What Does an Application Administrator Do?

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE POSITION

Application Administrators aren’t developers and they’re not users, but they are critical to keeping the applications your organization relies on running. They install, update, tune, diagnose, and babysit both internal and third-party applications. The applications they support can include ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning), CRM (Customer Relationship Management), POS (Point of Sale), BPM (Business Process Management), budgeting and forecasting, HR (Human Resources), legal matter management, AP (Accounts Payable)/AR (Accounts Receivable), payroll, general ledger, SOX (Sarbanes Oxley) compliance tracking, training, time tracking, supply chain, database engines, and messaging, i.e., e-mail.

While software can be readily licensed from a vendor, it still requires a significant amount of effort on the part of the acquiring organization. Someone has to prepare the servers that it will run on. Then someone has to install it, configure it, load data into it, tune it, upgrade it, and generally keep the package up and running. If errors occur, someone has to report them to the vendor and work with vendor technicians to correct the problems. These are all tasks that an Application Administrator handles.

In many cases, corporations are absolutely dependent that these applications be kept running. What would be the response of employees if the payroll application broke down? What would happen to the organization’s financial situation if invoices weren’t sent out to customers? What if new employees couldn’t be added to the HR system? The importance of Application Administrators and their level of expertise shouldn’t be overlooked. Since the trend of relying upon third-party software isn’t going to decrease in the foreseeable future, the role of Application Administrator won’t be going away either.

Every company employs them even if their official job title doesn’t sound at all like “Application Administrator.” A job title of “system application administrator” might be for a position that covers both application administration and systems administration. Since there is a significant degree of overlap between these two positions, this isn’t uncommon.

Any software the organization relies upon is almost certain to have an Application Administrator supporting it. This includes software acquired from a third-party vendor or from an internal development team. Development teams typically develop the application and then hand support responsibilities off to another group within the organization. For better or for worse, they don’t tend to stick around indefinitely to provide ongoing production support.

1.1.1 Application administrator backgrounds

The background of IT professionals working as Application Administrators varies widely. Some have a background in software development. Others became Application Administrators because an administrator was needed and they were in the right place at the right time. Individuals without formal education or training in IT will benefit the most from this book. It will provide hands on advice on how to administer applications, troubleshoot them, and establish best practices for keeping applications running smoothly. But even the most experienced Application Administrator has weak areas that this book can help shore up.
1.1.2 Potential skillset

The list of potential skills that an Application Administrator might be required to have can be long and diverse. The skills that are being sought range from very specific technical skills to skills that are considered “softer.” Virtually every posting requires some variation of excellent communication skills, troubleshooting ability, problem solving and/or analytical skills, flexibility, and understanding business needs. Some examples of requested skills are:

- Expertise and experience in XYZ application is a must.
- Strong experience on failover, high availability, disaster recovery, business continuance.
- Strong experience in XYZ version control tool.
- Good knowledge and demonstrated troubleshooting abilities on connectivity issues due to firewall, load balancer, proxy, and others.
- Experience with SOX compliance and methodologies.
- Hands on experience in process automation, best practice approach, technology efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Knowledge of Web Services and Services Oriented Architecture is desirable.
- Should be experienced with SQL Query Development as it relates to XYZ databases.
- Must demonstrate strong experience in designing, implementing, and maintaining current Windows server products including Microsoft SQL 2005, IIS, Windows Clustering, Network Load Balance, Net Environments, and ISA.
- Strong Linux experience including shell and Perl scripting for administration tasks.
- Experience with monitoring tools is a plus.
- Knowledge of Oracle Application Server, Apache Tomcat, and Microsoft IIS a plus.
- Excels at the highest technical level of all phases of applications systems analysis and programming activities.
- Understands software and hardware requirements of varied departmental systems.
- Understands the workflow and process requirements of complex application systems.
- Demonstrated ability to be the subject matter expert in supporting, maintaining, and administering complex applications.
- Excellent problem solving/analytical skills and knowledge of analytical tools.
- Display and execute logical and complex troubleshooting methods.
- Excellent verbal, written communication, and negotiations skills.
- Demonstrated soft skills required such as presentation of ideas and clearly articulate the concepts to senior management.
- Ability to effectively interface with technical and nontechnical staff at all organizational levels.
- Strong customer services and problem solving skills.
- Ability to provide outstanding customer service, be a good listener and work well with others.
- Self-motivated, able to work independently, and takes initiative.
- Ability to multitask in a fast-paced environment.
- Outstanding attention to detail with superior time and project management skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work successfully with a diverse group of customers.
- Ability to learn new content areas and new skills quickly and well required.
- Professional attitude and work habits.
- Understands business function related to the application.
- Ability to work through ambiguous work situations.
1.1.3 Duties and responsibilities

The list of duties and responsibilities described in some job postings is as broad and diverse as the technical skills that are required of prospective job applicants. It wouldn’t be realistic to expect a single candidate to be responsible for this entire list of duties, but don’t be surprised if your initial job description gets widened to include more and more responsibilities as time goes by. Some of the duties and responsibilities that an Application Administrator might be given include:

- The candidate shall monitor the XYZ software application, document and analyze problems, and publish maintenance schedule
- Sets up administrator and service accounts
- Maintains system documentation
- Interacts with users and evaluates vendor products
- May program in an administrative language
- Provides advice and training to end-users
- Maintains current knowledge of relevant technologies as assigned
- The candidate shall serve as part of a team responsible to maintain an XYZ system availability rate of 99%
- Troubleshoot, and resolve any reported problems
- Provide application performance tuning
- The candidate shall review the governing regulations to ensure proper program support
- The candidate shall monitor, update, and maintain existing legacy environment software systems interfaces to ensure that the interfaces exchange data properly and to support the current legacy environment
- This is a hands on senior technical position with Subject Matter Expertise (SME) on XYZ app
- Enable best practices
- Process automation
- Maintain SLA, System Availability, Capacity management, and Performance KPI
- Collaborate with hardware, OS, DBA technical teams to ensure proper integration of the environment
- Work closely with application development teams and vendors to tune and troubleshoot applications
- Plan and coordinate testing changes, upgrades, and new services, ensuring systems will operate correctly in current and future environments
- Provides second level of technical support for all corporate systems and software components
- Provide Level 3 support for the application. Must be able to support 24 × 7. Also enable production support team to tackle Level 2 support and issues
- Leads and participates in efforts to develop and implement processes for application and system monitoring
- Leads and participates in efforts to implement application updates to include upgrades, patches, and new releases
- Tests, debugs, implements, and documents programs. Assists in the modification of company products and/or customer/ internal systems to meet the needs of the client and/or end-user
- Develops test plans to verify logic of new or modified programs
- Develop and maintain the reporting and dashboard infrastructure for the organization
- Develop work plans and track/report status of assigned projects/tasks
- Liaise with vendor support on all issues
- Fully responsible for problem management activities such as issue resolution and root cause analysis
- Daily monitoring and maintenance activities
- Assist in the day-to-day operations of Operations department
Reviews and addresses assigned technical support tickets and calls, enters all updates related to such calls into the Help Desk ticketing system, and keeps team aware of any sensitive or escalating issues

Provides subject matter expertise for all applications

Participate in security and application audits

Occasionally supporting off-hours activities. This position may require a flexible schedule

Promote changes through the use of XYZ adhering to SOX policies and procedures

Identify, download and apply XYZ upgrades and patches

Research issues with application middleware, database, etc., and recommend/apply solutions such as configuration changes to O/S, WebLogic, Tuxedo, Java, etc., additional hardware, memory, CPUs, etc.

Identify problematic SQL and work with developers, analysts, and DBAs to resolve

Optimize and tune the XYZ application components

Work with customers and analysts to develop scripts used to perform load testing

Use load testing tool to perform tests to determine application load capabilities

As the above list makes painfully obvious, the demands put upon an Application Administrator are diverse and plentiful. It’s an interesting job. It’s a challenging job. It’s certainly not a boring job. Every day will bring new challenges. Every problem is a learning opportunity. Every solution is an opportunity to educate your users, other professionals in the organization, or your successors.

1.1.4 Types of applications that need an administrator

Applications that are licensed from a third-party vendor and weren’t custom built for an organization are frequently referred to by the acronym COTS—Commercial Off The Shelf Software. Because there are so many installations of COTS applications, they are primarily what Application Administrators support.

In addition to COTS packages, Application Administrators also work to administer Software as a Service (SaaS) applications. SaaS applications are hosted by the vendor. The client’s users access it via a web browser directed to a specific URL. If the SaaS application is critical to your organization, then someone will need to function as an administrator to help users, work with the vendor when problems occur and act as an intermediary between your organization and the vendor’s technical staff.

More and more enterprise-level software used worldwide is licensed from third-party vendors instead of being developed internally. This trend isn’t likely to change in the future. If anything, it’s likely to accelerate. Reasons for this are numerous and include the following:

Developing a complex application is both extremely difficult and very expensive. It takes time, skilled individuals, and significant resources to develop effective, reliable software. Most organizations lack the experience to do it properly. The failure rate of large-scale software development projects is appalling high.

Organizations like to focus on their primary business function. For most businesses, software development isn’t their core function. Developing an ERP application or any other complex application reduces their ability to focus on running the business.

Enterprise-level software is complex and becoming more so. Many, if not most, organizations extend across state or international boundaries. This requires that the software be capable of handling the laws and regulations of every state and country that it operates in. Laws and regulations tend to be extremely dynamic. It’s very time consuming to modify and test software to properly handle this flood of changes.

Software applications have to deal with dynamic environments. New versions of operating systems become available and existing ones are retired. Modifying and testing an application to deal with a new operating system is a significant commitment. New web browsers and updated versions of existing ones are released on a regular basis. Applications that rely on a web browser need to be tested, and
possibly modified, for each new browser upgrade. Database systems undergo regular upgrades and modifications. Applications that rely upon a database system need to be tested and possibly modified to deal with changes that occur within the database package.

- Security vulnerabilities are a constant threat for all software, especially ones that are widely deployed and deal with confidential or personally identifiable information (PII). The dangers to an organization’s reputation and the costs of a breach are shockingly high. Staying knowledgeable about newly discovered security threats requires the focus of skilled professionals.

Due to the above points, more and more organizations are choosing to “outsource” development of software applications to specialized vendors. Acquiring a third-party application is definitely a compromise situation. None of the existing packages is likely to provide the exact features that an organization wants or needs. On the other hand, the cost and time to install an off-the-shelf application are significantly less than what it would take to develop the application internally or have it custom built by a third party.

The primary exceptions to the trend of licensing applications are when the application is “core” to the business and provides a competitive advantage. For example, Google is never going to license software from a vendor to replace its Page Ranking algorithms. Those algorithms are the heart and soul of Google and will always be kept in-house. Contrast this with an organization’s payroll application. There is nothing unique or advantageous about payroll. Certainly, it’s an important process, but it doesn’t rise to the level of being a trade secret. It wouldn’t make sense for an organization to spend millions of dollars to develop proprietary algorithms to cut paychecks. There wouldn’t be any significant payback from such an investment.

### 1.2 Qualities of an Application Administrator

To be a successful Application Administrator, it helps to have a special set of qualities. The job isn’t exactly like being a software developer. Some of the qualities that are good to have are described in the following sections.

#### 1.2.1 Service mentality

You have to have a service mentality to be an effective Application Administrator. The essence of your job is to keep applications running so other people can do their jobs. Typically, you won’t be in a “9 to 5” job. You have to be willing to do what it takes to keep the systems running. If the application goes down in the middle of the night and impacts users in another time zone, you’ll get a call. If a patch needs to be applied and the maintenance window is from 10 pm until midnight on Sunday, then expect to be working an occasional Sunday night. If performance is slow for users on the other side of the world, then expect to be up late at night monitoring and troubleshooting the situation. You’re providing a service as well as technical expertise. If the idea of providing service to internal or external clients or customers doesn’t appeal to you, then you might not be suited to be an Application Administrator.

Being in an application support position means never being able to say “That’s not my problem.” If the users aren’t able to use the application, it’s your problem even if you know that the true cause of the problem has nothing to do with the application itself. You will have to work with other groups (DBAs, vendor, network team, security team, firewall team, etc.) on behalf of the users until both the application and your users are back online. Working with members of other teams will give you opportunities to learn more about the IT industry as you all work together to keep the systems running.

I’ll admit that I’m more than a little bit biased on this subject, but an Application Administrator is arguably just as important to the company as the application developer. The best application in the world is worthless if it isn’t installed, customized, backed up, or available to the users.
If ever the phrase “many ways to skin a cat” applied to a job position, it would be Application Administration. There are numerous ways to accomplish just about everything you will need to do. Some ways might be a little faster or more straightforward than others, but always be aware that many solutions exist. If you keep your eyes open you’ll be presented with many learning opportunities as you work with other Application Administrators, Systems Administrators, Database Administrators, vendor technical reps, and other professionals. If you can pick up one or two tips from each of them, you’ll be that much more valuable to your employer, your users, and your profession.

1.2.2 Persistence pays off

An Application Administrator has to walk a fine line between being persistent without being rude.

You’ll need help from other people like the network team, DBAs, vendor help desk, the security team, and users at a remote site. It’s tough being persistent without crossing the line and becoming annoying, but you have to keep at it. No one likes to be a pest, but the users of your application are depending on you and you can’t do everything by yourself. Just keep reminding yourself that you’re just trying to do your job and you are entitled to the assistance of other professionals in the organization. Don’t be rude, don’t be aggressive, but do be persistent. You’re fighting for your applications and the users that depend on them.

1.2.3 Continuous improvements

Your job is actually more than to just keeping the applications running. Organizations are increasingly looking for ways continuously improve their processes. As part of the IT team, you will be expected to contribute to this effort. Three common ways to improve operations are:

- Documentation
- Best practices
- Process maturity

1.2.4 Document, document, document

Document everything you do. The vendor’s documentation will provide some high-level examples, but specifics like server names, account names, URLs, etc., won’t be included in their standard documentation. Capture screenshots of every screen that you advance through. Label screenshots thoroughly, for example, identifying which settings need to be changed on each screen.

If the application encounters a problem or has an outage, you need to document it. Write up a document that describes what happened, when it happened, who noticed it first, and how it was resolved. Your organization might call this an incident report or a root cause analysis. Make sure that your narrative is clear, concise, and accurate.

If you’re doing to do an upgrade of the system, you need to write up a project plan and a test script. The project plan describes in great detail what will be done, who will do it, how long it will take, and how you’ll recover if the upgrade fails. The test script lists a series of tests that need to be done to confirm that an upgrade was successful.

There will be times that when your application gets restarted. You need to document how to validate that the application came up successfully. This might be as simple as logging into the application successfully. Or it might be as complicated as confirming that application “A” can successfully pass a file to application “B.” It all depends on your environment.

Take the time to accurately name each document file you create. The most detailed documentation in the world will be worthless if you can’t find it. A descriptively named file will be found more quickly than a tersely or obscurely named document.
Your organization or department needs to identify a place where all documentation will be located. It doesn’t really matter whether this is a SharePoint portal, a database, or a network drive. As long as it’s somewhere that everyone knows about, can access it, and uses it consistently.

1.2.5 Best practices

“Best practices” is a generic term for a method or technique that has proved to result in a superior outcome. This concept is understandably vague. What are best practices for one group or organization might be worthless for another group. Your group’s management needs to identify what constitutes best practices for your situation.

Where can your organization get its “best practices”? Possibilities include building them yourselves through trial, error, and observation of what works best. Acquiring them from an accredited management standards organizations like the ISO (International Organization for Standardization). A final source would be to work with a consulting firm that specializes in the area of Best Practices and have them advise you with templates applicable to IT or your specific industry.

As an Application Administrator you’ll have the opportunity to ensure that all of the applications you support adhere to the best practices of the organization. It won’t be done overnight, but as you improve on the current processes your job will become easier and more efficient.

1.2.6 Process maturity

Process maturity embraces the concept that your group or organization goes about its business activities in a way that improves the likelihood of success. People perform activities using the same well defined steps. This ensures that the process is repeatable. Processes are decomposed, defined, optimized, and measured. Application Administrators help insure that processes related to their applications become more and more mature.

Given all of the skills that are expected of Application Administrators and all of the conditions under which we are expected to perform reminds me of a poem from Rudyard Kipling. It’s too long to include the entire poem here, but the first and last verses go like this:

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds’ worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,
And - which is more - you’ll be a Man my son!

Rudyard Kipling

1.3 WHERE DO APPLICATION ADMINISTRATORS COME FROM?

There are no undergraduate degrees in Application Administration, so no one gets a formal education for this particular position. Everyone currently in the field drifted in from another area of business or IT. Some Application Administrators, like myself, were originally software developers. Some started off with an MIS (Management Information System) degree and were assigned to be the Application Administrator for one or more of the organization’s applications. Other Application Administrators may have started out as the power user of an organization’s application and when someone was needed to administer the application they either volunteered or were volunteered.
1.4 WHAT JOBS CAN AN APPLICATION ADMINISTRATOR MOVE UP TO?

There really aren’t any defined career paths that Application Administrators advance into. My experience and observation are that Application Administrators’ career paths are as varied as the individuals in the position. One common path is to continue as an Application Administrator but for other or additional applications. Once you develop the skillset needed to be a competent Application Administrator, there are many organizations that potentially need your services.

1.4.1 IT architect

An Application Administrator works with just about every facet of the organization’s IT department. He or she needs to understand how all the pieces fit together. This type of background could make an Application Administrator a potential candidate for the IT Architect position in the organization. An IT Architect is the person in an organization that works at the highest level to determine which IT investments will have the best returns for the organization. The position requires experience on both the technical side and the business side. Certifications for IT architects are offered by both Microsoft and The Open Group. If you’re currently an Application Administrator and have an interest in moving up the ladder to IT Architect position, you should investigate the certification requirements and consider working toward rounding your skillset to fill in any gaps you might have.

1.4.2 Software development

If you’re currently an Application Administrator and you have a software development background, then the option of moving back into development is certainly an option. The time spent supporting an application will have provided you with invaluable insight into what users expect in applications, shortcomings of current applications, and thoughts on how to write software that is easier to implement and upgrade. Developers that haven’t spent time supporting applications aren’t likely to have the insights you have acquired.

One warning about this career move is that software development changes incredibly quickly. If you’ve been out of the field for more than a few years, you can expect a steep climb to get back up to speed. If you believe this type of move is in your long-term future, then you should plan to keep up with current trends in the software development world. Read the trade journals on a regular basis, read the most respected blogs and keep your coding skills sharp. This will consume a lot of your free time, but it will be well worth it when you start submitting job applications for developer positions.

1.4.3 Work for the vendor

If you become extremely proficient with a specific software application and like working with it, then a possible career path would be to go to work for the vendor. You might consider becoming a technical analyst or system engineer for them. If you go to work for them, they will probably provide you with advanced training to learn more about internal workings of the application. You would then assist their clients with installs, upgrades, troubleshooting, etc. This position would be similar to your current position except you’ll work with a number of clients instead of just your current organization.

One word of warning—the organization you work for might have an agreement with the vendor to not hire employees away from each other. If such an agreement exists, whether in writing or even just verbally, the chances of the vendor hiring you are slim. Find out if an agreement exists before approaching the vendor. It would be very awkward for everyone if you make inquiries and the vendor can’t hire you due to a legal agreement with your current employer.
1.4.4 Consulting

Moving into a consulting or contract position is a possibility for anyone in IT who has demonstrated competency with a marketable set of skills. While it’s possible that Application Administrators could move into a consulting position, it seems less likely for other skillsets. Application Administration is a position that’s needed on a long term or a permanent basis. Most consulting or contract positions are to fill short-term positions. While this career path doesn’t seem as probably as some others, it might become more common in the future. Stranger things than this have happened in the industry.

1.5 Examples of Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) Software

Earlier in this chapter, a reference was made about COTS software. Some examples of Commercial Off The Shelf software include the following:

- ERP—Enterprise Resource Planning packages
- CRM—Customer Relationship Management packages
- POS—Point of Sale packages
- Scheduling packages
- Education/training software
- Resume processing
- Accounting packages
- Contract management software
- Medical billing
- Invoicing
- SOX compliance tracking
- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable
- Unclaimed Property
- Sales tax processing
- Payroll tax processing
- Project Management software
- SAP
- PeopleSoft
- Sales Force
- Oracle Financials
- Oracle HR
- Warehouse management
- Order Management
- Inventory management
- Supply chain management

While every application is different, there are many common skills, techniques, and approaches that can help an application administrator support a wide variety of applications. This book attempts to document these techniques. It won’t provide you with the details to install version 9.7 of the XYZ application, but provides a set of fundamental skills that are applicable to many if not most applications.

As an Application Administrator you have to be something of a Jack of all trades. You need to know a little about a great number of topics like operating systems, disk management, databases, networking, performance, web site, load balancing, security, backups, disaster recovery, project management, and
configuration management. This book won’t make you an expert in all these areas, but it will provide basic information that will enable you to do your job quickly, efficiently, and competently. Hopefully, it will provide you with enough baseline knowledge to work efficiently with experts in each of those areas.

1.6 DEALING WITH PEOPLE, LOTS OF PEOPLE
You might think that as an Application Administrator you’ll spend all of your time dealing with computers and software, but that’s far from reality. You’ll be dealing with a LOT of people. A typical day will have you spending as much time with other people as with the application you’re administering. Some of the types of people are:

- Users
- Power Users
- The application “owner”
- Your supervisor or manager
- Project managers
- Internal development team
- DBAs (Database Administrators)
- The Network team
- The Security team
- Vendor help desk personnel
- Vendor development team
- Your organization’s help desk team

1.7 QUESTIONS TO ASK IF RESPONSIBILITY FOR AN APPLICATION IS DROPPED ON YOU
If you’re an Application Administrator, there’s a good chance that at some point in your career you’ll have another application added to your list of responsibilities. If you’re about to become an Application Administrator for the first time, then this is happening to you right now.

How should you respond if this occurs? You want to be a team player, but don’t neglect looking out for yourself. Gather as much information on the new application as possible. A list of potential questions is provided in Chapter 6. Obviously no canned list of questions can cover every situation, but use this list as a starting point. Flesh it out with questions specific to you, your organization, and the application you’re about to take responsibility for.

I hate to be a pessimist, but if the current “owner” of the application tells you the application is very easy to support, I’d take that claim with a grain of salt. After all, if it’s so easy to support why is it being handed off to you?

1.8 ADMINISTERING MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS
Most applications don’t require the equivalent of a full-time person administering them. This being the case, you can expect that you’ll have additional responsibilities. It’s entirely likely that you’ll be tasked with administering multiple applications.

In my experience, the biggest challenge of administering multiple applications is balancing requests that come in for each application. Murphy’s law predicts that if one application is requiring a great deal of your
time and attention, that’s exactly when one of your other applications will crash or require an update. The best advice I can give you is to keep your supervisor well informed about your daily activities. Work with him or her to determine which application should be your highest priority. If users or anyone else doesn’t agree with it, then very diplomatically tell them to take it up with your supervisor. Letting your supervisor handle decisions like this frees up more of your time to address the problems.

If you end up being the Application Administrator for multiple applications, then you need to be as efficient as possible. You need to exploit opportunities to reuse documentation, forms, shortcuts, tips, training, DR plans, etc. Anything that can be copied and reused from one application to another will save your time. It has the secondary advantage of making your documentation and procedures more consistent between applications.

1.9 TRAINING YOUR REPLACEMENT OR BACKUP

This particular detail of your job might not be obvious, but it’s one of the most important tasks to you personally. If you ever want to take any time off or be promoted or transferred, then you need to have someone who is immediately available to replace you. Nothing is worse than being on vacation or sick and getting a call telling you that the application is down and you need to address the problem immediately.

The first step in training a backup is to identify who it will be. Obviously, this decision will be made by management and not by you personally. Once the decision is made, then you need to work with your backup on a regular basis. You need to educate him or her about the application, its background, and daily activities.

You’ll need to provide your backup with access to all the relevant servers and documentation. More importantly, they’ll need to initially watch you and later administer it themselves. Most people seem to learn best when they actually perform the task. Application administration is no exception to this rule, so plan to have your backup watch you perform a specific task a time or two and then do it themselves the next time. You’ll need to be extremely patient while they’re doing any task the first time. They won’t be as confident as you. They won’t be as fast as you. They’ll make mistakes. But that’s part of the learning experience and can’t be avoided.

Get in the habit of calling them over whenever you’re about to do something unusual. Even if you don’t think this particular task will be done again soon. It’s better to let them see it done at least once than have them trying to do it for the first time when you’re unavailable.

You’ve spent a lot of time becoming technically proficient and you enjoy having those skills. You’re proud of your reputation as being someone who gets things done. It’s difficult for many of us to hand tasks over to someone else, but you need to look at the big picture. Do you like being called when you’re on vacation and a problem occurs? Do you want to be able to take advantage of promotions or new assignments? If you answered “yes” to either of these questions then keep that in mind as you train your backup or potential replacement.

1.10 SUMMARY

If you weren’t already familiar with the position of Application Administrator, I hope this introduction has convinced you that the job is both important and challenging. It might not be a job that’s suited for everyone, but it’s interesting, challenging and critical to continuing the operations of the largest companies in the world. If you’re already familiar with the position or are working as an Application Administrator then I hope that this book provides you with tools that will help you be a better Application Administrator.