results of the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison and the results of the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison. The results of the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison and the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison are presented to facilitate an explanation of the RMANOVA for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

Evaluation Measures. It was expected that participants would evaluate the performance appraisal and person impression measures based on the actor's performance during a specific time period (i.e., participants in the initial high performance condition should report higher ratings compared with participants in the initial low performance condition at Time 1). In addition, it was expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would be more extreme in their evaluations for high

and low performance compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition.

It was also expected that the participants would rely on their initial attribution about the actor in subsequent evaluations of the target actor (Feldman, 1981). Thus, a single instance of discrepant information was not expected to alter the participants' evaluation of the actor at Time 2 compared with the evaluations at Time 1. It was expected, however, that multiple instances of discrepant performance information presented and recorded at Time 3 would result in a change in the participants' evaluation of the target actor compared with the evaluations at Time 2. The results of the RMANOVAs for the evaluation measures are presented in Table IV-10.

Performance Appraisal and Person Impression. The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 150.94$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and the person impression measure ( $F = 15.58$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Results for the performance appraisal measure also showed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison ( $F = 32.06$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison ( $F = 123.26$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), as did the results for the person impression measure ( $T_{1,2}$ ,  $F = 9.70$ ,  $p < .005$ ;  $T_{2,3}$ ,  $F = 9.08$ ,  $p < .005$ , respectively).

Figure IV-21 and Figure IV-22 illustrate that participants in the initial low performance condition reported an increase in their evaluation of the target actor from Time 1 to Time 3. In contrast, participants in

Table IV-10. Results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance  
for the Evaluation Measures

|                               | Performance<br>Appraisal | Person<br>Impression |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Time 1, Time 2, Time 3</u> |                          |                      |
| Between Group Effects         |                          |                      |
| df                            | (7, 112)                 | (7, 112)             |
| Attribution (A)               | 1.36                     | 3.13                 |
| Performance (P)               | 176.30***                | 48.36***             |
| Discrepant (D)                | 14.69**                  | --                   |
| A * P                         | 88.15**                  | 65.21***             |
| A * D                         | 2.97                     | 8.76*                |
| P * D                         | 80.00**                  | 1.73                 |
| A * P * D                     | --                       | --                   |
| Within Group Effects          |                          |                      |
| df                            | (16, 224)                | (16, 224)            |
| Time (T)                      | 3.68*                    | 3.40*                |
| T * A                         | --                       | --                   |
| T * P                         | 150.94***                | 15.58***             |
| T * D                         | 3.85*                    | 1.70                 |
| T * A * P                     | 1.90                     | 1.24                 |
| T * A * D                     | 1.28                     | 3.32                 |
| T * P * D                     | 82.45***                 | 36.59***             |
| T * A * P * D                 | 3.21*                    | 3.22*                |
| <u>Time 1 and Time 2</u>      |                          |                      |
| Between Group Effects         |                          |                      |
| df                            | (3, 116)                 | (3, 116)             |
| Attribution (A)               | 1.79                     | 4.25*                |
| Performance (P)               | 374.83***                | 61.66***             |
| A * P                         | 74.99***                 | 50.64***             |
| Within Group Effects          |                          |                      |
| df                            | (4, 116)                 | (4, 116)             |
| Time (T)                      | 9.48**                   | --                   |
| T * A                         | --                       | 1.61                 |
| T * P                         | 32.06***                 | 9.70**               |
| T * A * P                     | 2.22                     | --                   |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

IV-Table 10. (continued)

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|                          | Performance<br>Appraisal | Person<br>Impression |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <hr/>                    |                          |                      |
| <u>Time 2 and Time 3</u> |                          |                      |
| Between Group Effects    |                          |                      |
| df                       | (7, 112)                 | (7, 112)             |
| Attribution (A)          | --                       | 1.40                 |
| Performance (P)          | 28.65***                 | 26.76***             |
| Discrepant (D)           | 15.10**                  | --                   |
| A * P                    | 71.10***                 | 59.07***             |
| A * D                    | 5.17*                    | 5.83*                |
| P * D                    | 109.94***                | 4.28*                |
| A * P * D                | 2.37                     | --                   |
| Within Group Effects     |                          |                      |
| df                       | (8, 112)                 | (8, 112)             |
| Time (T)                 | --                       | 4.63*                |
| T * A                    | --                       | --                   |
| T * P                    | 123.26***                | 9.08**               |
| T * D                    | 5.63*                    | 3.35                 |
| T * A * P                | 3.10                     | 2.61                 |
| T * A * D                | --                       | 5.61*                |
| T * P * D                | 116.56***                | 72.30***             |
| T * A * P * D            | 2.12                     | 4.63*                |

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\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 15. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

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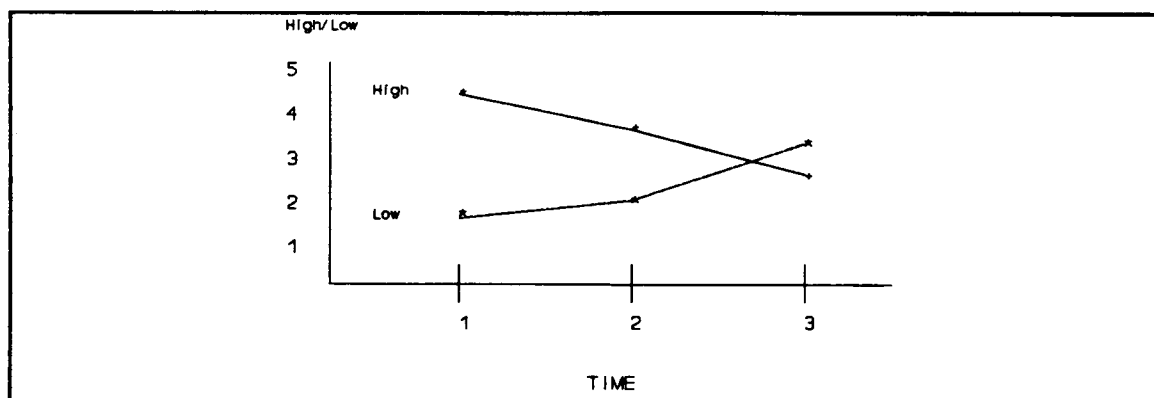


Figure IV-21. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the performance appraisal measure for the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison and the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison.

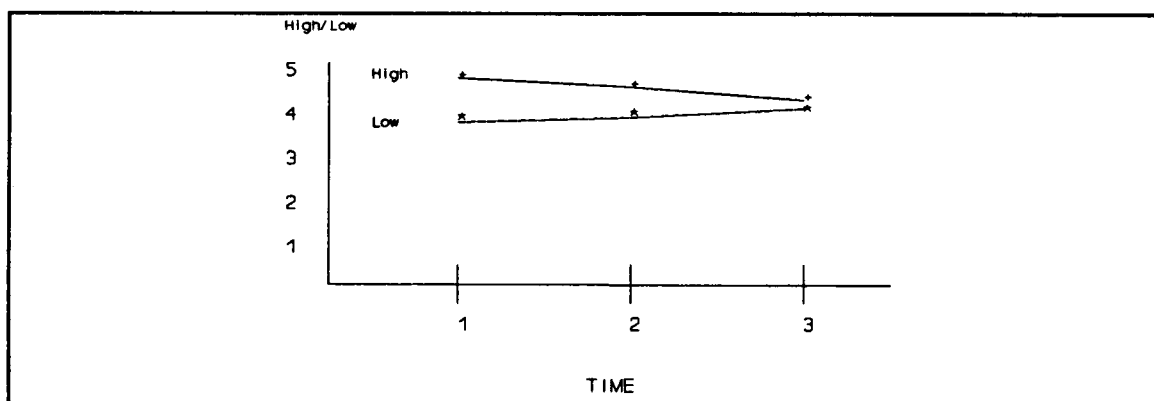


Figure IV-22. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person impression measure for the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison and the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison.

the initial high performance condition reported a decrease in their evaluation of the actor from Time 1 to Time 3.



The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interactions for the performance appraisal measure ( $F = 82.45$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and the person impression measure ( $F = 36.59$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  comparisons (performance appraisal,  $F = 116.56$ ,  $p < .0001$ ; person impression,  $F = 72.30$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Figure IV-23 and Figure IV-24 illustrate that the evaluations by participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3; i.e., participants at both Time 1 and Time 3 in the initial high performance condition consistently rated the target actor higher compared with participants in the initial low performance condition.

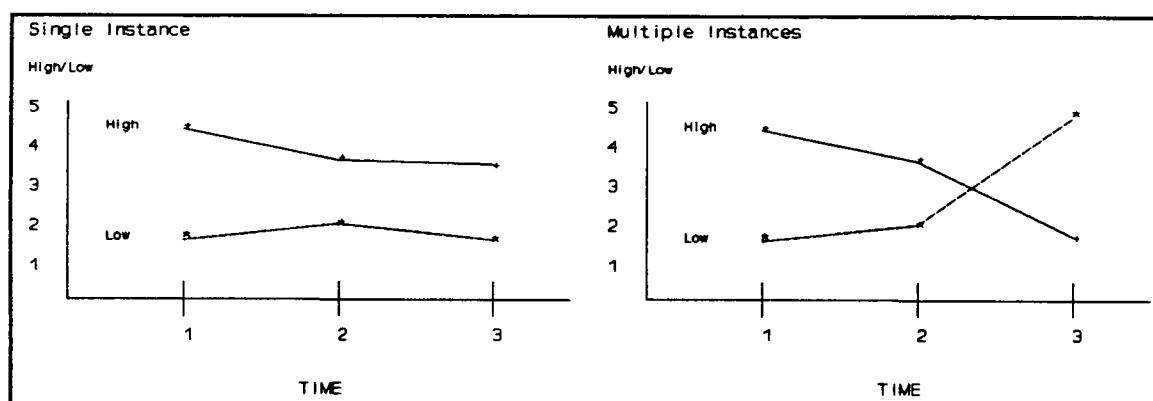


Figure IV-23. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal measure for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

However, participants in the initial low performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant performance, reported an

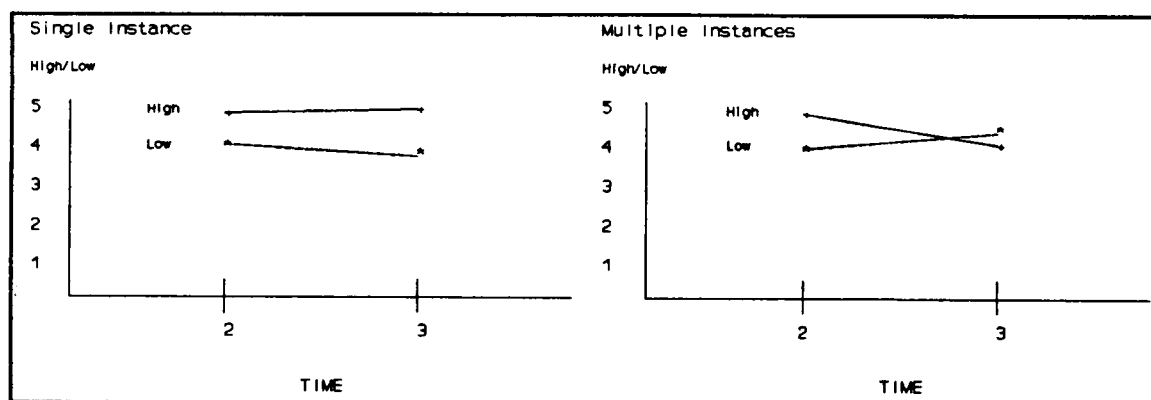


Figure IV-24. Illustration of a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure for the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison.

increase in their evaluation of the target actor from Time 1 to Time 3; while participants in the initial high performance condition reported a decrease in their evaluation of the actor from Time 1 to Time 3. Furthermore, Figure IV-23 and Figure IV-24 show that participants at Time 1 in the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant performance information rated the target actor higher compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. At Time 3, however, participants in the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant performance information rated the target actor lower compared with participants in the initial low performance condition.

The results of the RMANOVA for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison also revealed TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interactions for the evaluation measures (i.e., performance appraisal,

$F = 3.21$ ,  $p < .05$ ; person impression,  $F = 3.22$ ,  $p < .05$ ). A TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction effect in the  $T_{23}$  comparison was also evident for the person impression measure ( $F = 4.63$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure IV-25 and Figure IV-26 illustrate the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interactions. The figures show that participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition remained relatively constant in their evaluation of the target actor from Time 1 to Time 3, with those in the initial internal attribution condition offering more extreme evaluations of the target actor's performance (i.e., high and low) than those in the initial external condition.

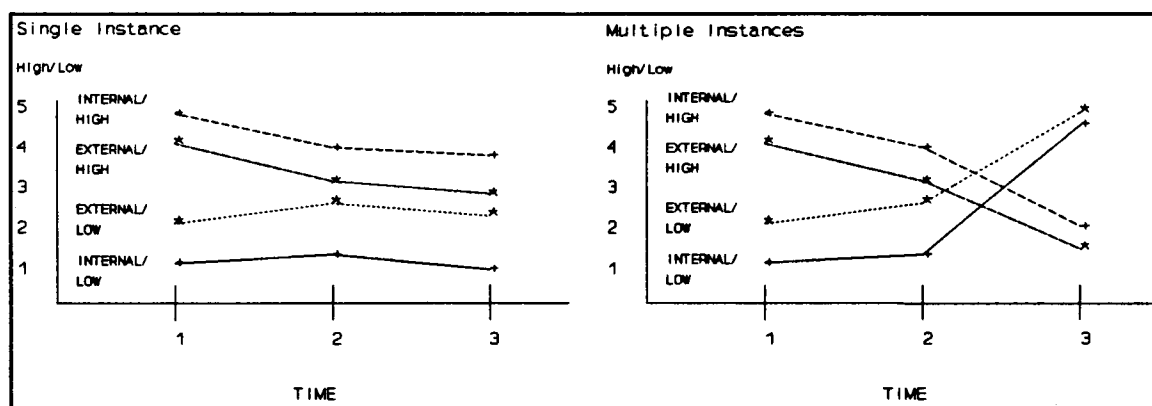


Figure IV-25. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the performance appraisal item for the  $T_{13}$  comparison.

In contrast, Figure IV-25 and Figure IV-26 also illustrate that participants in the multiple instance of discrepant information condition

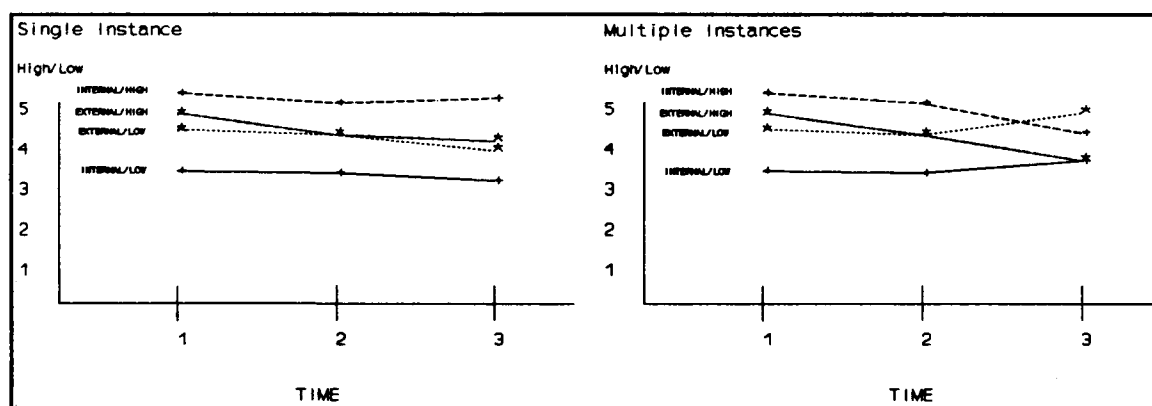


Figure IV-26. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

changed their evaluation from Time 1 to Time 3. Specifically, participants in the initial internal attribution condition at Time 1 were more extreme in their evaluation of the target actor's performance than the participants in the initial external condition. At Time 3, however, participants in the initial external attribution condition became more extreme in their evaluation of the target actor's performance than the participants in the initial internal condition.

An effect for TIME in the evaluation measures (performance appraisal,  $F = 3.68$ ,  $p < .05$ ; person impression,  $F = 3.40$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was also evident in the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA. The  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA for the performance appraisal measure also showed an effect for TIME ( $F = 9.48$ ,  $p < .005$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA for the person impression measure ( $F = 4.63$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means for the performance appraisal measure indicated that, overall, participants rated the target actor's performance higher

at Time 1 than at Time 2 and that the evaluations remained relatively constant from Time 2 to Time 3. In contrast, the participant's responses for the person impression measure remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 2 and then decreased from Time 2 to Time 3.

The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA also showed an effect for a TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 3.85, p < .05$ ) for the performance appraisal measure, as did the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 5.63, p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means indicated that participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition showed a decrease in their evaluation of the target actor's performance from Time 2 to Time 3. Participants who received multiple instances of discrepant performance information, in contrast, showed an increase in their evaluation of the actor's performance from Time 2 to Time 3.

The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA for the person impression measure also showed an effect for a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 3.32, p < .05$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison ( $F = 5.61, p < .05$ ). Figure IV-27 reveals that a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction occurred for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition but did not occur for participants in the multiple instance of discrepant information condition. As shown in Figure IV-27, initial attribution cues had a stronger effect on the person impression measure for participants at Time 2 than at Time 3 when the participants received a single instance of discrepant information. However, when the participants received multiple instances of discrepant performance information the difference between the responses of participants in the

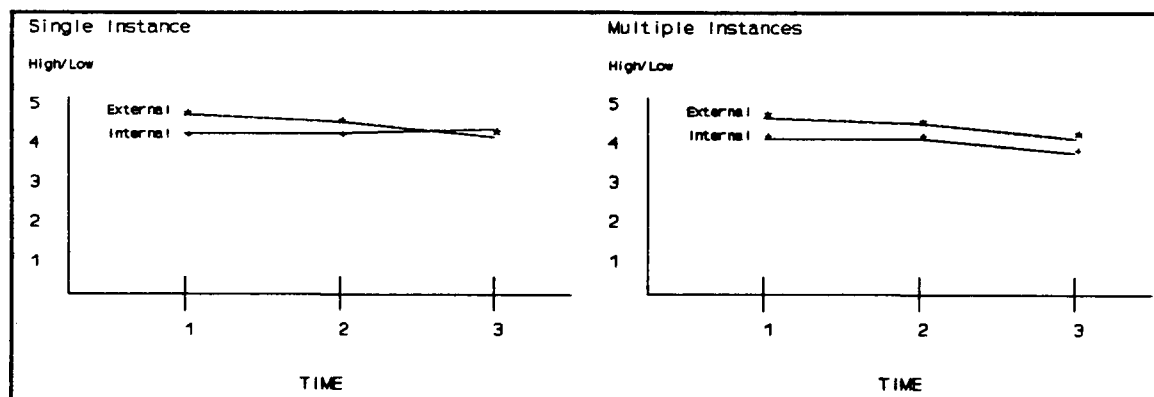


Figure IV-27. Illustration of a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person impression measure for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

initial internal attribution condition and those in the initial external attribution condition remained relatively constant from Time 2 to Time 3.

In summary, these results of the RMANOVAs for the performance appraisal and person impression measures were consistent with the expectations for the study. As expected for the experimental manipulation, the participants in the initial high performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant performance information reported higher performance appraisals and person impressions at Time 1 and Time 2 compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. By Time 3 however, participants in the initial low performance condition were found to report higher performance appraisals and person impressions than those in the initial high performance condition. As expected, there was no change in the pattern of responses for participants

who received a single instance of discrepant information from Time 1 to Time 3.

The results for the performance appraisal and person impression measures in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition also revealed, as expected, that participants in the initial internal attribution condition were more extreme in their evaluations as a function of initial performance at Time 1 and Time 2 than participants in the initial external attribution condition. However, at Time 3, participants in the initial external attribution condition were more extreme in their evaluations as a function of initial performance compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition. In contrast, participants in the initial internal attribution condition who received a single instance of discrepant information reported more extreme responses for the target actor's performance at all time periods than participants in the initial external attribution condition.

Contrary to expectations, the results of the analysis for the performance appraisal and person impression measures also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction (i.e., the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison). The results indicated that following the introduction of a single instance of discrepant performance, participants in the initial high performance condition reported a decrease in their evaluation for the target actor from Time 1 to Time 2, while those in the initial low performance condition reported an increase in their evaluation of the target actor from Time 1 to Time 2.

Attribution Measures. It was expected that levels of discrepant information would have a stronger affect on the measures of locus of control for participants in the initial external attribution condition than for participants in the initial internal attribution condition. That is, a single instance of discrepant information should affect a temporary change in the causal attribution from Time 1 to Time 2 for participants in the initial external attribution condition but the attribution should return to the initial external level at Time 3. In contrast, participants in the initial external attribution condition who received multiple instances of discrepant performance should change their attribution from Time 2 to Time 3. No change in attribution was expected for participants in the initial internal attribution condition from Time 1 to Time 2 or from Time 2 to Time 3.

It was also expected that a single instance of discrepant information would elicit a temporary change in the stability of attributions from Time 1 to Time 2 and that the stability of attribution would return to the initial level at Time 3. However, multiple instances of discrepant performance information should continue to effect the participants' stability of attribution from Time 2 to Time 3.

A single instance of discrepant information was also expected to elicit a temporary change in the participants' attribution for responsibility. Participants in the initial external attribution condition were expected to report that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 2 than at Time 1, and participants in the initial internal attribution condition should report that the target actor was less responsible for the actor's performance at Time 2



than at Time 1. In both cases, they should return to their initial (i.e., Time 1) attribution of responsibility at Time 3. Participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information were expected to report that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2 regardless of initial attribution condition. Table IV-11 contains the results of the RMANOVAs for the attribution measures.

Locus of Control Dimension. The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the person/situation measure ( $F = 5.27$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and the internal/external measure ( $F = 3.48$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The results of the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA for the person/situation measure also showed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 5.09$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As noted previously, the results of the within-time ANOVAs for the person/situation measure indicated a significant effect for INITIAL PERFORMANCE at Time 3 (Table IV-8, page 91) but not at Time 2 (Table IV-5, page 75). Inspection of the means for the locus of control measures indicated that participants in the initial low performance condition reported that the target actor's performance was more a function of internal (i.e., person) factors at Time 3 than at Time 1. Participants in the initial high performance condition, in contrast, reported that the actor's performance was more a function of external (i.e., situation) causes at Time 3 than at Time 1.

The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interactions for the person/situation measure ( $F = 7.08$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and the internal/external

Table IV-11. Results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for the Attribution Measures.

|                               | Person/<br>Situation | Internal/<br>External | Stability | Responsibility |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| <u>Time 1, Time 2, Time 3</u> |                      |                       |           |                |
| Between Group Effects         |                      |                       |           |                |
| df                            | (7, 112)             | (7, 112)              | (7, 112)  | (7, 112)       |
| Attribution (A)               | 10.94**              | 11.29**               | --        | 2.97           |
| Performance (P)               | 1.03                 | 1.39                  | --        | --             |
| Discrepant (D)                | --                   | 2.31                  | 11.03**   | --             |
| A * P                         | 1.48                 | --                    | --        | 4.35           |
| A * D                         | 1.32                 | --                    | 1.38      | --             |
| P * D                         | --                   | 5.64                  | 1.26      | 1.25           |
| A * P * D                     | --                   | 1.39                  | --        | 2.47           |
| Within Group Effects          |                      |                       |           |                |
| df                            | (16, 224)            | (16, 224)             | (16, 224) | (16, 224)      |
| Time (T)                      | 1.36                 | --                    | 1.67      | 9.40***        |
| T * A                         | --                   | 1.07                  | --        | 2.15           |
| T * P                         | 5.27**               | 3.48*                 | 1.28      | 6.04**         |
| T * D                         | 2.43                 | --                    | 7.29**    | --             |
| T * A * P                     | --                   | 1.64                  | 2.26      | 2.76           |
| T * A * D                     | 1.61                 | --                    | 1.15      | --             |
| T * P * D                     | 7.08**               | 4.08*                 | --        | 2.88           |
| T * A * P * D                 | --                   | 2.09                  | 4.05*     | 2.80           |
| <u>Time 1 and Time 2</u>      |                      |                       |           |                |
| Between Group Effects         |                      |                       |           |                |
| df                            | (3, 116)             | (3, 116)              | (3, 116)  | (3, 116)       |
| Attribution (A)               | 8.85**               | 10.53**               | --        | 1.90           |
| Performance (P)               | --                   | --                    | --        | --             |
| A * P                         | 1.69                 | --                    | --        | 2.42           |
| Within Group Effects          |                      |                       |           |                |
| df                            | (4, 116)             | (4, 116)              | (4, 116)  | (4, 116)       |
| Time (T)                      | 3.35                 | --                    | 3.38      | 2.19           |
| T * A                         | --                   | 1.56                  | --        | 4.03*          |
| T * P                         | 1.21                 | 2.70                  | --        | 14.46**        |
| T * A * P                     | --                   | --                    | --        | 3.32           |
| <u>Time 2 and Time 3</u>      |                      |                       |           |                |
| Between Group Effects         |                      |                       |           |                |
| df                            | (7, 112)             | (7, 112)              | (7, 112)  | (7, 112)       |
| Attribution (A)               | 10.49**              | 9.91**                | --        | 1.74           |
| Performance (P)               | 3.20                 | 3.72                  | --        | --             |
| Discrepant (D)                | --                   | 2.53                  | 4.97*     | --             |
| A * P                         | --                   | --                    | --        | 6.12           |
| A * D                         | --                   | --                    | 2.47      | --             |
| P * D                         | --                   | 10.78**               | --        | 1.15           |
| A * P * D                     | --                   | 2.75                  | --        | 2.72           |
| Within Group Effects          |                      |                       |           |                |
| df                            | (8, 112)             | (8, 112)              | (8, 112)  | (8, 112)       |
| Time (T)                      | 1.18                 | 1.31                  | --        | 8.25**         |
| T * A                         | --                   | --                    | --        | 3.22           |
| T * P                         | 5.08*                | --                    | 2.36      | --             |
| T * D                         | 3.70                 | --                    | 2.36      | --             |
| T * A * P                     | --                   | 4.86*                 | 2.34      | --             |
| T * A * D                     | --                   | --                    | --        | --             |
| T * P * D                     | 14.15**              | --                    | --        | 5.45*          |
| T * A * P * D                 | 1.57                 | 2.81                  | --        | 4.64*          |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 15. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

measure ( $F = 4.08, p < .05$ ). The  $T_{23}$  RMANOVA for the person/situation measure also showed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 14.15, p < .005$ ). Figure IV-28 and Figure IV-29 illustrate that initial performance cues had a stronger effect for participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition than for participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition. The figures demonstrate that in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition, participants in the initial low performance condition reported that the actor's performance was more a function of internal (i.e., person) causes at Time 3 than at Time 1. In contrast, participants in the initial high performance condition that received multiple instances of

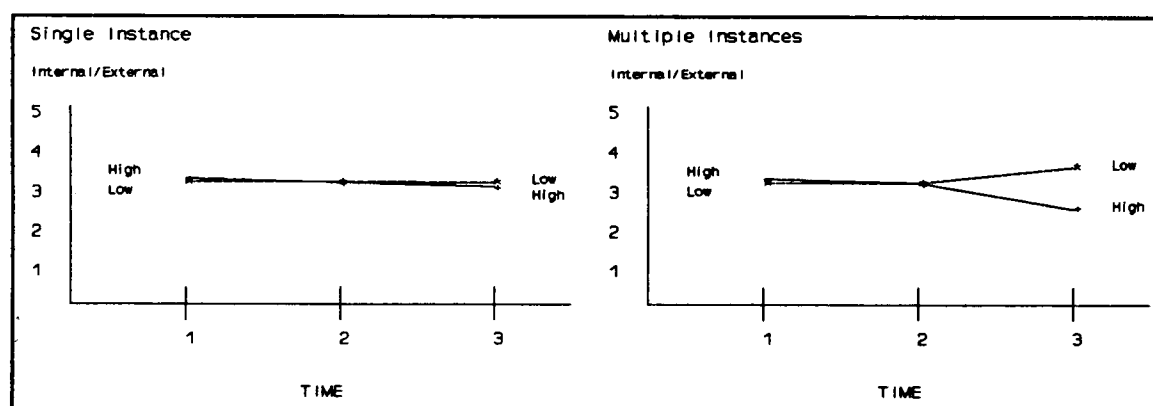


Figure IV-28. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the person/situation measure for the  $T_{13}$  comparison.

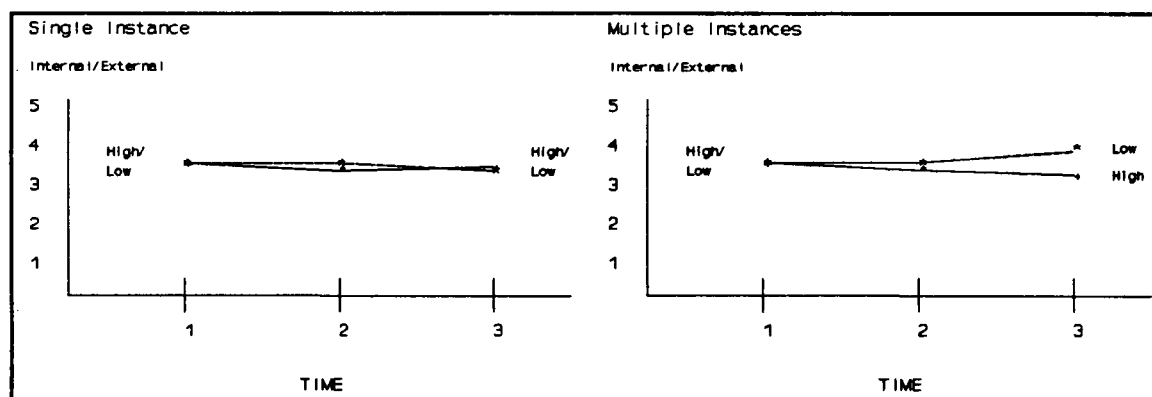


Figure IV-29. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the internal/external measure for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

discrepant performance information reported that the actor's performance was more a function of external (i.e., situation) factors at Time 3 than at Time 1. In the single instance of discrepant information condition, the participants responses remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3.

The results of the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA for the internal/external measure showed a significant effect for a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 4.86, p < .05$ ). Figure IV-30 shows that for participants in the initial internal attribution condition, initial performance cues had a stronger effect at Time 3 than at Time 2. However, the effect of initial performance cues for participants in the initial external attribution condition on the internal/external measure remained constant from Time 2 to Time 3.

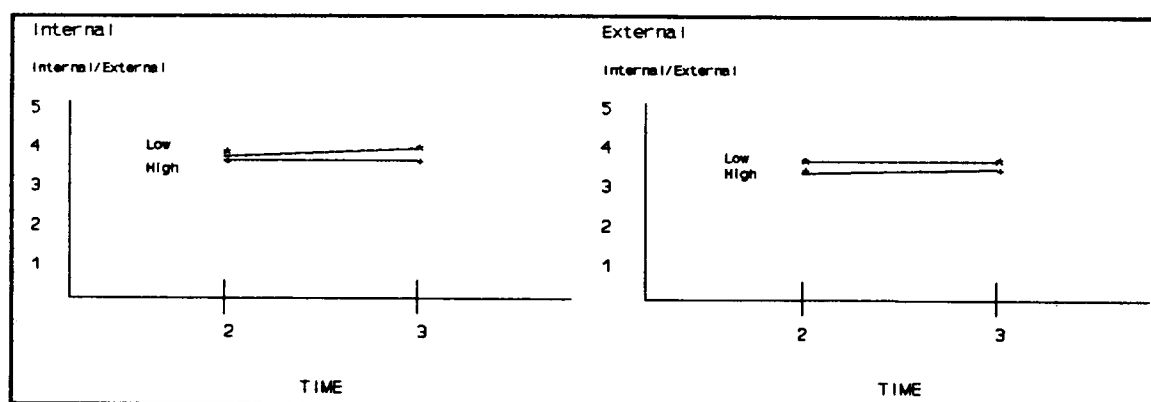


Figure IV-30. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the internal/external measure for the  $T_{23}$  comparison.

Stability Dimension. The  $T_{13}$  RMANOVA results for the stability measure showed significant effects for a TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 7.29$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 4.07$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means showed that discrepant information had a stronger effect at Time 3 than at Time 1. Contrary to expectations however, participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition reported that the cause of the target actor was more stable at Time 3 than participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition at Time 3.

Figure IV-31 shows that a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction occurred in the single instance of discrepant information condition but did not occur in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition. That is, initial performance cues had

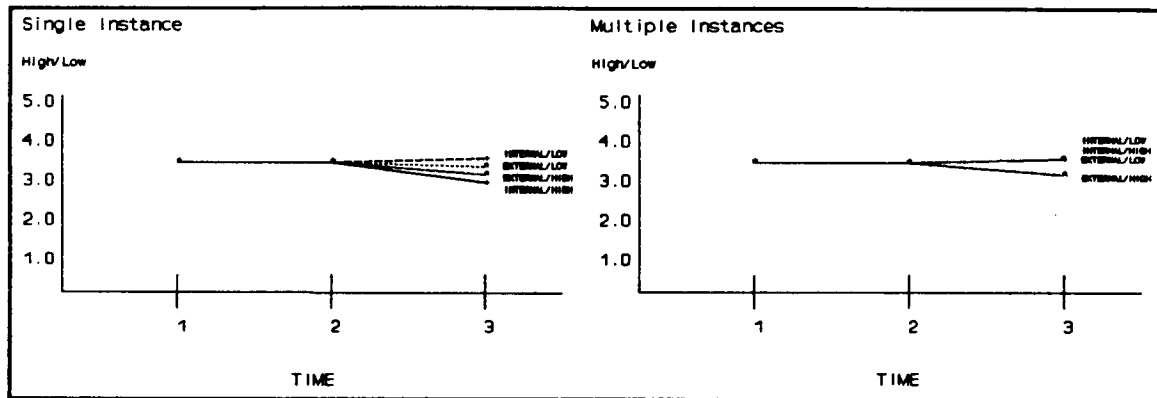


Figure IV-31. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the stability measure for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

a stronger effect for participants who received a single instance of discrepant information in the initial internal attribution condition at Time 3 than for participants in the initial external attribution condition at Time 3; similar differences were not apparent among the participants at Time 2. Specifically, participants in the initial low performance condition who received the initial internal attribution cues reported that the cause of the target actor's performance was more stable at Time 3 than at Time 2, while participants in the initial high performance condition reported that the cause of the target actor's performance was less stable at Time 3 compared with Time 2.

Responsibility Dimension. The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA for the responsibility measure showed an effect for TIME ( $F = 9.40$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 8.25$ ,  $p < .005$ ). Inspection of the means

associated with the effect showed that the participants reported that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2.

Consistent with the expectations of the study, the  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction ( $F = 4.03$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It was previously noted that the results of the ANOVA for Time 1 showed a main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION with participants in the initial internal attribution condition reporting that the target actor was more responsible for the performance than participants in the initial external attribution condition (Table IV-2, page 63). However, the results of the ANOVA for Time 2 did not reveal a main effect for INITIAL ATTRIBUTION (Table IV-5, page 75). Inspection of the means associated with the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction showed that the initial attribution condition had a stronger effect on attributions of responsibility at Time 1 than at Time 2. Figure IV-32 illustrates that, as expected, participants in the initial external attribution condition reported that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 2 than at Time 1, while the attribution for responsibility by the participants in the initial internal attribution condition remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 2.

The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 6.04$ ,  $p < .005$ ), as did the  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 14.46$ ,  $p < .005$ ). Inspection of the means showed that participants in the initial low performance condition reported an increase in their attribution for responsibility from Time 1 to Time 2. In contrast, participants in the initial high performance condition reported a decrease

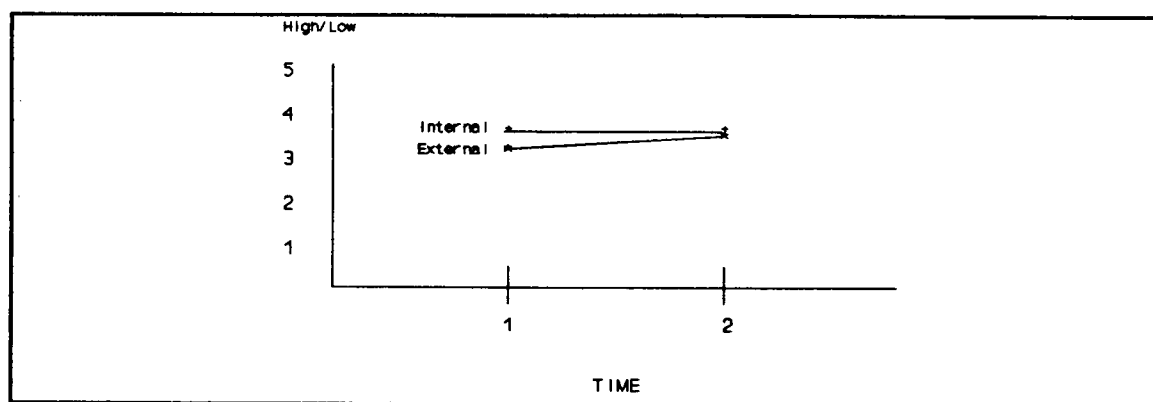


Figure IV-32. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION interaction for the responsibility measure for the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison.

in their attribution for responsibility from Time 1 to Time 2. Specifically, at Time 1, participants in the initial high performance condition reported that the target actor was more responsible for the actor's performance compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. However, at Time 2, the situation was reversed with participants in the initial low performance condition reporting that the target actor was more responsible for the actor's performance compared with the participants in the initial high performance condition.

The results of  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 5.45$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure IV-33 illustrates that a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction occurred in the single instance of discrepant information condition but did not occur in the multiple instance of discrepant information condition. Specifically, participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition who received the initial high performance



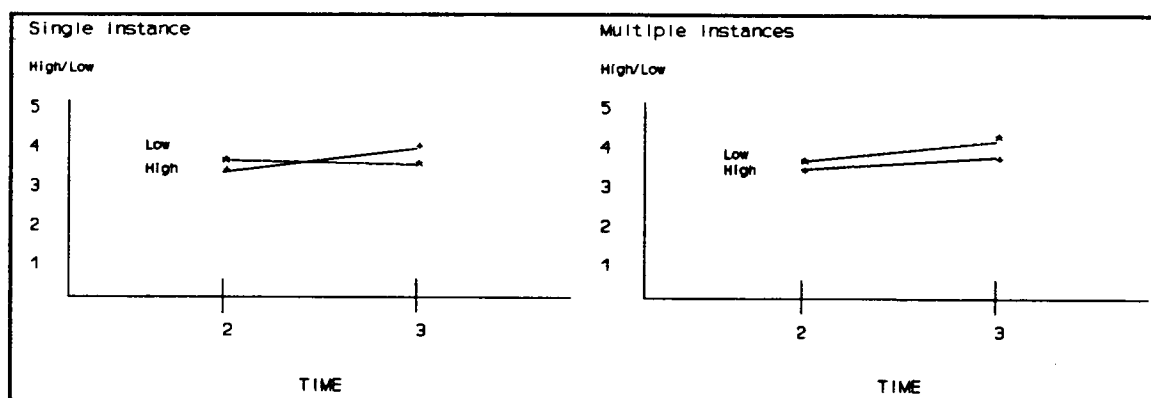


Figure IV-33. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the responsibility measure for the  $T_{23}$  comparison.

cues reported that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2. In contrast, participants in the initial low performance condition reported that the target actor was less responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2. Participants who received multiple instances of discrepant performance information reported that the target actor was more responsible for the actor's performance at Time 3 compared to Time 2 in both the initial high performance condition and the initial low performance condition.

The results of the  $T_{23}$  RMANOVA also showed a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 4.64$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure IV-34 illustrates that a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction occurred for the single instance of discrepant information condition and did not occur for the multiple instance of discrepant information condition. Figure IV-34

demonstrates that in the single instance of discrepant information condition, initial attributions had a stronger effect at Time 3 on attributions of responsibility for participants in the initial low performance condition than initial attributions had for participants in the initial high performance condition at Time 3. In addition, initial attributions had a stronger effect on participants in the initial low performance condition that received a single instance of discrepant information compared with the effect initial attributions had on participants in the initial low performance condition who received multiple instances of discrepant information.

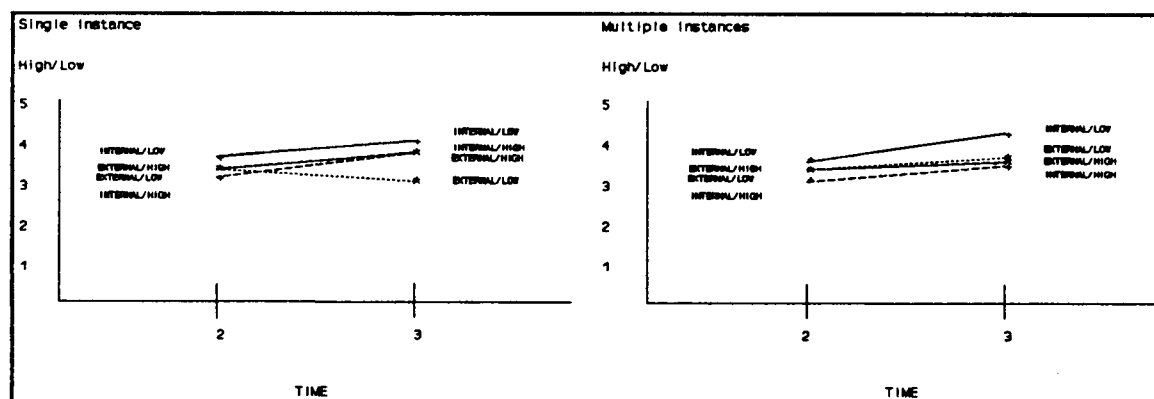


Figure IV-34. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the responsibility measure for the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison.

In summary, the results of the RMANOVA for the locus of control measures did not support the expectation that multiple instances of discrepant information would have a stronger effect for participants in

the initial external attribution condition across time compared with the effect for participants in the initial internal attribution condition. Instead, the results revealed that the effect of discrepant information on the locus of control measures varied significantly across time by the level of the initial performance condition. Generally, participants in the initial low performance condition that received multiple instances of discrepant information reported that the target actor's performance was more a function of the person or internal causes at Time 3 than at Time 2. Conversely, participants in the initial high performance condition that received multiple instances of discrepant information reported that the target actor's performance at Time 3 was more a function of the situation or external causes compared with their responses before receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information (e.g., at Time 2).

Contrary to expectations, the results of the RMANOVA for the stability dimension revealed that participants in the multiple instance of discrepant information condition reported that the cause of the target actor's performance at Time 3 was more stable compared with participants who received a single instance of discrepant information at Time 3. However, the results of the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA showed that participants in the initial internal attribution condition who received a single instance of discrepant information as opposed to multiple instances of discrepant information were more extreme in their responses to the initial performance cues (i.e., high and low) at Time 3 than were the participants in the initial external attribution condition. There were no differences in the responses for participants in the initial internal attribution condition and participants in the initial external attribution condition

at Time 2. As a result, the mean response for the participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition was less than the mean response for participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition.

The results of the  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA for the responsibility measure provided some support for the expectations for the study. As expected, participants in the initial external attribution condition that received a single instance of discrepant information reported that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 2 than at Time 1. Participants in the initial internal attribution condition who received a single instance of discrepant information reported that the target actor was less responsible for the performance at Time 2 than at Time 1.

The results of the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA also provided limited support for the study. As expected, for the single instance of discrepant information condition, participants in the initial external attribution condition who received the initial low performance cues reported that the target actor was less responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2; participants in the initial internal attribution condition who received the initial low performance cues reported that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2. However, contrary to expectations, participants in the initial high performance condition who received a single instance of discrepant information reported that the target actor was more responsible for the performance at Time 3 than at Time 2, regardless of initial attribution condition.

Information Search Measures. It was expected that discrepant information would reduce the participants' confidence in their appraisal of the target actor. It was also expected that as the participants' confidence decreased, the participants would request more additional information to help explain the target actor's performance. Multiple instances of discrepant information were expected to reduced the participants' confidence of appraisal more than a single instance of discrepant information. Therefore, participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition were expected to request more additional information than participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition. Table IV-12 contains the results of the RMANOVAs for the information search measures.

Confidence of Appraisal. The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA for the confidence of appraisal item showed an effect for TIME ( $F = 17.75$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 19.63$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Inspection of the means for the confidence of appraisal item showed that participants at Time 3 reported that they were more confident of their appraisal of the target actor's performance than they were at Time 2.

The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 13.10$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) for the confidence of appraisal measure, as did the  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 15.06$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) and the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 4.91$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure IV-35 illustrates that participants in the initial low performance condition reported an increase in their confidence of appraisal from Time 1 to Time 3, while participants in the initial high performance condition remained relatively constant in their confidence of

Table IV-12. Results of the Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance  
for the Information Search Measures

|                               | Confidence<br>of Appraisal | Additional<br>Information | Consistency | Distinctiveness | Consensus |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|
| <u>Time 1, Time 2, Time 3</u> |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| Between Group Effects         |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| df                            | (7, 112)                   | (7, 112)                  | (7, 42)     | (7, 42)         | (7, 42)   |
| Attribution (A)               | 15.08**                    | --                        | 18.78***    | 5.14*           | --        |
| Performance (P)               | 1.06                       | --                        | 2.37        | 3.69            | 20.24***  |
| Discrepant (D)                | --                         | 2.28                      | --          | 1.50            | 4.26*     |
| A * P                         | 4.51*                      | --                        | --          | 2.03            | 8.74**    |
| A * D                         | 1.19                       | --                        | 2.85        | --              | 5.53*     |
| P * D                         | --                         | --                        | --          | 2.33            | 10.07**   |
| A * P * D                     | --                         | 2.28                      | --          | --              | 2.20      |
| Within Group Effects          |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| df                            | (16, 224)                  | (16, 224)                 | (14, 84)    | (14, 84)        | (14, 84)  |
| Time (T)                      | 17.75***                   | 15.46***                  | 3.75*       | --              | 2.98      |
| T * A                         | --                         | --                        | --          | --              | --        |
| T * P                         | 13.10***                   | 3.49*                     | --          | --              | 2.56      |
| T * D                         | --                         | --                        | 2.40        | 1.28            | 4.00*     |
| T * A * P                     | 1.08                       | 5.55*                     | --          | --              | 2.02      |
| T * A * D                     | --                         | --                        | 1.04        | 2.29            | 2.23      |
| T * P * D                     | 10.53***                   | 2.85                      | 1.41        | 9.81***         | 1.67      |
| T * A * P * D                 | --                         | 1.22                      | --          | 1.61            | 1.76      |
| <u>Time 1 and Time 2</u>      |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| Between Group Effects         |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| df                            | (3, 116)                   | (3, 116)                  | (3, 66)     | (3, 66)         | (3, 66)   |
| Attribution (A)               | 9.73**                     | --                        | 7.39**      | --              | 4.84*     |
| Performance (P)               | 4.27*                      | --                        | --          | 2.88            | 5.37*     |
| A * P                         | 3.62                       | --                        | --          | 3.26            | 3.04      |
| Within Group Effects          |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| df                            | (4, 116)                   | (4, 116)                  | (4, 66)     | (4, 66)         | (4, 66)   |
| Time (T)                      | 2.34                       | --                        | 26.07***    | --              | --        |
| T * A                         | --                         | --                        | --          | 1.39            | 2.57      |
| T * P                         | 15.06***                   | --                        | 1.53        | 1.56            | 3.24      |
| T * A * P                     | 4.00*                      | 7.56*                     | 1.07        | 1.25            | --        |
| <u>Time 2 and Time 3</u>      |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| Between Group Effects         |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| df                            | (7, 112)                   | (7, 112)                  | (7, 44)     | (7, 44)         | (7, 44)   |
| Attribution (A)               | 18.90***                   | --                        | 23.00***    | 3.27            | --        |
| Performance (P)               | --                         | --                        | 1.24        | 1.83            | 10.40**   |
| Discrepant (D)                | --                         | 1.83                      | --          | --              | --        |
| A * P                         | 3.23                       | 1.83                      | --          | 4.49*           | 13.68**   |
| A * D                         | 1.08                       | --                        | 5.64*       | --              | 1.75      |
| P * D                         | --                         | --                        | --          | --              | 3.23      |
| A * P * D                     | --                         | 1.27                      | --          | 1.59            | 2.86      |
| Within Group Effects          |                            |                           |             |                 |           |
| df                            | (8, 112)                   | (8, 112)                  | (4, 66)     | (4, 66)         | (4, 66)   |
| Time (T)                      | 19.63***                   | 18.33***                  | --          | --              | --        |
| T * A                         | --                         | --                        | --          | 1.11            | --        |
| T * P                         | 4.91*                      | 6.24*                     | --          | --              | 4.53*     |
| T * D                         | --                         | 1.15                      | 2.76        | 2.43            | 5.40*     |
| T * A * P                     | --                         | --                        | 1.18        | --              | --        |
| T * A * D                     | --                         | --                        | --          | 1.92            | 4.71*     |
| T * P * D                     | 19.63***                   | 4.58*                     | 3.66        | 1.56            | 2.18      |
| T * A * P * D                 | --                         | 2.04                      | 1.87        | 1.97            | 1.47      |

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .005. \*\*\*p < .0001

Note. n = 15. F values < 1.0 are represented by a dash (--).

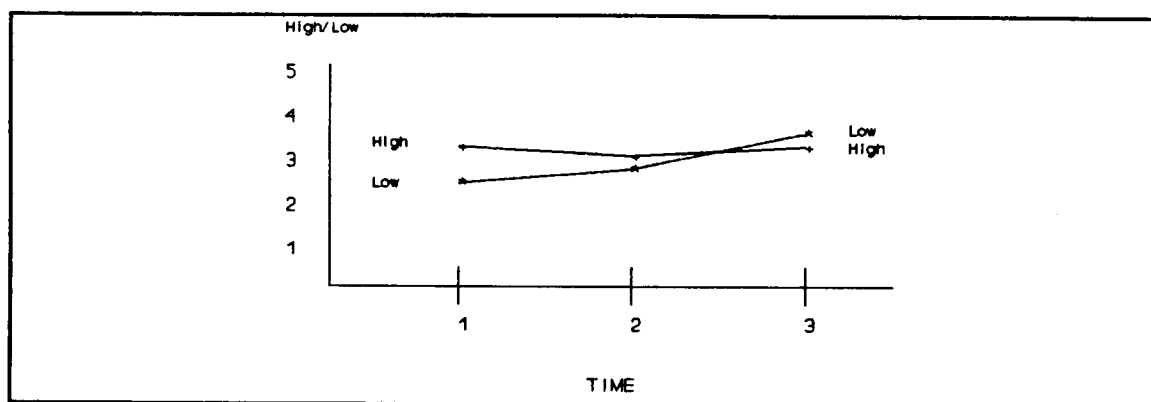


Figure IV-35. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the confidence of appraisal measure for the  $T_{1,2}$  and  $T_{2,3}$  comparisons.

appraisal from Time 1 to Time 3. Participants in the initial high performance condition also reported being more confident of their appraisal at Time 1 compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. In contrast, at Time 3, the participants in the initial low performance condition reported that they were more confident of their appraisal than were the participants in the initial high performance condition.

The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA for the confidence of appraisal measure also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 10.53$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 19.63$ ,  $p < .005$ ). Figure IV-36 demonstrates that a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction occurred in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition but did not occur in the single instance of discrepant information condition. In the multiple instances of discrepant information condition, participants in the initial high performance condition and initial low

performance condition reported the same level of confidence in their appraisal at Time 2. However, at Time 3, participants in the initial low performance condition reported an increase in their confidence of appraisal at Time 3 compared with Time 2, while participants in the initial high performance condition indicated that their confidence of appraisal remained relatively constant from Time 2 to Time 3. In the single instance of discrepant information condition, there was no difference in confidence of appraisal apparent between participants in the initial high performance condition and participants in the initial low performance condition at either Time 2 or Time 3. In addition, both groups reported that they were more confident of their appraisal at Time 3 than at Time 2.

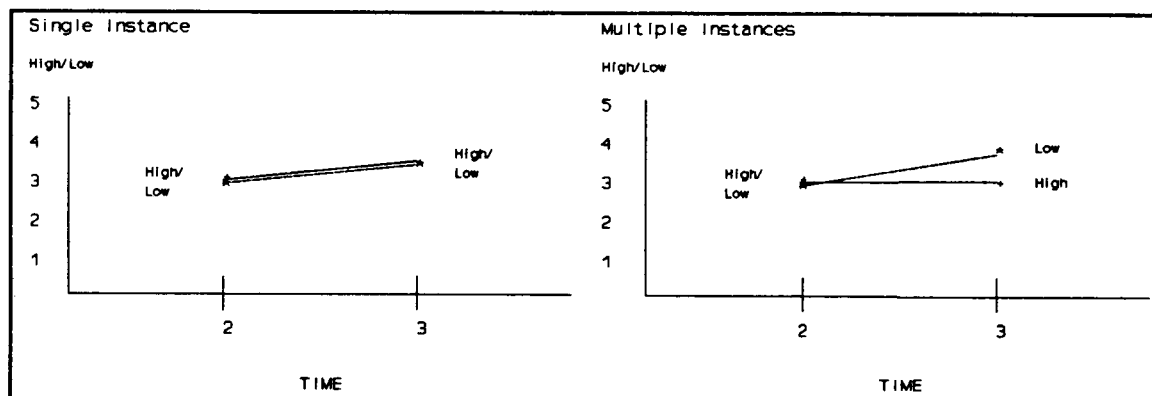


Figure IV-36. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the confidence of appraisal measure for the  $T_{23}$  comparison.



Figure IV-37 illustrates the  $T_{1,2}$  TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 4.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ) for the confidence of appraisal measure. It was noted that the results of the ANOVA at Time 1 indicated that the initial attribution condition had a stronger effect for participants that received the initial high performance cues compared with participants that received the initial low performance cues (Table IV-3, page 66). However, the results of the ANOVA for the confidence of appraisal measure at Time 2 did not reveal an effect for an INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction (Table IV-6, page 78).

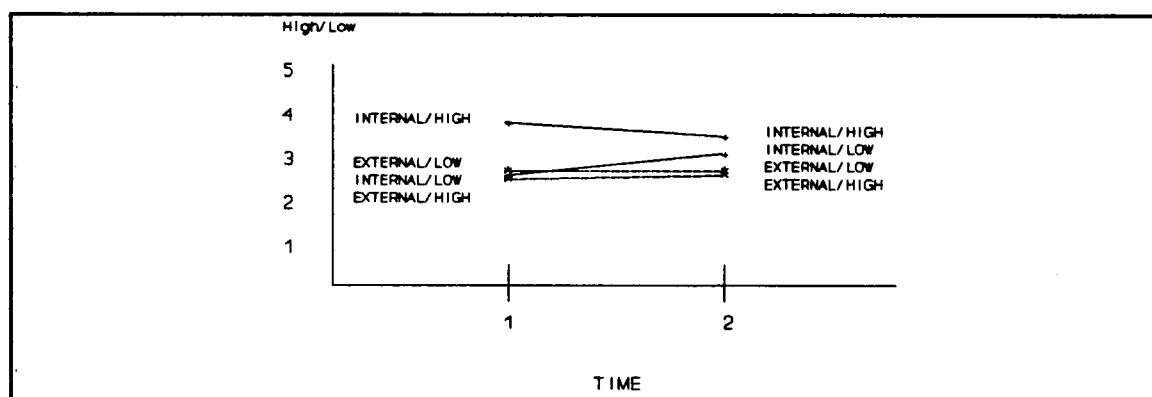


Figure IV-37. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the confidence of appraisal measure for the  $T_{1,2}$  comparison.

Request for Additional Information. The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA for the request for additional information measure revealed a TIME main effect ( $F = 15.46$ ,  $p < .0001$ ), as did the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 18.33$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). An inspection of the means associated with the TIME main effect showed that the

participants requests for additional information decreased from Time 2 to Time 3.

The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 3.49, p < .05$ ), as did the RMANOVA for the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison ( $F = 6.24, p < .05$ ). Figure IV-38 shows that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on requests for additional information at Time 3 than at Time 2. Specifically, participants in the initial high performance condition requested more additional information at Time 3 than participants in the initial low performance condition at Time 3. However, there was no reported difference in the requests for the initial high performance condition and the initial low performance condition at Time 2.

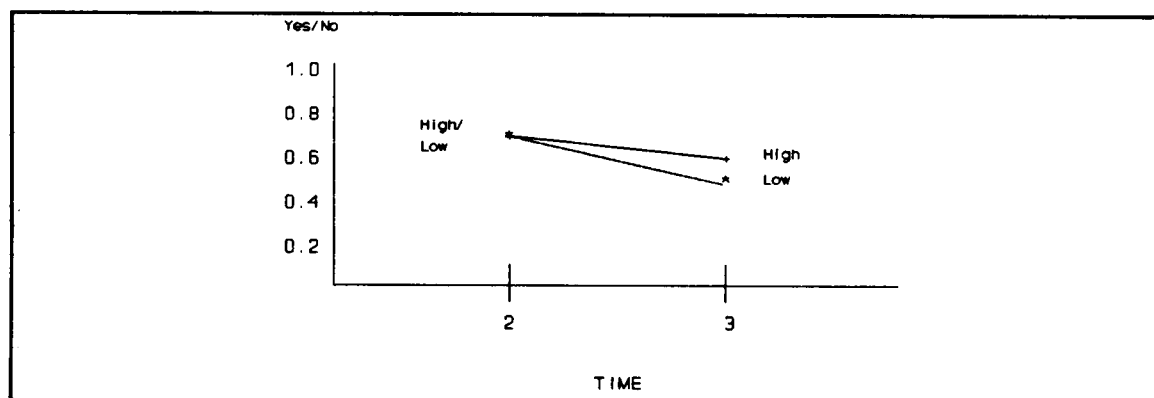


Figure IV-38. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction for the request for additional information measure for the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison.

The results of the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 4.58, p < .05$ ).

Figure IV-39 illustrates that a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction occurred in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition but not in the single instance of discrepant information condition. Figure IV-39 demonstrates that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on requests for additional information for participants who received multiple instances of discrepant information at Time 3 than at Time 2. That is, at Time 3, for the multiple instances of discrepant information condition, participants in the initial high performance condition requested more additional information compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. There was no difference in the requests indicated by participants in the initial high performance condition and initial low performance condition at Time 2. Figure IV-39

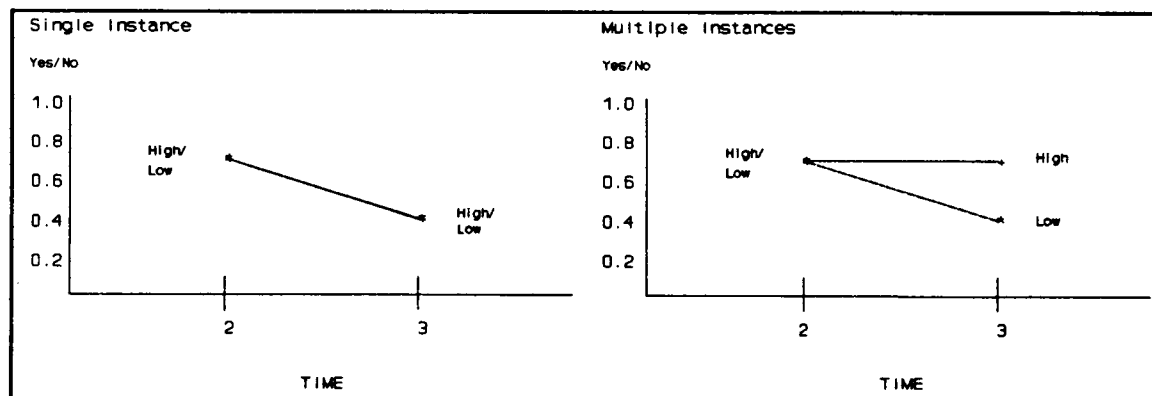


Figure IV-39. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the request for additional information measure for the  $T_{23}$  comparison.

shows that although, participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition requested more additional information at Time 2 than at Time 3, there was no difference between the initial high performance condition and initial low performance condition at Time 2 or at Time 3.

The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA revealed a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 5.55$ ,  $p < .05$ ), as did the  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 7.56$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As previously noted, the results of the ANOVA for Time 1 revealed a INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction demonstrating that initial attribution condition had a stronger effect for participants in the initial high performance condition compared with participants in the low performance condition (Table IV-3, page 66). Specifically, at Time 1, in the initial high performance condition, participants in the initial external attribution condition requested more additional information compared with participants in the initial internal attribution condition. The ANOVA for Time 2 did not show any differences between the participants in their request for additional information (Table IV-6, page 78).

Types of Additional Information. The types of additional information were constructed to represent the information domains of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus information.

Consistency. The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA for the consistency measure revealed a main effect for TIME ( $F = 3.75$ ,  $p < .05$ ), as did the  $T_{1,2}$  RMANOVA ( $F = 26.07$ ,  $p < .0001$ ). Inspection of the means associated with the TIME main effect showed that the participants reported that

consistency information would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance at Time 2 compared with Time 1.

Distinctiveness. The results of the  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA showed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 9.81$ ,  $p < .0001$ ) for the distinctiveness measure. Figure IV-40 illustrates that a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction occurred for the single instance of discrepant information condition but not in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition. Specifically, participants at Time 1 in the single instance of discrepant information condition who received the initial high performance cues reported that distinctiveness information would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance than participants who received the initial low performance cues. However, at Time 3 in the single instance of discrepant information condition, participants in the initial high performance condition reported that distinctiveness information would be less useful in explaining the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial low performance condition.

Consensus. The  $T_{1,3}$  RMANOVA revealed a TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 4.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The RMANOVA for the  $T_{2,3}$  comparison also showed a TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 5.40$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Inspection of the means associated with the TIME by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction showed that at Time 3, participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the performance of the target actor

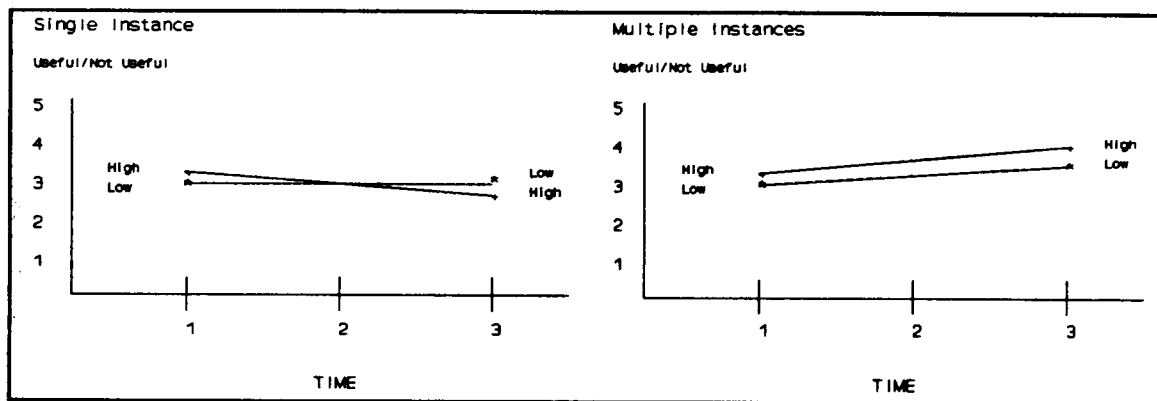


Figure IV-40. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the distinctiveness measure for the  $T_{1,3}$  comparison.

compared with participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition. There was no difference for participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition and participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition at Time 2.

The  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA for the consensus measure also revealed a TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction ( $F = 4.71$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Figure IV-41 illustrates that for participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition, the initial attribution condition had a stronger effect at Time 2 compared to Time 3.

In addition, the  $T_{2,3}$  RMANOVA also revealed a TIME by INITIAL PERFORMANCE interaction ( $F = 4.53$ ,  $p < .05$ ) for consensus information. Inspection of the means showed that initial performance cues had a stronger effect at Time 3 compared with Time 2. The results of the within-time ANOVA for the consensus measure at Time 3 showed a main effect

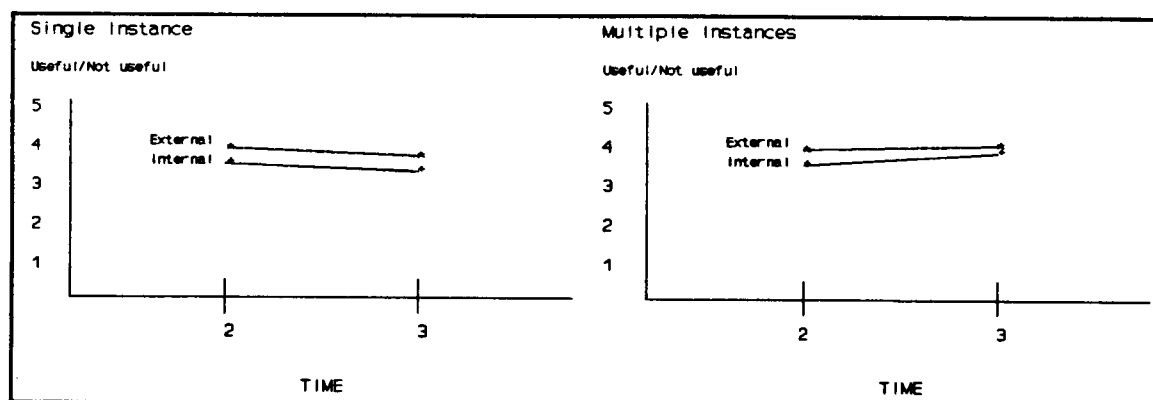


Figure IV-41. Illustration of the TIME by INITIAL ATTRIBUTION by DISCREPANT INFORMATION interaction for the consensus measure for the  $T_{23}$  comparison.

for INITIAL PERFORMANCE (Table IV-9, page 97), while the ANOVA for the consensus measure at Time 2 did not reveal an INITIAL PERFORMANCE effect (Table IV-6, page 78). At Time 3, participants in the initial high performance condition reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance compared with participants in the initial low performance condition at Time 3.

In summary, the results of the analysis for the confidence of appraisal measure did not support the research expectations that a single instance of discrepant information would elicit an increase in the participants' uncertainty of attribution for participants in the initial external attribution condition and that multiple instances of discrepant information would increase the participants' uncertainty of attribution for participants in both the initial internal attribution and initial external attribution conditions. The results did indicate, however, that

participants in the initial low performance condition were more confident of their appraisal at Time 3 than at Time 1 and that the confidence of appraisal for participants in the initial high performance condition remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3.

In addition, at Time 3 in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition, participants in the initial low performance condition reported being more confident of their appraisal compared with participants in the initial high performance condition. In contrast, at Time 2 in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition, there was no reported difference between participants in the initial low performance condition and the initial high performance condition. Although participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition reported being more confident of their appraisal at Time 3 than at Time 2, there was no reported difference between participants in the initial low performance condition or participants in the initial high performance condition at either Time 2 or Time 3.

The results of the analysis for the request for additional information also revealed that at Time 3 in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition, participants in the initial high performance condition requested more additional information compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. In contrast, at Time 2 for the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition, there was no reported difference between participants in the initial high performance condition and the initial low performance condition. Participants in the single instance of discrepant information



condition requested less additional information at Time 3 than at Time 2. However, there was no reported difference between participants in the initial high performance condition and the initial low performance condition at either Time 2 or Time 3 in their request for additional information.

The results of the analyses of the types of additional information indicated that consistency information was viewed as more useful in explaining the target actor's performance at Time 2 than at Time 1. In the single instance of discrepant information condition, participants in the initial high performance condition reported a decrease in the usefulness of distinctiveness information from Time 1 to Time 3. In contrast, participants in the initial low performance condition who received a single instance of discrepant information were relatively constant in their rating of the usefulness of distinctiveness information from Time 1 to Time 3. Participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition reported that distinctiveness information would be more useful at Time 3 than at Time 2, regardless of initial performance condition.

The results of the analysis for the consensus measure showed that participants that received multiple instances of discrepant information reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the target actor's performance at Time 3 compared with participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition. In addition, participants at Time 3 in the initial high performance condition also reported that consensus information would be more useful in explaining the

target actor's performance compared with participants at Time 3 in the initial low performance condition.

### Final Summary

The results of the Repeated Measures Analyses of Variance for the study did not support the initial hypothesis that multiple instances of discrepant information should elicit a change in the participants' initial causal attributions for the target actor's performance. As shown in Table IV-13, the results revealed instead that multiple instances of discrepant information had an effect on the initial performance conditions across time periods. The following chapter (i.e., Chapter V) summarizes the empirical results and discusses the implications of this study to the information processing model.

Table IV-13. Expected effects compared with obtained effects for the study.

| Measures                               | T <sub>1-2</sub> |                    | T <sub>2-3</sub>                                              |                                                          |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|                                        | Expected         | Obtained           | Expected                                                      | Obtained                                                 |
| Evaluation                             |                  |                    |                                                               |                                                          |
| Performance Appraisal                  | none             | Time (T)<br>T * P  | T * P <sup>a</sup><br>T * P * D<br>T * A <sup>c</sup> * P * D | T * P<br>T * D <sup>b</sup><br>T * P * D                 |
| Person Impression                      | none             | T * P              | T * P<br>T * P * D<br>T * A * P * D                           | Time<br>T * P<br>T * A * D<br>T * P * D<br>T * A * P * D |
| Attribution                            |                  |                    |                                                               |                                                          |
| Locus of Causality<br>Person/Situation | Time<br>T * A    | none               | T * A * D                                                     | T * P<br>T * P * D                                       |
| Internal/External                      | Time<br>T * A    | none               | T * A * D                                                     | T * A * P                                                |
| Stability                              | Time             | none               | T * D                                                         | none                                                     |
| Responsibility                         | T * A            | T * A<br>T * P     | T * D<br>T * A * D                                            | Time<br>T * P * D<br>T * A * P * D                       |
| Information Search                     |                  |                    |                                                               |                                                          |
| Confidence of Appraisal                | Time<br>T * A    | T * P<br>T * A * P | Time<br>T * A * D                                             | Time<br>T * P<br>T * P * D                               |
| Request for Additional<br>Information  | Time             | T * P              | T * D                                                         | Time<br>T * P<br>T * P * D                               |

<sup>a</sup>Initial Performance. <sup>b</sup>Discrepant Information. <sup>c</sup>Initial Attribution.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

The present study examined aspects of the cognitive information processing model proposed by Feldman (1981). The cognitive information processing model suggests that an observer will use either an automatic or controlled categorization process to store information about a specific person. Feldman indicated that the first stage in categorization involves a process by which the observer develops a causal attribution for an actor's performance. The second stage in the process is one in which the observer assigns the actor to a particular cognitive category based upon the observer's causal attribution and the observer's category system. That is, it is expected that an observer would assign a target person to a particular category based on the match of salient characteristics of the person and the attributes of categories that are easily accessible to the observer. When asked to recall information about the person, the observer may infer characteristics of the person from the attributes of the person's category prototype rather than recall actual behavior. Ilgen and Feldman (1983) also suggest that an observer's evaluative responses for an actor may be based on the evaluative impressions stored with the actor's assigned category.

The purpose for the study was to explore the issue of whether the participants would develop causal attributions to explain the performance of a target actor and then use the causal attributions as a source of information for categorizing the actor. The study also attempted to show

that the participants would engage in a search for additional information when presented with discrepant information about the target actor's performance (i.e., a controlled information processing function). It was expected that the participants would modify their causal attribution for an actor's performance in order to incorporate the discrepant performance information. Subsequently, the participants were expected to use the modified causal attribution as a source of information to re-categorize the target actor.

The present study presented the participants with performance information in the form of consistency, distinctiveness and consensus cues for a target actor and two comparison others. It was expected that the participants would develop causal attributions to account for the actor's performance and then use the attributions as a source of information in assigning the actor to a category. The participants were asked to evaluate the target actor's performance and then describe their person impression of the actor. The person impression measure presumably reflects aspects of the cognitive category to which the actor was assigned. That is, the participant's responses on the person impression measure were expected to be based, in part, upon the attributes of the prototype corresponding to the actor's assigned category.

The present chapter provides a discussion of the important empirical findings obtained in the study. Specifically, the chapter provides (1) a summary of the empirical results, (2) a discussion of the implications of the results of this study to the model, and (3) a discussion of the methodological issues that serve to qualify the study.

### Summary of the Empirical Results

The information processing model (Feldman, 1981) identified two conditions under which an observer was expected to categorize an actor: (1) initial interaction and (2) after the observer is presented with information inconsistent with the actor's assigned category. The observer may use either an automatic or controlled categorization process to initially assign the actor to a specific category depending on the salient characteristics of the actor and the categories easily available to the observer. Once an actor has been categorized, the observer is expected to rely on the automatic process as long as the actor's performance remains consistent with the expectations derived from the actor's assigned category. The model suggests that a controlled re-categorization process would occur when an actor's performance exceeds some threshold of discrepancy from the observer's expectations.

#### Initial Categorization

The results of the study at Time 1 indicated that the participants used the information cues concerning the consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus of performance as a source of information about the target actor. The results suggested that specific patterns of information cues elicited either the intended internal or external attribution for the target actor's performance. The results also indicated that the pattern of information cues for the actor's performance contributed to distinct initial person impressions (i.e., categorizations) of the actor at Time 1 as suggested by the model. That is, as expected, the participants that

received a pattern of information cues designed to elicit an initial internal attribution rated the target actor higher on the person impression measure compared with participants that received a pattern of information cues designed to elicit an external attribution.

The results also indicated that the participants used the initial level of performance as another source of information about the target actor. As expected, participants in the initial high performance condition reported a higher evaluation for the target actor on the person impression measure compared with participants in the initial low performance condition.

In addition, the results suggested that initial performance cues had a stronger effect on evaluations of the actor for participants in the initial internal attribution condition compared with the effect on participants in the initial external attribution condition. That is, consistent with previous research (e.g., Knowlton and Mitchell, 1981), participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported a higher evaluation for participants in the initial high performance condition compared with participants in the initial low performance condition. In contrast, participants in the initial internal attribution condition reported a lower evaluation for participants in the initial low performance condition compared with participants in the initial external attribution condition.

The results of the study at Time 1 were consistent with the expectations derived from the information processing model. The model suggests that an observer would initially assign an actor to a category as a function of the observer's initial attributions for the actor's

performance. The results indicated that specific patterns of performance information cues (i.e., consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus cues) elicited either the expected internal or external attribution for the target actor's performance. The results also indicated that the participants may have made different evaluations of the target actor on the person impression measure depending on initial attribution condition (i.e., either internal or external). In addition, the results also suggested that the participants used the actor's initial level of performance as another source of information when evaluating the actor.

#### Re-categorization

The model suggests that an observer will engage in a controlled re-categorization process when presented with sufficient discrepant information about a target actor. That is, once a threshold of discrepancy is exceeded, an observer is expected to engage in a search for additional information to explain the target actor's unexpected performance. After searching the additional information, the observer is then expected to form causal attributions to explain the actor's performance, and re-assign the actor to a category based on the observer's new causal attributions as they coincide with the observer's category system.

The present study proposed that a single instance of discrepant information would not be sufficient to elicit the re-categorization process (i.e., as indicated by a change in the evaluation of the target actor on the person impression measure across time). It was expected however, that participants in the multiple instances of discrepant



information condition would engage in a re-categorization process. In particular, participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition were expected to engage in an extended information search to explain the discrepant information about the target actor. Next, the participants were expected to develop causal attributions to account for the unexpected change in the actor's performance. Finally, it was expected that the participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition would re-assign the target actor to a different cognitive category (i.e., as indicated on the person impression measure).

The results of the analyses indicated that the participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition in fact altered their evaluations of the target actor at Time 3 compared with Time 1. Participants in the single instance of discrepant information appeared to maintain their initial evaluations (i.e., categorization) of the actor from Time 1 to Time 3. The analyses did not show, however, that the participants at Time 3 revised their initial causal attributions for the actor's performance after receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information. In contrast, the results seem to reveal that the extent to which the participants re-categorized the actor after receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information was more a function of initial performance conditions than a function of attribution conditions. That is, after receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information, participants in the initial high performance condition reported lower evaluations for the actor at Time 3 than at Time 1, while participants in the initial low performance condition

reported an increase in their evaluations of the actor from Time 1 to Time 3.

#### Discrepant Information and Initial Attribution Condition

It was hypothesized in the present study that multiple instances of discrepant performance information for the target actor would have a stronger effect on attributions and evaluations for participants in the initial external attribution condition than participants in the initial internal attribution. That is, as the actor's performance changed over time, it was expected that participants in the initial external attribution condition would attribute the actor's performance at Time 3 as more a function of internal factors than occurred at Time 1. In contrast, participants in the initial internal attribution condition were expected to attribute the cause of the actor's performance as a function of internal factors at both Time 1 and Time 3. Participants in the single instance of discrepant performance condition were expected to maintain their initial attributions (i.e., either internal or external attribution) from Time 1 to Time 3 for the actor's performance.

The results of the analyses did not support the initial hypothesis that multiple instances of discrepant performance information would have a stronger effect on attributions and evaluations for participants in the initial external attribution condition compared with the effect on participants in the initial internal attribution condition. In fact, there was no change from Time 1 to Time 3 in the reported causal attributions for the actor's performance by participants in the initial

external attribution condition or the initial internal attribution condition.

#### Discrepant Information and Initial Performance Condition

A single instance of discrepant information. The results of the analyses indicated that the participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition, regardless of initial performance condition, did not modify their evaluations of the actor from Time 1 to Time 3, presumably reflecting an automatic information processing function. Moreover, participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition reported an increase in their confidence of their appraisal of the target actor from Time 1 to Time 3 and as expected, they requested less additional information at Time 3 than at Time 1. In addition, the initial causal attributions made by the participants in the single instance of discrepant information to account for the actor's performance remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3 with no distinction apparent as a function of the initial high and initial low performance conditions. Finally, the participants' evaluation of the actor on the person impression measure in the single instance of discrepant information condition remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3. That is, participants in the initial high performance condition consistently reported a higher evaluation of the actor compared with participants in the initial low performance condition at both Time 1 and Time 3.

Multiple instances of discrepant performance information. In contrast, the results seem to indicate that the participants in the multiple instances of discrepant performance information condition may have re-classified the target actor from Time 1 to Time 3. These results also appeared to be a function of the level of initial performance. That is, the participants in the initial low performance condition reported a higher evaluation of the actor at Time 3 than at Time 1. In addition, participants in the initial low performance condition reported that the actor's performance was more a function of internal causes at Time 3 compared with Time 1. Curiously, the results also indicated that participants in the initial low performance condition were more confident of their appraisal and requested less additional information at Time 3 than at Time 1. Specifically, from Time 1 to Time 3, participants in the initial low performance condition reported a increase in their confidence of appraisal and a corresponding decrease in their request for additional information.

The results also seemed to indicate that participants in the initial high performance condition that received multiple instances of discrepant information may have re-classified the target actor (i.e., reported a change in their evaluation of the actor on the person impression measure from Time 1 to Time 3). The participants in the initial high performance condition reported a decrease in their evaluation of the actor on the person impression measure from Time 1 to Time 3. The participants also attributed the actor's performance as more a function of external causes at Time 3 compared with their initial causal attributions at Time 1. The confidence in appraisal by the participants in the initial high

performance condition for the actor's performance remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3 compared with that of the participants in the initial low performance condition. The participants corresponding request for additional information also remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3.

### Implications for the Information Processing Model

The results of the study seemed to provide some support for the information processing model proposed by Feldman (1981). Feldman suggested that the observer will use either an automatic or controlled process to categorize an actor and that the selection of an appropriate category for the actor depends on the observer's causal attributions and the observer's existing category system. The selection of either the automatic or controlled categorization process is dependent upon the characteristics of the actor and the observer's existing category system. Ilgen and Feldman (1983) also suggested that certain aspects of an actor (e.g., sex, race, age) may be so salient that an observer may be able to automatically assign the actor to a particular category. They also indicated that the controlled categorization process may occur under two possible conditions: (1) initial interaction with the actor or (2) following the presentation of information inconsistent with an actor's assigned category (i.e., re-categorization). Feldman further suggested that, under the controlled categorization process, an observer will develop causal attributions to account for an actor's performance. Once an observer has established causal attributions for an actor's

performance, the observer is expected to assign the actor to a cognitive category.

The results of the present study indicated that the participants used causal attributions for an actor's performance as a source of information about the actor in deriving specific evaluations (e.g., to initially assign the actor to a cognitive category). The results also indicated that the participants, following the introduction of multiple instances of discrepant performance information, appeared to assign the actor to another category on the basis of the discrepant information (i.e., re-categorization). The results indicated that the participants in the multiple instances of discrepant information condition altered their causal attributions to explain the changes in the actor's performance from Time 1 to Time 3. The results also revealed that the participants revised their evaluation of the actor following the introduction of multiple instances of discrepant performance information.

In contrast, the results also seemed to indicate that the participants in the single instance of discrepant information condition appeared to employ an automatic categorization function at Time 3 consistent with the impressions derived at Time 1. That is, the participants reported that they were more confident of their appraisal at Time 3 compared with Time 1 and they requested less additional information to explain the actor's performance at Time 3 compared to Time 1. Furthermore, their reported evaluation of the actor on the person impression measure remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3.

### Methodological Issues

It was hypothesized in the present study that any revisions of the causal attributions for the actor's performance following the introduction of multiple instances of discrepant information would be a function of induced initial attributions. Specifically, it was expected that participants in the initial external attribution condition would develop an internal attribution for the actor's performance after receiving multiple instances of discrepant performance information. It was also expected that participants in the initial internal attribution condition would continue to attribute the cause of the actor's performance as a function of internal factors following the introduction of multiple instances of discrepant performance information.

The results of the study did not support the initial hypothesis that participants in the initial attribution conditions (i.e., either internal or external) would alter their causal attributions for the actor's performance following the introduction of multiple instances of discrepant information. In support of the model, the results did indicate, however, that the participants in the study, in fact, developed initial causal attributions for the actor's performance at Time 1 and different causal attributions at Time 3 following the introduction of multiple instances of discrepant information. The revision of attributions, however, appeared to be largely a function of initial performance conditions, and not a function of initial attribution conditions. That is, contrary to initial expectations, participants in the initial internal attribution condition continued to report that the actor's performance was more a

function of internal causes at Time 1 through Time 3 compared with participants in the initial external condition.

Inspection of the means of the attribution measures by initial performance groups (i.e., high and low) and initial attribution conditions (i.e., internal and external) revealed that after receiving multiple instances of discrepant information, participants in the initial low performance condition at Time 3, regardless of their initial attribution, reported that the cause of the actor's performance was more a function of internal causes compared to their responses at Time 1. In contrast, participants in the initial high performance condition that received multiple instances of discrepant performance information reported that the cause of the actor's performance was due more to external factors at Time 3 compared to their initial attributions at Time 1. However, the results also indicated that the mean responses for the participants in the initial attribution conditions remained relatively constant from Time 1 to Time 3.

Due to the experimental nature of this study some concern should be given to its generalizability. First, the information provided to the participants about the actor consisted entirely of instances of performance. Thus, the use of performance cues eliminated any effect due to the actor's personality that would be present in a field setting. Secondly, unlike the work setting where performance appraisals may be six months apart (Landy, 1986), the entire exercise was completed by the participants in less than an hour and the participants were able to immediately review the actor's previous quarters performance. Thus, there was little if any memory or storage demands placed on the participants.



### Practical Implications

Krzystofiak, Cardy, and Newman (1988) have suggested that the categorization process may have a strong impact on performance appraisals in the work setting. In addition, they suggested that the categorization process may be a natural cognitive process and that categorization and recall may be a part of the observer's information processing. Krzystofiak et al., suggested that since research has failed to indicate the superiority of behaviorally based rating scales (e.g., Landy & Farr, 1980) then categorization information may have a relevant place in information processing. They suggested that rather than trying to identify a single best format, it may be better to try and capture all information: behavioral, category attributes, and outcome.

Ilgen and Feldman (1983) suggested that the categorization process may affect an appraiser's (1) attention to and perception of an employee's behavior, (2) behavioral interaction between the appraiser and an employee, and (3) recall of an employee's behavior at the time a formal evaluation is required. They proposed that training programs which focus on the entire appraisal process may produce more accurate ratings.

Specifically, Ilgen and Feldman (1983) recommended that training include the information encoding and memory storage processes as well as information retrieval. Appraisers may be made aware of problems in data collection and be trained to gather more valid information. In addition, Ilgen and Feldman also suggested that training (e.g., as found in

assessment centers) may provide a common frame of reference by which individuals may agree on a shared category set.

### Conclusion

The present study offered some support for the information processing model proposed by Feldman (1981). The study indicated that observers may use either an automatic or controlled information processing function to assign an actor to a specific cognitive category. The study also suggested that an observer may use causal attributions for an actor's performance as a source of information when assigning the actor to a cognitive category (i.e., controlled categorization). In addition, the study revealed that the actor's level of performance may contribute to the observer's categorization of the actor. The results of this study indicated that a single instance of discrepant information about the actor was not sufficient to elicit a change in person impression (i.e., the controlled categorization process). In contrast, the results indicated that multiple instances of discrepant information seemed to induce a controlled categorization process for the participants of this study.

Recent research by Karl and Wexley (1989) examined the effects of the pattern of an actor's performance on observer's evaluation of the actor. Their results indicated that an actor that exhibited an ascending pattern of performance was evaluated higher compared with an actor that exhibited a descending pattern of performance. The results of the present study are consistent with the findings by Karl and Wexley. The present study found that in the multiple instances of discrepant information

condition at Time 3, participants in the initial low performance condition were evaluated higher on the person impression measure compared with participants in the initial high performance condition.

Karl and Wexley (1989) noted that they were able to identify only four studies that investigated the effect of patterns of performance on performance ratings and no studies investigating the impact of patterns of performance on observer evaluations. The present study contributes to the existing research base in this area. Clearly, however, there is a need for additional research both in the laboratory and in the field.

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## APPENDIX



## Participant Consent Form

The present project is designed to investigate some aspects of the performance appraisal process. You will receive information about the performance of three students in two different courses. This information will consist of a series of quiz scores in each of the courses. At three different times you will be asked to evaluate one of the student's performance. A questionnaire will be provide to aid you in the evaluation of the student's performance. This project should take between 45 minutes and an hour to complete. Your cooperation is sincerely appreciated. It is expected that the present project will aid in the development of a formal performance appraisal process.

All records will be kept in the strictest confidentiality. All responses will be coded in order to ensure the anonymity of each participant. Any questions regarding the research project or about the rights of the participants may be directed to the Project Director. A debriefing session will be held following the conclusion of the study to answer any questions that you may have regarding this project.

All participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. In addition, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

I, the undersigned, have read the above information and voluntarily agree to participate in this research project.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To the participant:

Thank you for participating in this study. Your assistance is sincerely appreciated. The present study in which you have agreed to participate is a field test of a performance evaluation procedure that may be used in the university to determine eligibility of students for particular programs. The following information provides the background for the study. Your role in the study is then described.

#### Background Information

Rising enrollment, a concern for the quality of student education, and limited resources has prompted a number of departments in the university to consider limiting the number of students admitted into a particular program each year. One department, considering the limiting of student enrollment, is attempting to develop a fair and unbiased admission procedure. The present study is designed to assist in the development of such a procedure. To avoid the possible biasing of responses during this study, all references that might identify this department have been eliminated. However, some general background information will be provided to you.

Faced with the prospect of limiting the number of students admitted to their program, this department has identified two courses which it feels are necessary for success in the program. It has been proposed that a student's performance in these two courses, therefore, be used as one criteria for admission into the program.

A performance evaluation form has been developed to be used as a method of determining a student's eligibility into the program. This form should provide the department with an adequate screening device in order to select the best students for the program.

#### Participant Responsibilities

The packet that you have received contains the exam results for three students enrolled in the two prerequisite courses. For the purposes of this study, these two courses will be labeled Course A and Course B. Each course uses the same general format: each course is a three quarter sequence (i.e., Fall, Winter, and Spring); students must attend three sections per week; and students must complete five quizzes over the course of a quarter. Each student must have completed both courses before being considered for admission to the program.

For each student, you will receive a copy of their quiz scores by course and quarter. These scores represent the number of items that the student correctly answered on that particular quiz. It is your responsibility to transfer the individual scores to the Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet (CPRS) provided in the packet. The CPRS will be used as the primary source of information for your recommendations about a student's admission into the department. Be sure to list the information on the CPRS in the same order that it is listed on the Individual Performance Record Sheet since each entry is coded to represent the date and time that the quizzes were administered.

Once the scores are recorded on the Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet, you will be asked to provide an evaluation for one of the three students at the end of each quarter. You may be asked to evaluate the same student for all three quarters or you may be responsible for a different student each quarter. You will not be told which student you will be responsible for evaluating until after you have recorded all three student's quiz scores for a particular quarter. Once you have completed an evaluation for Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters, you will be asked to make some specific recommendations about the procedures used in this study.

A section will be provided at the end of the study for any comments or suggestions that you may have regarding the procedure used or the performance evaluation form itself. Please feel free to make any comments or suggestions that you believe may improve the form or the procedure to be used. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and any relevant feedback will be incorporated into the procedure.

#### Participant Identification

On the cover of the packet that you received is an identification number. Use this number whenever you are asked to identify yourself. DO NOT USE YOUR OWN NAME. For example, on the Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet use the identification number on the cover of the packet to indicate who is completing the form.

Thank you for your time and assistance. It is sincerely appreciated.

### Participant Instruction Booklet

To the participant:

Please take a moment at this time and make sure that the following materials are included in your packet.

- a. One Participant Instruction Booklet.
- b. One Performance Evaluation Questionnaire.
- c. One Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet (CPRS).
- d. One envelope labeled:  
Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, Fall  
Quarter.
- e. One envelope labeled:  
Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, Winter  
Quarter.
- f. One envelope labeled:  
Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, Spring  
Quarter.
- g. One booklet labeled:  
Comments and Suggestions.

If any item is missing, please contact the person conducting the research study immediately. If you have all the materials listed above, please turn to the next page in the Participant Instruction Booklet and follow the instructions provided.

Instructions for Completion of the Comprehensive  
Performance Record Sheet

Part I

1. Remove the Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet (CPRS) from the first packet of quiz scores.
2. Copy the identification number found on the front of the test packet in the space on the CPRS labeled:  
Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Locate the Student Performance Record Sheet labeled: Student Quiz Scores, Fall Quarter (next page).
4. Copy each Student Code number from the Student Performance Record Sheet to the CPRS in the space labeled:  
Student Code #: \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Copy each student's quiz scores in the numbered spaces for Course A and Course B.
6. When you have completed transcribing the quiz scores for ALL THREE STUDENTS, please remove the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form from the envelope labeled:  
Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, Fall Quarter.
7. Using the information that you have just recorded for the past quarter's set of quiz scores on all three students, complete the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire for the student and course identified at the top of the answer form.
8. After completing the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, replace the completed form into the envelope labeled: Performance Evaluation Answer Form, Fall Quarter.
9. Put the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire aside for the moment but remember where it is located because you will use the questionnaire again.

Turn to the next page after completing the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form.

## Student Performance Record Sheet

Student Quiz Scores  
Fall Quarter

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Student Code #: ILM

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>50</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>53</u> |
| Course B | <u>50</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>53</u> |

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Student Code #: BRT

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>93</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>93</u> |
| Course B | <u>93</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>92</u> |

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Student Code #: JDS

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>97</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>98</u> |
| Course B | <u>97</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>99</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>94</u> |

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Instructions for Completion of the Comprehensive  
Performance Record Sheet

Part II

1. Locate the Student Performance Record Sheet for Winter Quarter (next page).
2. Copy each student's quiz scores from the Student Performance Record Sheet for Winter Quarter to the CPRS for Course A and Course B.
3. When you have completed transcribing the quiz scores for ALL THREE STUDENTS, please remove the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form from the enveloped labeled:  
Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, Winter Quarter.
4. Using the information that you have just recorded for the past quarter's set of quiz scores on all three students, complete the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire for the student and course identified at the top of the answer form.
5. After completing the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, replace the completed form into the envelope labeled: Performance Evaluation Answer Form, Winter Quarter.
6. Put the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire aside for the moment but remember where it is located because you will use the questionnaire again.

Turn to the next section after completing the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form.

## Student Performance Record Sheet

Student Quiz Scores  
Winter Quarter

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Student Code #: ILM

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>49</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>51</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>93</u> |
| Course B | <u>52</u> | <u>51</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>49</u> | <u>48</u> |

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Student Code #: BRT

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>93</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>93</u> |
| Course B | <u>95</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>94</u> |

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Student Code #: JDS

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>92</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>98</u> |
| Course B | <u>97</u> | <u>93</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>93</u> |

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Instructions for Completion of the Comprehensive  
Performance Record Sheet

Part III

1. Locate the Student Performance Record Sheet for Spring Quarter (next page).
2. Copy each student's quiz scores from the Student Performance Record Sheet for Spring Quarter to the CPRS for Course A and Course B.
3. When you have completed transcribing the quiz scores for ALL THREE STUDENTS, please remove the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form from the envelope labeled:  
Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, Spring Quarter.
4. Using the information that you have just recorded for the past quarter's set of quiz scores on all three students, complete the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire for the student and course identified at the top of the answer form.
5. After completing the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, replace the completed form into the envelope labeled: Performance Evaluation Answer Form, Spring Quarter.
6. Place the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire with the three envelopes containing the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Forms.

When you have completed the Performance Evaluation Questionnaire Answer Form, locate the booklet labeled: Comments and Suggestions.

Open the booklet and answer the questions that you find there.

## Student Performance Record Sheet

Student Quiz Scores  
Spring Quarter

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Student Code #: ILM

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>95</u> |
| Course B | <u>49</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>51</u> | <u>46</u> | <u>48</u> |

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Student Code #: BRT

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>92</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>94</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>93</u> |
| Course B | <u>95</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>95</u> | <u>92</u> |

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Student Code #: JDS

|          |           |           |           |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Quiz #   | 01        | 02        | 03        | 04        | 05        |
| Course A | <u>99</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>96</u> | <u>95</u> |
| Course B | <u>96</u> | <u>98</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>96</u> |

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# Performance Evaluation

**Section A.** Think about the individual's level of performance during the most recent period and what conditions you think could account for the individual's performance level.

How would you describe the individual's level of performance for the most recent period?

|      |      |         |      |      |
|------|------|---------|------|------|
| A    | B    | C       | D    | E    |
| Very | Poor | Average | Good | Very |
| Poor |      |         |      | Good |

1. The individual's level of performance is most probably due to some personal quality or characteristic (e.g., level of ability, motivation, interest, etc.).

|          |       |       |          |          |
|----------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| A        | B     | C     | D        | E        |
| Strongly | Agree | Don't | Disagree | Strongly |
| Agree    |       | Know  |          | Disagree |

2. The individual's level of performance is most probably due to some situational factor (e.g., level of difficulty for the task, etc.).

|          |       |       |          |          |
|----------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| A        | B     | C     | D        | E        |
| Strongly | Agree | Don't | Disagree | Strongly |
| Agree    |       | Know  |          | Disagree |

3. The factor(s) responsible for the individual's level of performance are under the direct control of the individual.

|          |       |       |          |          |
|----------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| A        | B     | C     | D        | E        |
| Strongly | Agree | Don't | Disagree | Strongly |
| Agree    |       | Know  |          | Disagree |

4. The individual could alter the level of performance if he/she chose to do so.

|          |       |       |          |          |
|----------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| A        | B     | C     | D        | E        |
| Strongly | Agree | Don't | Disagree | Strongly |
| Agree    |       | Know  |          | Disagree |

5. The individual is clearly responsible for his/her performance.

|          |       |       |          |          |
|----------|-------|-------|----------|----------|
| A        | B     | C     | D        | E        |
| Strongly | Agree | Don't | Disagree | Strongly |
| Agree    |       | Know  |          | Disagree |

6. To what extent is each of the following factors likely to account for the individual's most recent level of performance.

a. Effort (high or low)

|        |        |       |          |          |
|--------|--------|-------|----------|----------|
| A      | B      | C     | D        | E        |
| Very   | Likely | Don't | Unlikely | Very     |
| Likely |        | Know  |          | Unlikely |

b. Ability (high or low)

|        |        |       |          |          |
|--------|--------|-------|----------|----------|
| A      | B      | C     | D        | E        |
| Very   | Likely | Don't | Unlikely | Very     |
| Likely |        | Know  |          | Unlikely |

c. Nature of the task (easy or difficult)

|        |        |       |          |          |
|--------|--------|-------|----------|----------|
| A      | B      | C     | D        | E        |
| Very   | Likely | Don't | Unlikely | Very     |
| Likely |        | Know  |          | Unlikely |

d. Luck (good or bad)

|        |        |       |          |          |
|--------|--------|-------|----------|----------|
| A      | B      | C     | D        | E        |
| Very   | Likely | Don't | Unlikely | Very     |
| Likely |        | Know  |          | Unlikely |

7. How confident are you in your appraisal and in your accounting of this individual's performance?

|           |            |           |           |           |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| A         | B          | C         | D         | E         |
| Highly    | Moderately | Fairly    | Barely    | Not       |
| Confident | Confident  | Confident | Confident | Confident |

8. Do you desire further information about the individual?

|     |    |
|-----|----|
| A   | B  |
| Yes | No |

If yes, continue to and complete Section B.  
If no, continue and complete Section C.

**Section B.** If you feel that you have sufficient understanding of the causes for the individual's most recent level of performance, please skip this section and continue to Section C. Otherwise, if you require additional information to help you account for the individual's most recent level of performance, please indicate which specific questions would be of most benefit to you.

Use the following scale to indicate how useful each question would be to help you account for the individual's most recent level of performance.

|                                                                                             | A<br>Highly<br>Useful | B<br>Moderately<br>Useful | C<br>Fairly<br>Useful | D<br>Marginally<br>Useful | E<br>Not<br>Useful |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. I would like to know more about the individual's past performance on this task.          | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 2. I would like to know how frequently the individual has performed this way.               | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 3. Does the individual often change levels of performance on this task?                     | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 4. Is the individual usually a reliable performer on this type of task?                     | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 5. How does the individual perform on other, similar tasks?                                 | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 6. How does the individual perform on other tasks that are different from the present task? | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 7. How did other people perform on similar tasks?                                           | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |
| 8. How do other people do on other, dissimilar tasks?                                       | A                     | B                         | C                     | D                         | E                  |

Use the following scale to indicate how useful each question would be to help you account for the individual's most recent level of performance.

|                                                                         | A<br>Highly<br>Useful | B<br>Moderately<br>Useful | C<br>Fairly<br>Useful | D<br>Marginally<br>Useful | E<br>Not<br>Useful |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 10. Did circumstances change for the individual?                        |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 11. Did something change in the situation?                              |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 12. Did something change in the task?                                   |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 13. Did someone else bring about a change in the task?                  |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 14. Did someone else effect a change in the situation?                  |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 15. Was this particular individual the only one who performed this way? |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 16. How has the individual performed on the task recently?              |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 17. How have other individuals performed on this task recently?         |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 18. How different are the tasks that the individual is performing?      |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 19. Does the individual complete the tasks at the same time?            |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |
| 20. Are the tasks completed under the same circumstances?               |                       |                           |                       | A B C                     | D E                |

Continue to and complete Section C.



## Participant Comments and Suggestions

Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_

The following questions are designed to assess your reactions to the present study. Please answer these questions as honestly as possible. Any information that you provide will be appreciated.

1. In your opinion, what was the purpose of the present study?

2. How well did the present study achieve its purpose?

3. Were the directions clearly stated?

|       |            |        |        |       |
|-------|------------|--------|--------|-------|
| A     | B          | C      | D      | E     |
| Very  | Moderately | Fairly | Barely | Not   |
| Clear | Clear      | Clear  | Clear  | Clear |

4. How easy were the directions to understand?

|      |            |        |        |      |
|------|------------|--------|--------|------|
| A    | B          | C      | D      | E    |
| Very | Moderately | Fairly | Barely | Not  |
| Easy | Easy       | Easy   | Easy   | Easy |

5. Please state any suggestions or comments about the directions here.

6. Was the presentation of the students' quiz scores easy to understand?



7. Please state any suggestions or comments about the presentation of the quiz scores here.

8. How easy was the evaluation questionnaire to use?

|      |            |        |        |      |
|------|------------|--------|--------|------|
| A    | B          | C      | D      | E    |
| Very | Moderately | Fairly | Barely | Not  |
| Easy | Easy       | Easy   | Easy   | Easy |

9. Please state any suggestions or comments about improving the evaluation questionnaire here.

10. Please state any additional comments or suggestions regarding the testing procedure here.

# Comprehensive Performance Record Sheet (CPRS)

Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_

|                 |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Student Code #: | _____ |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
|                 | Fall  |       |       |       |       | Winter |       |       |       |       | Spring |       |       |       |       |
| Trial #         | 01    | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    | 01     | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    | 01     | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    |
| Task A          | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Task B          | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

|                 |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Student Code #: | _____ |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
|                 | Fall  |       |       |       |       | Winter |       |       |       |       | Spring |       |       |       |       |
| Trial #         | 01    | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    | 01     | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    | 01     | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    |
| Task A          | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Task B          | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

|                 |       |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Student Code #: | _____ |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |        |       |       |       |       |
|                 | Fall  |       |       |       |       | Winter |       |       |       |       | Spring |       |       |       |       |
| Trial #         | 01    | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    | 01     | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    | 01     | 02    | 03    | 04    | 05    |
| Task A          | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Task B          | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

## VITA

Neil Allen Thomas was born on October 23, 1953, in Richmond, California. He is the son of Vernon and Joan Thomas. Neil attended high school at Pinole Valley High School in Pinole, California, and is a graduate of the California State University at Hayward, where he received his B.S. with a major in psychology in December, 1979. He was employed by Ford Motor Co. while attending undergraduate school.

He began his graduate studies in industrial/organizational psychology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in 1980. He received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1989. Dr. Thomas is currently employed by the Energy, Environment, and Resources Center at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville as a Research Associate where he has worked since 1985.