Agent Networking Analysis

Social Networks are groups of related people and are comprised of nodes, ties, and bridges. This networking method is useful in order to find social networking connections between members of the Department of Homeland Security. Nodes are individuals within a network, while ties are relationships between the nodes. Bridges connect two or more groups or networks that comprise of nodes.

When applying nodes, ties, and bridges to agent profiles, the agents are the nodes of the network. The ties between the agents are factors such as previously sharing the same work environment, or attending a university in the same year. A bridge between agents would be a common tie between two groups of nodes. A strong tie between agents in the Department of Homeland Security would consist of a common past or participation in the same activities together. A weak tie, for instance, would be a shared interest. An example of a strong tie that involves Travis Atkison, Heath Tims, and Drew McKevitt is the mutual connections of their work experience at the Central Intelligence Agency. Agents Atkison and Tims both have a past education involving Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. Another example of a strong tie is the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which contain many nodes whose works are similar. The agents’ backgrounds are composed of separate ties to different groups, although the ties still represent a fundamental connection between contacts.

The connection of groups through bridges ties together the disparate groups of agents within the DHS. The main bridge of the agents, representing the merge between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency, is the extensive and ample history of his past employment of the agent Travis Atkison. Travis’ background gives the groups a shared link between him and many members of the two groups. Among these individuals are Drew McKevitt, Jason Pigg, and Jeremy Mhire, whom through Travis’ background had multiple indirect similarities with concerning their previous employment history. This came to bring the bridging between the FBI and the CIA. Now, although there happens to be another agent whose background shares these similarities, Atkinson also happens to have associations with another bridge, an agent whose name is Heath Tims. Tims’ background is a linking ground between many of the fellow agents. The relationship between many of the agents is made apparent when similar education background checks are made, revealing that Heath and Ernest both attended Purdue, and Heath and Jean attended Stanford, which leads to the correlation between Paul Hummel and the group as this extension still extends from the same tree. The bridge between Atkison and Heath is the ultimate link between the largest masses of agents.

The study of social networks can be and incredibly powerful tool for investigators. This small example of how people can be linked together demonstrates how this can be used to trace connections between actors in incidents. These processes have and will continue to serve our agencies in their quest to make America a secure place.