

DRUG EDUCATION: A PREVENTIVE STEP

*a report on a
program at
Central National
Bank of Cleveland*

Taking corrective action after a problem occurs is often the direction taken by both business and individuals. Drug abuse, an area that effects both companies and individuals, has an explosive reaction for those unprepared and uneducated.

By educating top management and those in personnel, who hire and counsel, we protect our company; but the problem begins with the individual employee — who protects him?

We must ask ourselves, is it sensible to educate, prepare and protect the company — the company as an institution — against drug abuse and ignore the people, the source of possible problems? We have no apparent drug abuse problem at Central National Bank, but we are prepared for one if it occurs.

BASIC QUESTIONS

Once a decision was made to develop a program on drug abuse education for all employees, the next question was what kind of program was needed. It had to be designed to answer three basic questions:

1. How did the drug abuse problem evolve to its present state?
2. What drugs are abused and what do they look like?
3. What are the real experiences of an addict?

Employees were introduced to the program by the statement that education was the best prevention for combating the problems surrounding drug abuse; education better equips them to educate their family and friends.

The rest of the format was in three stages to answer our three basic questions. The evolution of America as a "pill-popping" society was clearly demonstrated with a large mock-up of a medicine cabinet. The drugs found in the cabinet were common to most homes. We presented a correlation between the established practice of taking

pills and hard drug intake as it has mushroomed in the last decade.

A-V AIDS

A 15-minute slide and tape presentation then provided the history of drugs, their identification and abuse, from hard narcotics like heroin to marketable drugs like amphetamines and barbiturates. "The Trip Back," a film of a woman from a middle-class family who fought her way back from drug excess, provided bleak realism. Her message was dramatic, and highly effective without actually showing the more ugly sides of drug abuse — hyperdermic needles, injections and infections.

The hour-long program was concluded by providing employees with brochures published by various organizations fighting drug abuse. Posters featuring abused drugs and narcotics along with the Ohio narcotic laws were displayed. In addition, special marijuana awareness wafers were burned, giving off a simulated marijuana scent.

Following each presentation, employees were asked to complete a brief anonymous questionnaire. The questionnaire, Exhibit I, provided information relative to the employees' knowledge about drug abuse before the program, what they thought of the program, what new topics they might be interested in and whether additional programs might be necessary or helpful.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The results of the questionnaire negated assumptions that were made during program preparation. It was assumed that people had seen a number of drug programs and another program would be repetitious. It was further assumed that most people had a solid knowledge about drugs. Of the 1,103 questionnaires completed, 71.2 per cent of the participants claimed their knowledge was either minimal or very general. Only 4.4 per cent considered themselves extensively informed. Of the reactions to the program, 46.5 per cent believed it

TERRY H. REILLY
Manager, Training & Development

and

MARGARET M. MARINELLI
Clerical Training Supervisor
Central National Bank of Cleveland
Cleveland, Ohio

was a good start and only 2.2 per cent found it too general. 73.9 per cent of the employees requested additional programs. A number of employees requested that the program be made available to their children, particularly those having teenage youngsters.

The bank conducted the program for all employees in its main office location in downtown Cleveland and in each of its 48 branch banks. Night shift employees were also exposed to it in either late evening or early morning sessions.

Because of employee response, we believe the program to have been successful. We initiated the first program, anticipating employees interest. The questionnaire will now give us guidelines for future programs.

Exhibit I: DRUG INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Prior to the program, my knowledge of drugs was
 - Minimal
 - Very general
 - Well informed
 - Extensively informed
2. The program today was
 - Too general
 - A good start
 - Factual
 - Answered most of my questions
3. I would like to know more about
 - Amphetamines and barbiturates abuse
 - Marijuana and other hallucinogens
 - Heroin and hard drug intake
4. Topics I am interested in
 - Youth culture and drugs
 - Why people take drugs
 - Panel of experts
 - Long range effects of drug intake
 - History of drugs and governmental control
5. Do you feel additional programs are needed?
6. List any specific questions you have.

Exhibit II

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

		Number	Per cent
Prior to the program	Minimal	284	25.7
	Very general	502	45.5
	Well informed	268	24.3
	Extensively informed	49	4.4
The program today was	Too general	34	2.9
	Good start	529	46.5
	Factual	430	37.8
	Answered most of my questions	144	12.8
Additional programs needed	Yes	815	73.9
	No	87	7.9
	No answer	201	18.2
Content of additional programs*	Amphetamines and barbiturates	448	
	Marijuana and other hallucinogens	355	
	Heroin and hard drug intake	356	
	Youth culture and drugs	351	
	Why people take drugs	476	
	Panel of experts	126	
	Long range effects of drug intake	340	
History of drugs and governmental control	228		

*Because many employees checked more than one topic, percentages are not available.