THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND REALISTIC JOB PREVIEWS ON COMMUNITY

COLLEGE DEAN RETENTION AND EXIT

by

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ABSTRACT

Employee exit is costly, making the focus on the initial stages of the employment relationship a relevant topic. At community colleges, the role of dean is usually the first point of entry into leadership, paving the way for the employee to develop more advanced leadership skills benefiting the institution. This research investigates the role of vocational anticipatory socialization and realistic job previews on community college dean employment experience. Utilizing uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975), the following discussion progresses through several theories relating to new hires including vocational anticipatory socialization, realistic job previews, and employee socialization. It then examines the employment lifecycle once the dean has joined the organization. This includes a continuation of the employee socialization discussion, psychological contract violations, and sensemaking to better understand intention to quit and employee exit.

The research project involves a qualitative study of 12 community college newly appointed deans within their first year of acquiring their positions who were selected through purposive sampling. Semi-structured interview data was transcribed and examined using a thematic analysis to better understand the experience of these employees as they move into administrative leadership positions. The discussion examines how newly appointed deans reflect on their hiring experiences, or initial perceptions about the job and organization, comparing those to their experiences within their position. When those experiences are not in

concert with one another as a result of psychological contract violations, this study examines

whether employees intend to remain in or exit their position.

KEYWORDS: vocational anticipatory socialization, realistic job previews, employee socialization, psychological contracts, sensemaking, turnover

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover or exit is an ongoing problem in organizations demonstrated by the extensive attention given to the topic (Barksdale, Bellenger, Boles & Brasher, 2003). The impact on employers is well documented through financial analysis of turnover including hiring costs, training costs, and the cost of the absence of a productive employee during the transitional and acclimation period (Barksdale, et al., 2003, Holmes, 2007; Moncrief, Hoverstad, & Lucas, 1989). Although the costs of employee exit are well documented, the mysteries of turnover cannot be resolved by financial reporting alone.

ADDRESSING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Recent literature in this area has focused on various solutions including delivering realistic job previews post hire and encouraging proactive newcomer information seeking behaviors (Ng, Feldman & Lam, 2010; Earnest, Allen, & Landis, 2011). The effects of psychological contract breach were associated with lower levels of organizational commitment, which negatively impacted innovative work behaviors. The negative outcomes of work behaviors associated with the existing studies has led researchers to suggest a more strategic approach to managing employee perceptions (Saks, Gruman, & Cooper-Thomas, 2011).

The departure of an experienced manager can cost an organization between five and 25 times the individual's annual salary (Murray & Murray, 1998). Essentially, the turnover costs are

associated with recruiting, training, developing, disruption of daily work activities, and the public's loss of confidence in the department or organization (Murray & Murray, 1998). Voluntary turnover, because of its unpredictability, is usually the costliest form of turnover in an organization. Highly skilled and marketable employees may be more likely to leave based on access to other employment opportunities (Park & Shaw, 2013).

THE ROLE OF COLLEGE DEANS

Deans occupy unique organizational positions as boundary spanners, interacting with people both inside and outside of the organization (Friedman & Podolny, 1992). A dean is both a member of the organization and must also affiliate with the needs, interests and values of others. Therefore, communication and control of information and the larger affiliation issues of these employees is by definition more challenging.

Socialization processes at the onset of organizational entry involve new hire orientation and training programs designed to guide employees through their new roles and responsibilities. Mentoring programs or buddy systems for new hires have also been used to acclimate them to organizations more effectively (Jablin, 2001). While the continued improvements to socialization programs may have some impact, turnover continues in organizations. In fact, the highest turnover rates are documented among newly hired employees (Wanous, 1992), and the question is why they may be particularly vulnerable. It is to this question that this study is addressed.

Employee turnover may be attributed to many variables that are examined further in the review of literature below. Prior to finding what some individuals would consider to be their first "real" job that leads to building a lifelong professional career, there is an expectation of

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what that job will be like. Job seekers form these expectations through a process of anticipatory vocational socialization. Essentially, teachers, parents, peers ,and television shows influence job seekers to have a concept of what their intended profession might require of them (Jablin, 2001). For example, requirements for an administrative leadership role might include the ability to mediate disagreements, respond to student inquiries, and set departmental budgets. There are also expectations formed about the rewards gained from a particular profession, like having a retirement pension, or making an above average income. Once the first job in the profession is secured, the job seeker quickly assesses his or her initial expectations in relation to the reality encountered on the job. This assessment may include an examination of whether this job meets an employee's expectations or whether this job as a career path is desirable outside of this organization.

OVERVIEW TO THIS RESEARCH STUDY

This study outlined an investigation of the effectiveness of vocational anticipatory socialization and realistic job previews on community college dean employee exit. The review of literature addressed what is known about turnover. The discussion includes theories relating to uncertainty new hires experience including vocational anticipatory socialization, realistic job previews, and employee socialization. The review then examined the employment lifecycle once the employee has joined the organization, including a continuation of the employee socialization discussion, psychological contract violations, and sensemaking to better understand intention to quit and employee exit.

The research project is a qualitative study of community college newly appointed deans within their first 2 – 15 months of acquiring their positions. The transition from faculty to

leadership was not successfully achieved by all who make the attempt. Most deans arrive to their positions without leadership training or experience in the role. They encounter required tasks of management, curriculum development, fundraising, and political responsibilities, which result in some feeling that the expectations are impossible. Coupled with a lack of experience and few mentors, the number and variety of expectations generates role ambiguity or uncertainty that creates stress. The process of uncertainty management is of particular interest throughout the employment socialization process as deans make decisions on role continuance or exit based on what they thought the role would be (Gmelch, 2003).

To further investigate the effectiveness of recruitment and socialization messages on community college deans, a qualitative study was completed to address message content, resulting assumptions, and subsequent decisions. Toward that end, semi-structured interviews were completed and transcribed. These transcriptions were examined thematically to begin to develop a richer understanding of the employee experience as they move from full-time faculty roles into administrative positions. The focus was on how newly appointed deans reflect on their hiring experiences, or initial perceptions about the job and organization, comparing those initial assumptions to their actual experiences within their position. When deans experience role ambiguity or uncertainty and expectations are unmet, this study will then examine whether employees intend to remain in or exit their position.

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine a segment of the employment lifecycle of community college deans from anticipatory vocational socialization through organizational commitment or intention to quit. In other words, this research will examine how employee

expectations of work can be met or unmet. In the case of unmet expectations, this project expects to identify how the employee makes sense of the discrepancies, the psychological contract violations, and timing of these experiences that may lead to intention to quit. With additional information, organizations may be able to make changes to the hiring process of deans that will positively influence turnover. This study will provide an explanation of why intention to quit occurs for community college deans within one year of hire or shortly thereafter.

This study adds to extant literature by completing the loop of the lifecycle of employment, providing a more comprehensive view of antecedents to turnover. In a meta-analysis of turnover, Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) documented several areas in which the employee turnover literature could be expanded. Job dissatisfaction is a precursor to leaving, but what remains unaddressed is the sequence of withdrawal behaviors and decisions as the employee seeks another job opportunity. In an effort to study a larger group of those employees who left their jobs, Griffeth, et al. (2000) noted there is a lag between turnover predictors and turnover, which may result in predictions for turnover being overstated. This study will capture both the employees' initial impressions immediately following hire and survey employees at least two to three months into their career in an effort to capture both withdrawal behaviors and decisions, if reported. Based on the timing of the interviews, the intention to quit and antecedents would be captured more accurately than extant research.

This research also adds practical value for human resources professionals and college leadership tasked with staffing a department. Hiring managers often continue to use the same recruiting and socialization methods only to resign themselves to the repeated outcome of

turnover. The process becomes so repetitive that it is viewed as expected and routine (Randall & Randall, 2001). The recruitment effort, based on the high volume of turnover, is focused on quantity of applicants, not the quality of the candidates. In trying to fill the void left by continuous turnover, inadequate effort is focused on analysis that will break the cycle of turnover through an examination of how the selection, recruitment, and socialization activities create/mitigate the opportunity for turnover to occur. This study will address these issues and may be of assistance in more efficient hiring, recruitment, and socialization.

CONCLUSION

Understanding of organizational communication processes will be enhanced through examination of the communication patterns from organizational entrance through exit, focusing on communication of intention to quit and actual turnover in a profession with a higher than average likelihood of employee exit. While organizational entry has received significant attention in extant literature, exit has not received comparable focus. Following the review of literature presented in Chapter Two, research questions are presented to guide this project.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 25–30 years, organizational management research and social science theorists have helped make sense of the employment experience. Vocational anticipatory socialization (Jablin, 2001) provides insights regarding how attitudes and beliefs about work are formed, starting as early as childhood with influences from friends, family, and educators. Further shaping the work experience is the realistic job preview (Wanous, 1992) that provides potential employees with a picture of the positive and negative aspects of the job and organization. During the interviewing process, potential employees have the ability to reduce their uncertainty about their potential job. Berger and Calabrese's (1975) uncertainty reduction theory is useful in explaining that individuals want to ask questions to gain a better understanding of their potential job and reduce anxiety associated with change. Sensemaking (Weick, 1995) explains how feelings of uncertainty reduce as employees attempt to compare past experiences to present day organizational puzzles when they encounter new situations. The socialization process continues following the interview for new employees, assimilating them to the organization using both formal (new hire orientation) and informal (employee friendships) socialization (Barge & Schlueter, 2004; Jablin, 2001; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Nelson; 1987; Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Following hire, employees assess whether they made the appropriate decision to join the organization by determining how their goals, values, and interest match those of the organization. Additionally, employees determine whether the promises made during the recruitment and hiring process are being realized or breached, a discussion that the psychological contract literature addresses (Rousseau, 2001). The psychological contract is an agreement between employer and employee with actual promises being made and implied promises being assumed by both the employer and employee. This contract's terms are generally established during the interviewing process but are not tested until hire. If breaches of the employee's psychological contract occur, the employee may intend to quit. The decision to resign is determined by a variety of factors, but intention to quit does not necessarily lead to resignation (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski & Erez, 2001; Maertz & Griffeth, 2004).

The recruitment process is important to the vocational anticipatory socialization process and the development of psychological contracts. The goal of this review, however, was to explore the question of why turnover occurs within organizations. It encompasses the considerations made through the attraction and mutual selection phases of recruitment (Wanous, 1992). Using the general framework created by uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975), the processes by which new hires seek information to reduce uncertainty during the hiring process and recognize how organizations attempt to meet the job candidate's desire to receive information through realistic job previews are explored. After exploring the effects of realistic job previews, the reasons for acceptance and rejection of job offers was examined and post-hire newcomer socialization research was reviewed. This process of new hire onboarding was compared to the psychological contracts held by both the employee and

employer to attempt to explain employee turnover. What is known about exit will be addressed first.

SEPARATIONS AND EXIT

Many researchers prior to Jablin (1987) have examined organizational exit. Separations from an organization can either be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary turnover can include resignation while involuntary turnover can include firing or being forced to resign. In certain cases, voluntary turnover can involve an employee moving from a leadership position into a faculty role. Bluedorn (1978) defined turnover as "a change in membership status of an individual" (p. 647), or an individual's movement in the membership boundary of an organization–either in or out. All organizations experience turnover. This broad definition of membership status incorporates the lifecycle of employment, from employees who are leaving, to those who are joining the organization as a replacement.

Bluedorn (1978) further distinguished whether the movement was initiated by the employee (voluntary turnover) or not (involuntary turnover). He described four types of turnover: voluntary separations (resignation), voluntary accessions (joining a church), involuntary accessions (merger with another company) and involuntary separations (firing). These groups can be perceived as mutually exclusive. Someone is either inside or outside of the organization, quits, or is fired. Ambiguity can also enter into this process of turnover. For example, an employee can be offered the opportunity to resign instead of being fired. While this creates an inaccurate written record of employment status, it does not change the member's experience of the events leading to the termination. According to Maertz and

Campion (2004), "Process models focus on how individuals arrive at their final decision to quit, while content models focus on why individuals quit organizations" (p. 566).

Fuchs Ebaugh (1988) stated that exiting employees go through four stages. The first stage is characterized by doubt of the role commitments previously assumed. Following these doubts, employees considering exit begin to examine alternatives and weigh them against their current role. Employees considering exit reach a turning point where they commit to exit. The final stage of exit is the former employee's redefining of what their former role means to their self-identity.

Jablin's (2001) research focused on voluntary exit which has three categories: preannouncement, announcement, and post-exit. Most current literature can be divided into one of these subcategories. Preannouncement examines what happens prior to announcing a decision to exit and leaving the organization or position. Thus, the factors in this process are the antecedents to turnover and have been the focus in recent literature. Announcement of exit usually is centered around an event, either an announcement in a written letter or a verbal announcement to a manager. Post-exit begins when an individual departs from the organization or position and remaining employees begin to assign meaning to the event.

Talk of turnover and action can be perceived as two separate concepts, but a relationship exists between the two (Marshak, 1998; Dunford & Palmer, 1998). Talk of turnover precedes action; the reverse rarely occurs in organizational communication. There is a naturally occurring sequence from talk to action. Therefore, intention to quit should be a concept shared with others prior to turnover occurring. However, talking about turnover does not necessarily result in exit. This phenomenon could occur because some employers view talk as the same as

action. In other words, if employees talk about exit, employers may change their practices to help retain employees. Additionally, talk helps employees make sense of situations. Questions logically arise as to what changes in the sequence from talk to action when employees are talking of their intention to quit but decide to remain with an organization. It also leads to another question of whether talking about intention to quit can be taken seriously or whether it is just idle discussion (Marshak, 1998; Dunford & Palmer, 1998). Jablin (1987) noted that extant research has not spent much attention linking the variables of turnover and communication, which need to be addressed to prevent unwanted turnover.

VOLUNTARY TURNOVER

Research on voluntary turnover consists of two primary areas: work attitudes like job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors and withdrawal cognitions, like intention to quit and psychological contract violations. Even with the research efforts, Blau (1993) argues that the literature is still deficient because it does not sufficiently address the role of job search: "Job search was expected to follow intent to search and precede intention to quit" (p. 314). Potential job opportunities coupled with withdrawal cognitions led to increased turnover intentions over time. Blau indicates there is a difference between preparatory and active job search, which makes employer intervention more of a possibility than previously recognized. Identifying behaviors of an individual that are present when seeking employment are valuable in explaining turnover beyond the traditional antecedents. Job search behaviors are related to perceived available job opportunities (Bluedorn, 1982); however, the perceived available job opportunities independent of other variables are poor predictors of turnover (Steel & Griffeth,

1989). What is important to recognize is that turnover is a process, with a variety of responsible antecedents (Mobley, 1982).

Maertz and Griffeth (2004) identified eight motivational forces that impact intention to quit. Affective forces refer to an avoidance technique based on level of comfort with the organization. If employees feel comfortable, they will remain with the organization. If there are feelings of discomfort, employees will be motivated to quit. Calculative forces measure future goals with the possibility of achievement through continued membership. If employees do not think their future goals can be achieved at an organization, they will want to leave. Contractual forces are a result of a fulfillment or breach of psychological contract. Behavioral forces address the commitment to other organizational members and the perceived stress of quitting. Consideration of other job alternatives and impact on self-efficacy for taking another role is termed as an alternative force. Normative forces refer to the influence of others outside of the organization that encourage staying or leaving. Moral or ethical forces refer to the employees' decisions to leave and their values about turnover. Employees may be influenced to remain or leave depending on their attachment to individuals or groups within the organization.

WORK ATTITUDES

Hom and Kinicki (2001) investigated how job dissatisfaction leads to turnover. They examined inter-role conflict which is a conflict between work and non-work requirements, the existence of alternative employment opportunities, and job avoidance, which is explained as a distancing of an employee from an unappealing environment at work. With inter-role conflict, employees can be confronted with demands outside of the workplace, such as familial responsibilities or leisure time. When inter-role conflict occurs, job dissatisfaction increases,

leading to an increase in job avoidance. Hom and Kinicki (2001) stated, "In several perspectives, job avoidance is an immediate reaction to dissatisfaction that substitutes for exits…job avoidance predates and reinforces exit propensities" (p. 977). If the employment market is perceived as being poor, employees are less likely to consider withdrawal and exit.

Work withdrawal is defined as creating distance between employees and undesirable work environments. This separation can be both physical and psychological. Jablin (1987) cites two studies that address organizational withdrawal. One study focused on workers' avoidance of communicative exchanges and avoidance of the organization overall. The second study focused on communication patterns during withdrawal,

> …as individuals disengage from organizations their talk initially reflects a differentiation of self from others, followed by a circumscription of communication activities, which subsequently leads to a period of emphasizing concerns for the future of the organization and its members. (p. 723)

Withdrawing employees may share a greater level of job knowledge with remaining employees or recruit others to take the withdrawing employee's place during communication exchanges with coworkers.

Co-workers may sense an impending leave based on communication patterns of withdrawing employees. Exiting employees begin to exhibit cues, or both conscious and unconscious signs, that they are no longer satisfied in their current role and are considering alternatives (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988). When interviewing employees who leave voluntarily, it is impossible for them to not link these cues at the time they occurred as subsequent reasons for exit. For example, an employee may begin to arrive late to work when she was normally early to arrive. Once the employee leaves the organization, she would link this behavior to

subsequent job dissatisfaction and exit, although the late arrival could have been caused by road construction and could have been interrelated (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988).

While co-workers may become frustrated with other members, they do not possess the authority to terminate the employment relationship. Frustrated colleagues can encourage members to leave the organization. This can often be a result of the members identifying an individual's deviation from group norms or low levels of commitment. Since the termination message is difficult to deliver, managers may also encourage voluntary separation by recommending other job alternatives or reducing the number of challenging projects an employee receives. Few studies have examined how communication occurs prior to an employee leaving voluntarily. Additional research is needed to determine how much co-workers and managers impact voluntary termination (Cox, 1999).

While job satisfaction and linkages to turnover have been present in the turnover literature for over 25 years, researchers are focusing their efforts on studying non-attitudinal causes for turnover. The variables linking job dissatisfaction and resignation remain ambiguous. However, studying the relationship of job dissatisfaction to turnover remains important (Hom & Kinicki, 2001).

WITHDRAWAL COGNITIONS

In general, turnover models dealing exclusively with individual characteristics and attitude cannot predict or explain turnover (Abelson, 1987). Jablin's (1987) research supports that turnover results from unmet expectations during entry, which is in concert with Rousseau's (2001) work on psychological contract violations. Withdrawal cognition research follows a basic attitude-intention-behavior pattern. Self-evaluation of an employee's present position may lead

to job dissatisfaction, leading to a job search. Those two factors, job dissatisfaction and job search, lead to an intention to quit and termination or withdrawal when alternative job opportunities are perceived as being more favorable. Essentially, job satisfaction will decrease unless it is coupled with a positive outcome resulting from role membership. Alternatively, if employees do not see another available employment opportunity because of poor economic conditions, they may experience greater job satisfaction. Essentially, they are lowering their expectations (Hulin, Roznowski & Hachiya, 1985).

Sager, Varadarajan, and Futrell (1988) examined Mobley's (1977) model of turnover and applied it to turnover of sales staff. If a salesperson is dissatisfied with aspects about the job, the salesperson considers quitting, which leads to openness to beginning a job search. When the job search begins, an employee can assess alternatives and make a comparison to his or her current job. If an alternative is better than the current opportunity, intention to quit develops, which precedes turnover. The researchers showed that salespeople reflect the general population in the model of turnover. Of interest, the researchers suggest that managers may hasten the departure of an employee once intention to quit is realized or acknowledged (Sager, Varadarajan, & Futrell, 1988).

While most turnover models place intention to quit prior to actual departure, the results of the research conducted by Barrick and Zimmerman (2005) indicates that intention to quit can be present prior to beginning a job. Therefore, intention to quit needs to be revisited to additionally consider what employees discover about the job prior to starting employment. Essentially, pre-hire attitudes that predict turnover need to be assessed. Also relevant in predicting turnover was biographical data which consisted of the applicant's number of friends

and family, whether the employee was referred to the organization by another employee, and the number of jobs an applicant had prior to organizational entry. Other researchers cite the important of nonwork-related variables that impact turnover.

Mitchell et al. (2001) introduced job embeddedness, or a linkage to an organization. Essentially, job embeddedness measures why an employee may not leave a job. Some researchers have departed from the theories that attitude and alternative opportunities creates turnover. Non-work factors influence turnover like family responsibilities or a spouse finding an opportunity that requires relocation. Consequently, a decision to leave may be event driven. Additionally, organizational factors like team membership build commitment and impact turnover. Fit, or perceived compatibility and comfort with an organization, is important to determining retention. Furthermore, there may be some sacrifices that occur when leaving a job like the loss of a company vehicle, that impact the decision to remain.

While organizational commitment and job satisfaction were the two predominant antecedent variables to turnover measured in literature, job involvement was also discussed. Organizational commitment contains a wide variety of variables that differ in each study. Organizational commitment and job satisfaction differ from job embeddedness in that job embeddedness involves measurements of employees' fit with the job and organization using measurements both inside and outside of the context of the organization (Mitchell, et al., 2001). These variables may help predict turnover but do not aid in understanding the process (Mobley, 1982).

Exes, or people leaving roles, have certain expectations, privileges and status (Fuchs

Ebaugh, 1988). According to Fuchs Ebaugh,

> The one thing exes (former employees) have in common is that they once identified
> with a social role which they no longer have. The process of disengagement from a role
> that is central to one's self-identity and the reestablishment of an identity is a new role
> that takes into account one's ex-role constitutes the process I will call role exit. (p. 1)

Every exiting employee has withdrawn from expectations associated with a former role

or has essentially disengaged from that role. The employee no longer finds the role

expectations to be relevant, and both the employee and the employer withdraw socially and

physically. While disengaging, employees are unlearning the expectations in previously held

roles while learning new role behaviors.

Disidentification occurs when employees stop thinking of themselves in their former

role. With the new role, socialization comes a new self-identity because the new employee

identifies with a new set of expectations. While trying to incorporate the past, present, and

future into one's identity, employees struggle with this anxiety. Disengagement and

disidentification make the experience of a former employee different from the individual who

has never had any previous work experience (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988). While extant literature

focused on the socialization process as one that concerns itself with entering and learning new

roles, exit is not addressed although it is part of a role change. Socialization is only one

component of role exit since exiting employees may not have a new role they are entering.

As employees experience first doubts about their organizational or role commitment,

they may receive negative reactions from others which may either cause them to reevaluate

their doubts or seek individuals who will support their beliefs. During this first stage of exit,

cues are emitted by exiting employees. Employees might exhibit cues and alternatively receive

positive reactions from others which reinforces their doubts and causes them to seek

alternatives, leading to a further reinforcement of doubts. Employees who are part of a larger

group that shares the same dissatisfaction with the organization or job will exit sooner than

those who are members of a satisfied group of employees (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988). The length the

doubting stage lasts is based on awareness of the doubts, a feeling of control over the exit

decision, the level of acceptance of the organization's ideology, and a membership in a larger

group of employees who may also doubt role commitment as opposed to enjoying their jobs.

With positive support from peers, employees begin to seek alternatives. Sharing doubts

with others allows employees to safely test alternatives since the decision to leave will

ultimately be made while accounting for a larger social context outside of the individual's

experience. The exiting employee may have financial responsibility for dependents who may be

compromised as commissions are low as a new customer base is built. Fuchs Ebaugh (1988)

stated, "Alternative seeking behavior is essentially a comparative process in which alternative

roles are evaluated in comparison with the costs and rewards of one's current role" (p. 87). The

analysis of the social costs of leaving and rewards of staying in the existing role is an easier

analysis than the evaluation of an unknown role. While this process is typically systematic and

practical, it can be an emotional and irrational process as well. The duration of the process is

based on the amount of social support and desirability of the exit, institutionalization of the

role exit (i.e., retirement vesting), the degree of awareness of this process, and the ability to

reverse the exit, which is linked with a more intense analysis of alternatives and a more

intricate anticipatory role rehearsal.

Potential alternatives are constrained to an employee's transferable skills and desire. A desire to move outside of his or her state of residence might also limit alternatives. Exit is more difficult when employees have always aspired to a particular job since childhood. Childhood aspirations may be rare for the community college dean but may be more common for other more visible roles, such as firefighter and school teacher (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988).

Seeking alternatives generates more of a conscious cuing behavior in opposition to merely unconscious cuing. Once the alternative role is selected as the most viable option over remaining in the current role, employees start to evaluate themselves within the values and norms set by the new role, thus undergoing the anticipatory socialization process once more. According to Fuchs Ebaugh (1988), "Anticipatory socialization is in fact the first real step away from an existing role and toward a new role identification" (p. 109).

There reaches a moment sometimes referred to as a turning point, where the decision is made to exit. The decision to exit is usually accompanied by a formal announcement, such as a resignation letter, which also serves the purpose of finalizing the decision (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988; Jablin, 2001). Some decisions to exit are gradual and take months or years. Events that trigger exit may be significant or insignificant but are salient to the exiting employee. While some exiting employees undergo a gradual process in exit, the "turning point" is a more common trigger. In addition to a formal announcement, the turning point may reduce anxiety caused through a feeling of imbalance.

The employment lifecycle from vocational anticipatory socialization through termination has been documented in extant literature. However, previous research did not sufficiently test Jablin's (2001) and Jablin & Miller's (1991) assertions of communication during voluntary

turnover, which would help strengthen this area of research. Furthermore, it would provide more solutions to recruiting and human resources professionals who manage the employment lifecycle.

To reach the point of exit, employees may either have a potentially more favorable job opportunity or have unmet expectations. Uncertainty of the prospective employment relationship begins the process of information seeking for employees. It is this communication exchange that leads to expectations of the employment relationship.

UNCERTAINTY REDUCTION

Uncertainty reduction theory was developed by Berger and Calabrese (1975) to aid in understanding interpersonal communication processes. Berger and Calabrese provided a theoretical framework for many levels of analysis of interpersonal communication, including organizational communication behaviors (Kramer, 1999). Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) offers insight into a variety of organizational communication interactions during organizational entry and exit and can be used to help understand the incompatibilities between behaviors and experiences when relationships change (Kramer, 1999).

According to uncertainty reduction theory, individuals experiencing feelings of uncertainty are motivated to seek information to reduce their discomfort (Kramer, 1999). URT claims that when individuals initially meet, they seek information from each other to reduce uncertainty (Goldsmith, 2001; Kramer, 1999). Information is shared to learn more about the other individual through self-disclosure, which strengthens relationships. Individuals want and need to communicate with each other. Essentially, Berger and Calabrese suggested that as levels of uncertainty increase, information seeking increases. Uncertainty decreases when

communication increases. Uncertainty is created when situations are unpredictable or not understood (Kramer, 1999). Communication becomes a coping strategy to reduce uncertainty (Teboul, 1994).

The theory at its foundation argues that uncertainty causes unwelcome anxiety, which will be avoided whenever possible (Brashers, 2001). Communicators strive to reduce uncertainty, explain phenomena, and make life experiences predicable. When people meet, they attempt to reduce uncertainty through communicative behaviors involving question and answer sequences (Bradac, 2001). Attempts to apply URT to the organization are predicated on the assumption that communication exchanges in relationships between newly hired employees and the organization are similar to those in interpersonal relationships (Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995).

Most scholars agree that new hires have uncertainty about organizational entry (Teboul, 1994). There are differing views about the source of uncertainty, suggesting that it can either be environmentally created, individually created, or created by both. Environmental uncertainty can be created from external sources outside of the organization or through the organization's employees or members. Berger and Calabrese developed uncertainty reduction theory by identifying uncertainty as a relational construct (Jorgensen & Petelle, 1992). Individually created uncertainty is generated by the onboarding employee, which can be related to self-confidence (Teboul, 1994).

Mignerey, Rubin, and Gorden (1995) developed an uncertainty reduction model of organizational assimilation. Communication behavior during organizational assimilation includes both tenured employees providing information in addition to new hires seeking

information to facilitate understanding of work roles. Critical involvement during the assimilation processes recognizes that there is a process by which organizational roles are negotiated within the organization. Involvement from new hires to actively negotiate these organizational roles is encouraged. New hires with reduced uncertainty will be more likely to be participative in role identification and negotiation, taking an active part in defining their work role with their supervisor. While the new hire's role-making behavior seems like a practical extension of the organization's assimilation and socialization practices, the extent to which a new hire engages in this work role development process will depend on several variables. These variables encountered through the hiring process can be environmental, such as incomplete information or the lack of a written job description or personal, such as the personal traits of the newcomer. This process does not always have a predictable outcome (Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995).

Products of this process include positive organizational outcomes such as employee commitment, role orientation, and job satisfaction. Some theories suggest that a new hire's organizational commitment is relational and dependent on the interaction between the organization and new hire. Alternatively, other theories suggest that a new hire's commitment is based on his or her actions and influences upon the organization (Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995). The nature and degree of a new hire's influence upon organizational outcomes has a distinct relationship to his or her level of job satisfaction. When new hires feel empowered to influence an organization, their level of job satisfaction increases, but employees who are unable to feel a sense of impact within an organization may not experience the degree of job satisfaction sought when they joined the organization. Lack of influence can

lead to negative outcomes such as role ambiguity and diminished confidence. Employees who have inflated expectations during the hiring process may be dissatisfied with initial communication if it is insufficient or is delivered from an unreliable source (Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995).

Uncertainty reduction theory (URT) also seeks to explain whether employees should take social risks within the organization to reduce their uncertainty. If, for example, newly hired employees encounter a unique computer program, they may fear that questions asked of their employer regarding the program may make them appear incompetent and unfit for the job. Employees weigh the risk of managerial or peer rebuke against their need to reduce uncertainty about the organization or their work roles (Kramer, 1999). During social exchanges within an organization, the newly hired employee might be rejected by members of the organization. This rejection may ultimately lead to the employment relationship being terminated by the employer (Brashers, 2001).

Uncertainty is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Individual beliefs and values can make uncertainty a contradictory experience. URT theories should focus on the interconnectivity of ambiguities to identify how unclear instructions might cause work role uncertainty. Lastly, uncertainty can be ongoing or short-term experience. Responses to uncertainty are created by logical assessments or emotional reactions to encounters. In an equally complex organizational environment, uncertainty can be challenging to study (Brashers, 2001).

Uncertainty reduction theory has received somewhat mixed reviews. There are many motives for communication. Some theorists argued that the potential for future communicative

interactions predicts initial communication patterns better than uncertainty. Goldsmith, (2001)

argued that URT should focus more on evaluating communication practices and understanding

the effectiveness of that communication.

> If we believe that communicative behavior is purposeful, meaningful, and motivated by multiple goals, then it isn't sufficient to look only at covariation between frequency of behavior and level of uncertainty; we must also look at the meanings attributed to uncertainty and to different communicative responses to uncertainty. (Goldsmith, p. 530)

Uncertainty becomes a tool which can be cultivated through dyadic exchange (Bradac,

2001; Goldsmith, 2001). Moreover, the ability to tolerate uncertainty is sometimes overlooked.

In addition, some communicative encounters never produce uncertainty. Others demonstrate

that information received through an exchange can actually increase uncertainty. Some

uncertainty can be a positive factor in relationships (Kramer, 1999). URT has also been

amended into uncertainty management theory. Nonetheless, URT remains a powerful theory

for understanding communication in organizations.

SENSEMAKING

URT provides an explanation for why individuals desire to reduce uncertainty and how

they try to reduce it. Sensemaking further explains why and how the process of comprehension

occurs. Sensemaking (Weick, 1995) explains how newcomers to an organization proceed with

resolving feelings of uncertainty. Sensemaking is a process whereby meaning is constructed

when ambiguity is present. Accuracy is not as important during this process, but creation of

meaning becomes a construction of truth. Instead of accuracy, reasonableness and plausibility

become more important to forming meaning. Individuals filter information to make sense of

situations, and it is important to gain an understanding of the filters used to gain clarity. This became particularly salient in this proposed study that sought to understand the process of how new hires move from accepting a new position, to working in the job to intention to quit.

Sensemaking as a process comes into play when an event or a sequence of events over time creates an experience of surprise, which require an explanation. The need to explain arises because of a lack of understanding of why the event happened. The occurrence seems improbable because it is so far outside of the norm or outside the individual's prior experiences that it creates an element of surprise. Cues are not only read in a retrospective manner, but responses are generated. New information or surprises may occur as a snapshot, a single reference point in a fast-moving environment. Individuals turn to prior experiences and knowledge in an attempt to understand a new event.

In reviewing new events, it becomes apparent that they do not make sense based on prior life experiences. This retrospective assessment of a new situation was important to this study, since entry into a new organization can create many opportunities for new situations and retrospective evaluations of experiences (Weick, 1995). Newly hired employees usually have expectations for their new job like role responsibilities, income potential, and work hours. These expectations are generated through educational experiences and internships, which occur prior to the start of full time, permanent employment. Expectations are further shaped by messages received prior to the start of the job through the RJP (Wanous, 1989) and newcomer socialization methods like employee orientation, which may occur shortly after hire (Miller & Jablin, 1991).

Possible explanations are generated when, during a retrospective analysis, events do not make sense. In generating meaning and then a response, individuals take part in creating an environment, complete with opportunities and limitations (Weick, 1995). This journey of making sense of new experiences begins when the dean transitions from a teaching role. The organization, with its complexity, tends to be an environment that is somewhat ambiguous, so employees spend time trying to decode indistinct occurrences: "Sensemaking is about authoring as well as interpretation, creation as well as discovery" (Weick, 1995, p. 8). How meanings are developed and the effects of this were of particular interest in this study. The effects helped to explain the surprise.

Sensemaking (Weick, 1995) is grounded in identity construction, meaning that individuals desire to maintain a positive, competent image of themselves in relationship to their environment. When the organizational environment is perceived as negative by outsiders, individuals working for the organization may distance themselves from the organization to avoid a negative impression or may work to repair that tarnished organizational image. Individuals make sense of their environment by asking what effect it has on their identity. Whether a dean stays or leaves the organization may be decided in part by the community college's reputation.

Sensemaking is retrospective, meaning that an event has to occur prior to an explanation for that event to be offered. Challenges may arise because of the possibility of multiple explanations for events. With actions, individuals create both their constraints and opportunities, as Weick explained, being interactive within their environments. Sensemaking is not done purely on an individual level, since the organization is a social network that shapes

meanings. Meaning construction does not occur in a vacuum but is influenced by the organization's membership.

The construction of meaning is ongoing, without a beginning or end. According to Weick (1995), "People remember events that have the same emotional tone as what they currently feel" (p. 49). Anger at an event causes the remembrance of other like events that similarly triggered that anger. With an organization's complexity, it is sometimes easy for a newly hired or promoted employee to become frustrated during the socialization process. This frustration may lead newcomers to question whether or not they made the right decision when they accepted the position.

Weick (1995) stated, "It is less often the case that an outcome fulfills some prior definition of the situation, and more often the case that an outcome *develops* that prior definition" (p. 11). This is why understanding the retrospective process is essential to understanding employee turnover. Sensemaking is a process based on cues singled out as important but reading these cues does not necessarily have to be accurate, merely plausible. The process of sensemaking reinforces initial impressions. This makes the study of newcomer attraction and socialization essential to understanding how thoughts of organizational exit can occur in the employment relationship.

Few studies have focused on the experience of uncertainty and the resultant sensemaking process faced by newcomers to organizations as they experience organizational entry. Wanous (1992) defined organizational entry as the events that occur when members join an organization and stressed that these events must be viewed from both the employee and employer perspective. Most of the research has focused on newly hired employees after they

have been exposed to the organization. Newcomers are twice as likely to experience referent

uncertainty with respect to the job and organization than they are to experience any other

uncertainty type. Newcomers may experience several different types of uncertainty at a variety

of levels from shock to surprise. Little is known about what causes the various types of

newcomer uncertainty (Teboul, 1994). Uncertainty reduction provides the theoretical construct

to allow communication researchers to examine processes of organizational socialization.

To summarize, employees particularly newly hired or in the process of looking for a job

may experience anxiety or discomfort given the newness of the situation. This creates a

situation of uncertainty. People are motivated to reduce this uncertainty and a way they can do

this is to seek information to fill the gaps or address their concerns. This information can come

from a variety of sources, including the organization in its hiring, a realistic job preview, and the

socialization process. Also, this information could be provided by the training the individual

receives through his or her education. The process by which uncertainty reduction occurs is a

sensemaking process, which is spurred by surprise or unmet initial expectations. With the

surprise, the individual begins to seek information to understand what happened, thus setting

the groundwork for subsequent decisions and actions. This study looked at what employees

knew and how they knew it prior to coming into the organization and then understanding what

they knew after being on the job for two or three months of employment and how it likened to

their desire to quit or continue.

ANTICIPATORY SOCIALIZATION

According to Fuchs Ebaugh (1988), "…anticipatory socialization is the acquisition of

values and orientations found in statuses and groups in which one is not yet engaged but which

one is likely to enter" (p. 7). Anticipatory socialization is the process by which the career and organization are selected. It serves two purposes; it eases entrance into a group based on motivation and simplifies adjustment to the group. By identifying with a group that one intends to join, potential employees start to exhibit the same values and norms of that group (Fuchs Ebaugh, 1988).

A preview of a career is determined by an individual's environment, where education, family, friends, media, and part-time jobs have an influence. At the age of five, children can respond to requests for work and create excuses for non-fulfillment (Jablin, 2001). Children soon learn how to solicit assistance from others and recognize what work can be passed along to another sibling. Parents may reinforce stereotypes by asking girls to complete some more "feminine" tasks like housekeeping and asking boys to complete "masculine" tasks like mowing the lawn. Parents teach work principles through metaphors, using different approaches to ask for work to be completed. Boys and girls receive work messages differently. Parents discuss their work experiences with their children that influence children's beliefs about work (Jablin, 2001). Peers reinforce or challenge these beliefs, which may also influence impressions about work.

A primary focus of educational institutions is to socialize students in preparation for a career. A hierarchical approach to division of work is experienced in school while students compare themselves to other colleagues as they transition from child to adulthood. Learning skills are developed in the classroom which established lifelong skills for further skill development. Through communication, students are encouraged to reduce uncertainty by asking questions. High school allows students to investigate classroom knowledge and seek

potential careers that allow them to apply their developing skills. Part-time jobs, internships, and co-ops allow students to further explore their interests. The impact of these employment opportunities depends on the communication with supervisors and peers (Jablin, 2001).

Friends and peers also influence socialization. Team oriented activities like sports teach the importance of practice and possessing a sense of urgency. Peers may already have jobs in a career of interest which will influence impressions about work. Prior to and while attending school and developing relationships with peers, children are exposed to media messages regarding different occupations and assumptions of work. Media, like television shows, give children a vision of what jobs may require, but these shows frequently glamorize professions, not giving a balanced realistic job preview. Some occupations, such as business professionals, are portrayed negatively and conflict in the workplace is usually identified. These messages can be eagerly absorbed by children as entertainment but may not give an entirely accurately portrayal of a profession. What is not yet determined based on the challenge and cost of longitudinal studies is the level of influence each of these variables has on an individual's career choice (Jablin, 2001).

While vocational anticipatory socialization is based on intentional and unintentional information gathering about a career choice, organizational anticipatory socialization occurs when job seekers learn about the organizations they wish to join. Realism measures how closely applicants' expectations of an organization match the organization. While research in dean-specific roles is not readily available, in other roles, realism impacts job performance, turnover, and job satisfaction and survival (Jablin, 2001; Murray & Murray, 1998).

Education is one of the primary sources of vocational anticipatory socialization. Students select college majors because they think the subjects studied will match their personalities. College students continue to form expectations based on their experiences in school. Expectations and self-selection are then linked to the creation of role expectations. A natural extension of this research is that expectations formed in school continue following graduation (Pike, 2006).

Congruence measures the compatibility of the needs of the organization and the recruit, and is influential in the general satisfaction, work motivation, and tenure of the employee. Since organizations struggle with tailoring programs for individuals, they attempt to find individuals who are congruent with the organization. When the individuals are investigating organizations to join, their desire to make a good match based on their perceived skills is reflected in the person-environment fit theory. Applicants will take fantasies about the job and perceived skills and abilities into consideration (Moss & Frieze, 1993).

With all of the messages received during approximately 15 years of vocational socialization, information must be validated prior to joining an organization. Unfortunately, organizational anticipatory socialization must begin and conclude in a more limited timeframe, possibly after only a few months of inquiry where the jobseeker will make a decision about the job and organizational fit. Organizations must also determine congruence in the same limited timeframe, the interviewing process. Job seekers will enthusiastically work toward seeking information about the potential job and organization.

Job seekers take an active role in seeking information about the organization they may join or a job they will perform, not merely taking a passive role of being the subject of an employer's attraction (Jablin, 2001; Morrison, 1993). This active information seeking role can also occur as a faculty member transitions to an administrative leadership role. The new job context can be characterized as a high uncertainty condition and information seeking is important to reduce uncertainty. Ultimately, this helps potential hires understand and control their environment. Information about a role or organization is provided through recruitment activities and recruiter behavior which creates impressions that need to be validated by employment candidates (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005).

Job seekers require information not readily provided by potential employers. For example, job seekers considering an administrative leadership role may want to know what they can expect to do in a typical day. This is difficult for colleges to answer, as it is largely dependent on the variety of challenges deans encounter as a result of the department's needs. Information seeking activities continue after the employee enters the organization (Miller & Jablin, 1991). During the process of organizational entry, job candidates experience high levels of uncertainty that includes interactional uncertainty about coworkers' goals, beliefs, and communication skills exists upon entry. Uncertainty about how to do the job is common, in addition to newcomers being uncertain about how they will accomplish their organizational role (Brashers, 2001).

Candidates for hire might struggle with full disclosure of their expectations during the interviewing process. Tulgan (2009) documented this well. While Tulgan's research focused on

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Generation Y, or employees born between 1978 and 1990, it offered practical advice for recruiting employees of all ages. Tulgan warned employers about the inherent problems associated with branding during the recruiting process, discussing the influence of the brand on the candidate. For example, recruitment advertisements establish company values that candidates think they have to replicate to get the job. For example, some candidates might only want to remain at the job for a short period of time yet because advertisements speak of long-term employment, the candidates cannot be honest during the recruitment process to meet those perceived expectations. Alternatively, employees work to join members of a peer group, work at a particular location, learn a particular skill, or make business contacts. Candidates feel constrained when asking questions about the job, so they remain in congruence with the values of the potential employer in order to remain a viable candidate for employment. To reduce uncertainty candidates will continue to make an attempt, regardless of how constrained, to obtain information about the opportunity. This study attempted to understand other sources job candidates use to gain information about the job.

Following the tenets of uncertainty reduction theory, candidates can be expected to seek out information to reduce their uncertainty. Job candidates may receive limited information until they prove that they are trustworthy, or job-related messages may be purposefully ambiguous to allow candidates to contribute their experience to the job. Candidates sometimes experience too much information, which may be overwhelming and lead to a lack of understanding. A lack of understanding may create a higher level of anxiety or uncertainty that requires attenuation. Job or company-specific jargon used without clarification

can also be confusing. This inadequate information can lead to high levels of uncertainty (Miller & Jablin, 1991).

As noted earlier, social costs such as a manager's perception of employee incompetence may prohibit an employee from speaking to a manager to gain understanding of an ambiguous concept. Instead, employees often approach peers to gain clarity without fear of sanctions for a lack of knowledge. Peers are generally more available than managers for more immediate responses (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Those employees who seek out information are perceived as having power within the organization because they take the lead in organizational influence and work role creation (Mignerey, Rubin & Gorden, 1995).

While information is sought by new hires during the decision-making process when accepting or rejecting a job offer, employers also communicate information to attract potential employees. The attraction process is mutual, with actions taken by both the employee and employer that place each other in a most favorable view (Wanous, 1992). Recruitment advertisements can only provide limited information about the scope of the company and job duties. Consequently, additional information must be supplied by the employer for an employee to make an informed decision on whether to accept a job offer. The realistic job preview is a method that employers use to aid the potential hire during that decision-making process. The realistic job preview contains information about the positive and negative aspects of the job in addition to information about the characteristics of the potential employer, such as its culture, organizational structure, and competitive position in the market. This preview may help reduce inflated newcomer expectations that may otherwise lead to job dissatisfaction or potential turnover of the newcomer.

The research indicated that the more accurate information a potential employee has about a job opportunity, the more likely they are to remain employed in an organization, thus reducing turnover (Pitt & Ramaseshan, 1995; Wanous, 1973). Most traditional recruitment methods focus on attracting the greatest number of candidates to a job opening to give employers the luxury of choosing among several qualified candidates (Wanous, 1992). Clearly, it is to the organization's advantage to present realistic information about the job and the company in order to assist the matching process (Pitt & Ramaseshan, 1995). The communication of this information may be completed through realistic job previews whereby employees gain both the positive and negative aspects of the job before joining the organization in an employment relationship. The expected result is less employee turnover (Buckley, Fedor, Veres, & Carraher, 1998; Pitt & Ramaseshan, 1995; Wanous, 1973).

Realistic job previews (RJPs) can be delivered during a dyadic exchange between the interviewer and interviewee, the use of printed materials like handbooks or brochures, and/or the usage of audio-visual aids such as films or slide show presentations (Nelson, 1987). According to Wanous (1975), "An RJP must be balanced to include important facets of a particular job (and the organization) that the typical employee experiences as satisfying and those that are commonly dissatisfying" (p. 53). The goal of reducing turnover may be achieved by applying Wanous' realistic job preview model and modeling organizational interviewing behavior to provide candidates with sufficient information about the job and organization during the hiring process (Wanous, 1973).

The realistic job preview model argues that employees possessing the most information about the job will be able to meet job expectations and perform satisfactorily in their new role (Wanous, 1973). Employees hired after receiving a realistic job preview have greater job survival than those not receiving such information. Accordingly, realistic job previews lower initial job expectations held by new hires, resulting in increasing job survival as those who join organizations with inflated expectations are more likely to resign (Wanous, 1976). Successful realistic job previews can provide accurate, relevant, and detailed information to applicants without distortion of these messages (Ramaseshan, 1997; Wanous, 1992).

Deans generally come into their positions without leadership training in preparation for an ambiguous, complex role. Studies have indicated that new deans experience significant difficulties in their new roles when compared to those with experience and are almost doomed to fail. Usually ascending from the ranks of faculty, deans have a difficult time transitioning into their new roles when attempting to meet personal and professional expectations. Whether they join new institutions or are promoted within the same organization, the challenges of adjustment remain the same even if the variables change (Gmelch, 2000; Gmelch, 2003).

Since new employees know relatively little about the organization they are joining until they are immersed as an employee, many join the organization with potentially inaccurate expectations. The same can be true with assuming a new role with an organization. These unrealistic expectations often take one to three months to change (Wanous, 1976). Consequently, it is within the first six months that organizations endure the highest turnover rates of new employees (Wanous, 1976; Wanous, 1992). Mixed reviews exist about the best RJP tactics that lead to retention. Most recent studies favored an RJP delivered from a more formal

source, like an advertisement over an informal source like an employee (Jablin, 2001; Sakes & Ashforth, 1997). Irrespective of the RJP source, employees typically rely on several sources to form an opinion about an organization. Additional areas for research on point included the consistency of messages from varying sources, the content of the RJP messages and the relationship of their importance, and the significance of dyadic communication (recruiter conversations) over one-way communication (job posting) (Jablin 2001).

Wanous (1989) argued that the content of the RJP should be intensive and focus on key factors about the job. He also recommended that the RJP be introduced to potential employees as early as possible, as this will allow the candidate to process the information about the job and self-select whether his/her expectations match that of the organization (Wanous, 1989). The RJP has traditionally focused on employee retention, but a secondary focus has been on applicant attraction and job choice (Sakes, Wiesner, & Summers, 1993). While realistic job previews are frequently understood to occur prior to acceptance of an offer of employment by the prospective employee, employees can continue to receive realistic job preview information throughout the hiring process. Some researchers have defined the hiring process to include the first weeks following the commencement of employment (Phillips, 1998). With additional information about the job and organization, a newcomer is less likely to exit the organization. To adequately provide sufficient information, the newcomer must receive information about both the advantages and disadvantages associated with the job and organization. There are a variety of mediums such as dyadic exchanges, PowerPoint presentations, or films that are used to deliver these messages. The organization's desired outcome in this investment of time and

resources is a high functioning, productive, and satisfied new hire. Research continues to focus on the outcomes of realistic job previews.

OUTCOMES OF REALISTIC JOB PREVIEWS

Theories about realistic job previews begin with the premise that messages are understood and internalized by potential employees receiving the communication. Continuing research focuses on the timing and format in which the realistic job previews are delivered and their subsequent effectiveness (Phillips, 1998). Recruiters or human resources professionals are seen as the primary communicators of information to candidates for hire, giving information about the job and the company, and being credible and trustworthy in their roles (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Candidates seeking employment prefer traditional methods of recruitment which is a sales process that leads to inflated expectations. Some RJPs are more realistic, touting benefits of the organization like vacation time without selling an unrealistic expectation of the job or organization (Jablin, 2001).

Meglino and DeNisi (1987) outlined four possible effects that a realistic job preview may have on potential candidates: self-selection, adjustment of expectation effect, the freedom of choice effect, and the "work of worry" effect. The self-selection effect presumes that if a candidate receives realistic information about the organization and the job duties, both positive and negative, a candidate may remove oneself from consideration leaving the organization with a more select group of new employees who are less like to leave "when the dissatisfying parts of the job manifest themselves" (p. 32). The RJP gives information to employees when facing uncertain situations which may create an additional benefit of providing comfort (Hom, Griffeth, Palich, & Bracker, 1999).

The second effect concerns the exposure to realistic job information and impact on prospective employee's expectations. This happens when candidates realize that parts of the job, they thought would be enjoyable actually are not gratifying and lower their expectations. In turn, individuals expect less from the job and are less likely to be disappointed if the job does not meet their original expectations (Meglino & DeNisi, 1987). The third part of the realistic job preview is the freedom of choice effect. This occurs when individuals are fully informed of all the aspects of their choices or course of action and when the negative aspects of the job arise, the individual does not feel as though they have been deceived because they freely made the choice. The final category is the "work of worry" effect. This is when the realistic job preview helps reduce uncertainty about the job, which allows new employees the opportunity to develop coping strategies with the disagreeable aspects of the job.

Clearly, these outcomes of a realistic job preview are designed to increase employee retention and reduce employee dissatisfaction. Pitt and Ramaseshan (1995) tested these four categories in a 1995 study on salesperson retention. They discovered that salespersons who leave their jobs within months of employment believed that their job preview was less than realistic compared to those who exhibited a tendency to stay in their positions. If a potential employee is presented with adequate information about the job, he/she can decide for oneself whether he/she is a good fit for the company. Pitt and Ramaseshan (1995) noted that it is best if the candidate "judges him or herself unsuitable or unqualified to join, or because the job is seen as too demanding, not offering sufficient remuneration for the work to be done, or any of a number of undesirable attributes" (p. 31). Pitt and Ramaseshan (1995) specified that the quality of the RJP, not quantity of messages received had an impact on retention. This study

attempted to understand how employees make sense of their initial impressions formed by the RJP compared to their actual work experiences in order to more fully understand the process of how employees make a decision to stay or leave.

As the name suggests, realistic job previews should present both the positive and negative aspects of the position in a "realistic" way. Realistic job previews combined with expectation lowering procedures produce the greatest potential for employee retention. Recruiters have a tendency to sell or focus on the positive aspects of the organization and job. This may become more widespread in an effort to increase applicants as the job market becomes more competitive. While bolstering the positive aspects of the job, an unexpected outcome may be failed promises or unmet expectations as the candidate begins work.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF OFFERS

Employees choose an organization based on their job wants and needs and the corresponding relationship to the institution's culture, while employers make offers based on job skills corresponding with organizational needs or deficiencies (Wanous, 1992). This acceptance can be systematic with importance being assigned to each expectation or desire. Alternatively, organizational choice can be a more implicit decision which is not systematic but becomes more of an unconscious decision that can be influenced by others. While most employees make systematic, rational decisions on offer acceptance or rejection, they do so from an outsider's perspective. Ultimately, employees are most satisfied with their decision to accept an offer of employment if they believe it was made by their own free will, absent of coercion (Wanous, 1992).

Many of the studies on employment that offer contemplation and acceptance or rejection occurred in the 1970s (Turban, Eyring, & Campion, 1993; Wanous, 1975). Few studies have investigated the influencing factors of job applicant's perception of employers, but employee preferences in jobs have been widely reported. Advancement, benefits, the company, co-workers, hours, pay, security, supervisors, type of work, and working conditions are all reported job preferences. The level of importance of each of these factors varies by gender and education. A more recent study found that employees receiving a realistic job preview take other factors into consideration when accepting an offer, such as compensation (Saks, Weisner, & Summers, 1996). Undoubtedly, whether an offer of employment is accepted or rejected will vary, depending on a variety of personal preference (Saks, Wiesner, & Summers, 1996; Turban, Eyring, & Campion, 1993).

When reporting data on work preferences, self-reporting leads to potential employees identifying what would cause them to accept an employment offer. Turban, Eyring and Campion (1993), for example, found that location was the most important reason applicants gave for rejecting a job offer. The type of work was the most important reason for accepting an employment offer. Applicants may identify and rank important aspects of the job and reject offers for those jobs that fall outside of an acceptable range. This study had limitations of its population by studying new college graduates at one large organization. The degree to which these results might generalize to a larger, more diverse population is not clear.

NEWCOMER SOCIALIZATION

Organizational socialization is the process through which organizations orient newcomers (Allen & Meyer; 1990; Saks & Ashforth, 1997) and thus, provide relevant

information for the new employee that will influence or connect to their expectations and thus, considerations of leaving or staying. Many factors impact a new hire's socialization. "The socialization process, combined with a new hire's expectations regarding their job, affects his or her role clarity, self-esteem, and job-related stress. These constructs, in turn, affect job satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment" (Barksdale, Bellanger, Boles, Brashear, 2003, p. 125). The methods chosen by the organization to socialize the new hire impact the extent to which information is made available to the newcomer. The method becomes a means for the organization to manipulate the level of uncertainty experienced by the newcomer as communication and messages are controlled (Mignerey, Rubin & Gorden, 1995).

Jablin (2001) and Jablin & Miller (1991) noted that the pre-entry stage, one that follows the acceptance of an offer of employment and precedes the start of work, needs additional attention from researchers. The messages employees receive from their employer prior to starting work, the techniques newcomers utilize to manage their reputation, and the way insiders make sense of the new hire joining the organization are all areas that merit further research. Once the employee enters the organization, the socialization process commences.

Wanous (1992) distinguished between orientation of new hires which includes the dissemination of information, connection with co-workers, and the socialization process, which is essentially the process of change that a new hire experiences. Other researchers have not made that distinction and combine orientation with the socialization process. During the socialization phase, new hires learn the requirements of the job from basic skills to cultural mores (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

During the encounter stage, or newcomer's hire date, they are exposed to change and contrast from their previous impressions formed in part from the realistic job preview. Surprise is experienced during the encounter stage. To reduce uncertainty and to fill their increased sensemaking needs, newcomers are generally very receptive to messages. They attach meanings to organizational events, practices and procedures. The organization can use this phase as an opportunity to socialize the newcomer, teaching the desired values, expected behaviors, and knowledge required to perform the job (Barge & Schlueter, 2004; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Socialization can be an informal or formal process and can be part of a collective process with a group of newcomers or can occur individually. Socialization can also be sequential, following a timeline, or random; fixed, where a role is assumed, or variable; and serial, where a process is administered by a senior member of the organization, or disjunctive. Newcomers can also maintain their identity throughout the process or can deny it in favor of assuming the organization's identity. The duration and timing of the socialization activities are not always well established by organizations. Additionally, the effectiveness of socialization techniques has not been well documented (Barge & Schlueter, 2004; Jablin, 2001; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Nelson, 1987; Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

In addition to a formal, structured socialization process, newcomers can encounter more informal socialization tactics that may lack structure or timing of events. Stories or organizational narratives are useful for orienting a new hire to the organization's culture (Hart & Miller, 2005). Group orientation or norm enforcement provides a newcomer with an understanding of acceptable or tolerated behaviors. Informal rituals create an opportunity for a

newcomer to pass an informal test and gain trust prior to receiving additional information from

co-workers. Social or recreational activities allow understanding about the organization and co-

workers to develop in more of a relaxed, casual atmosphere. Trial by fire challenges newcomers

to handle organizational crises to prepare them for additional responsibilities (Hart & Miller,

2005).

As expected from the uncertainty reduction theory, newcomers take an active role in

seeking information to reduce uncertainty. Some tactics include direct and indirect observation,

testing, and seeking feedback. The type of strategy selected will be based on perceived social

cost which may be identified as an unfavorable managerial reaction to a question or a non-

verbal expression from a peer (Barge & Schlueter, 2004; Jablin, 2001). The level of assertiveness

a newcomer has will determine the quality of the information received. Newcomers with

communication apprehension will have a more difficult time reducing uncertainty during the

socialization process (Mignerey, Rubin, & Gorden, 1995). The receipt of knowledge and

information was positively related to the newcomer's higher job satisfaction, reduced stress,

higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Continuously attempting to reduce uncertainty, newcomer socialization can be a stressful

process for the new hire, although the stress can be reduced with an institutionalized,

organized process for newcomer socialization (Mignerey, Rubin, & Gordon, 1995; Nelson,

1987).

A newly hired employee attempts to make sense of the employer's expectations. During

this time, employers use the employee's eagerness to learn as an opportunity to socialize the

new employee. Both formal and informal methods of socialization can be used, including

training and mentoring that represent formal methods of socialization and sharing

organizational stories and providing organizational history, which are more informal methods of

socialization. While this learning process can create unease for the newcomer, it also begins the

process by which the employee compares and contrasts realistic job previews against this

newfound information about the organization. The employee assesses if the commitments

made prior to onboarding were "honored" by the employer. These commitments are referred

to as the psychological contracts, and they continue to be assessed throughout the

employment relationship (Rousseau, 2001). Psychological contracts may receive more attention

immediately following hire as new employees assess whether they made the correct decision to

join a particular organization or perform a job.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

Psychological contracts are defined as reciprocal agreements between employer and

employee with both parties having either specified or implied duties to be performed by both

parties (Rousseau, 2001). The employee has an understanding of what he/she owes the

organization and what can be expected in return. Employees establish the terms of the

psychological contract through the promises provided by employers during the interviewing

process, personal perceptions about the organization and its culture, and idealized, somewhat

inflated, expectations on how the organization operates (Turnley & Feldman, 1999). Primarily,

these contracts develop both during and after the recruiting process. Formations of

psychological contracts begin prior to the employment interview in terms of expectations about

salary and working conditions. Relational and transactional terms compose the psychological

contract. Relational terms refer to the relationship between the employee and employer and

the transactional terms cover the more tangible aspects of the job, such as rate of pay and office conditions (Rousseau, 2001; Purvis & Cropley, 2003).

Psychological contracts and URT share a commonality of being frameworks for understanding employee relationships during periods of uncertainty or change during workplace transitions. These transitions can occur during phases of organizational entry, socialization, or exit. Psychological contract formation and URT are both based on communication exchanges. Psychological contract fulfillment or breach expands URT beyond reducing uncertainty to one of reliance upon an assumed shared understanding, which may be created at different points throughout an employment lifecycle, not merely at the beginning of an exchange (Chaudhry, Wayne & Schalk, 2009).

The study of these psychological contracts was not focused on the content of the contracts but on the relational interactions that form and execute them. Contract terms can either be discussed or unstated during the interviewing process and beyond. Terms can also be implicit, which can create ambiguity, or terms can be explicit. Candid communication during the hiring process is not always guaranteed, although the quality of communication exchanges may improve with previous experience in a job role (Purvis & Cropley, 2003). The gravity of the impact of the psychological contract is determined by the new hire's intention to remain with the organization upon entry. A greater sense of obligation to the employer is formed if the employee intends to stay with the organization for a long time, not merely viewing the employer as a "stepping stone" to a better opportunity (Rousseau, 1990).

Employees also form conceptual frameworks, or schemata, regarding how an employer is supposed to operate (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). This conceptual framework varies by

employee based on personal life experiences and can vary by employee performing the same job role. Given this variance, the opportunity for incongruence of the terms of the psychological contract can occur and the actual establishment of the psychological contract may be questioned. Promises can be casual psychological contracts and can be forgotten or misinterpreted. When promises are not written, an opportunity exists for them to change over time as employees gain more complete and complex understanding of the organization (Morrison & Robinson, 1997).

In a study by Robinson and Rousseau (1994), recruits were surveyed immediately upon hire and two years following hire. The majority of employees (54.8%) thought that the employer did not fulfill its agreement to the employees. The occurrence of contractual breaches correlated positively with turnover and correlated negatively with organizational trust, employee satisfaction, and intent to remain at the organization (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). The employee's dissatisfaction as a result of the breach increases as the gap between what the employee expects and the employee's perception on what they have received increases (Porter, Pearce, Tripoli, & Lewis, 1999). This two-year differential may be important to the results of their study, since a longitudinal study demonstrated that employees within the first two years of employment felt that their employer owed them more while they owed their employers less (Robinson, Kraatz, & Rousseau, 1994).

While managers tend to agree that the organization is not fulfilling its obligations to employees, managers also blame external factors outside of the organization as the cause for these breaches. This leads one to conclude that the organization, if the external environment remained constant, would fulfill its contractual obligations to its employees. Employees usually

do not see the environment as the cause of the breach and hold the employer responsible for the breach and disengage from the organization according to this perception (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Purvis & Cropley, 2003). In addition to holding the organization accountable, employees frequently hold their managers directly responsible for breaches of the psychological contract (Conway & Briner, 2002).

An employee begins the analysis of breach by first reviewing the difference between what was promised by the organization and what was actually provided. If the employee concludes that the organization has not fulfilled its promise, the employee then reviews his promises during the creation of the psychological contract to determine if he or she fulfilled all promised obligations. For example, if an employee is promised a promotion in three months after hire and identifies that the employer failed to fulfill the psychological contract, the employee might take into consideration his or her consistent underperformance of a task prior to blaming the employer for a contract breach (Morrison & Robinson, 1997).

If the breach relates to a breach on an organizational level, employees may turn to friends and family to make sense of the breach. On the other hand, if the breach occurs at the job level, employees seek counsel from co-workers doing similar work or individuals with whom they have had long term relationships (Ho & Levesque, 2005). In a study that collected data using employee dairies, it was found that employees are evaluating potential breaches on a daily basis. Broken promises to employees become part of the sense-making process for newly hired employees and may impact them more significantly than when expectations are exceeded (Conway & Briner, 2002).

Employers can be more effective in managing the psychological contract through organizational communication methods that focus on organizational entry, daily work, and regular communication (Guest & Conway, 2002). Managers should listen to employees' expectations of psychological contract fulfillment prior to making assumptions that they are meeting employee expectations, reducing incongruence. Taking initiative to understand employees' expectations will create the opportunity for the communication of the employers' inability to meet those needs. Often, significant time passes between the formation of the psychological contract during the recruiting process and its fulfillment, which can be modified or clarified by communication (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Frequent communication may also create the opportunity to modify the psychological contract so both the employee and employer feel fulfillment (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000).

Breaches are not the only outcome of psychological contracts; they may also be forgotten or fulfilled. Regular communication would reduce the possibility that the employee could forget about the terms of the psychological contract or not find value in its terms (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Employees may also have their expectations exceeded by employers, for example, ewards given to employees help to strengthen the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1990). While broken promises result in feelings of betrayal and hurt, exceeded expectations correlate with feelings of positive self-worth, being cared for, and surprise (Conway & Briner, 2002).

CONCLUSION

In sum, psychological contracts contain the terms by which employers and employees continue an employment relationship (Rousseau, 2001). The terms of psychological contracts

may be implicit or explicit. Personal life experiences of the employee shape expectations of the employer. As a result of the somewhat implicit terms, a breach can occur. Managers may tend to blame the environment for failing to meet the employee's expectations. If a breach occurs, employees turn to friends, family, and co-workers to make sense of the breach. The breach may not have a large impact on the employment relationship if the employee has overlooked the importance of the contract's terms. Alternatively, this breach may cause the employee to exit the employment relationship.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this investigation was the nature of communication throughout the hiring process and its impact on employee turnover within the community college dean position. This inquiry also explored the messages delivered from the perspective of psychological contract violations through intention to quit and exit for this group. This research project had three goals, which are reflected in the research questions that follow. Essentially, this research sought to understand: (1) the vocational anticipatory socialization and realistic job preview messages that were received; (2) how newly hired employees made sense of their experience taking the RJP and socialization process into account; and (3) how RJP and socialization messages connected to the employees' current assessment and desire to leave the job or profession. The study was a descriptive thematic analysis that was able to use multiple levels of analysis to understand the complexity of communication during hire and exit.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions addressed the purpose of the study.

RQ1: What vocational anticipatory socialization messages are received by newly appointed community college deans?

While most individuals form role expectations through education, community college deans without an educational background in leadership or business may have more limited

experience with the expectations and responsibilities in the role. They may have experience

working in a faculty role and have some preliminary information about the scope of the role of

the dean, but role ambiguity is expected (Murray & Murray, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Jablin & Miller,

1991). The vocational anticipatory socialization is expected to differ for those experienced

faculty who have never been in an administrative leadership role but are remaining in the same

institution and those faculty who are moving to other institutions to accept a position as dean.

The extent of this difference remains unknown in extant literature. The subsequent employee

experience from assimilation through psychological contract violations requires further

investigation.

Faculty members who have worked for a dean are expected to have exposure to some

of the duties required in the profession: assigning faculty to classes, serving as a mediator with

faculty and student conflicts, and determining and managing budgets. It is expected that the

duties will have to be learned on the job and this may not be an easy or enjoyable process.

Individuals migrating to a new institution to assume the role of dean will need to familiarize

themselves with the new organization and role. They compared their previous job and

institution to their new engagement.

The realistic job preview is given by the organization through a variety of mediums: job

advertisements, company websites, marketing brochures, job interviews, and discussions with

employees performing the job functions. The RJP functions to give potential hires a balanced

view of the job, the company, and the organization's expectations of its employees. Both the

positive and negative aspects are delivered to job candidates if the RJP is well executed.

Candidates will make decisions on job and organizational fit after gathering sufficient

information and make a commitment to accept a position or join the organization if a fit exists

(Wanous, 1975; Jablin, 2001).

RQ2: What messages did the community college deans receive through the realistic job preview given by the organization?

Regardless of the quality of the RJP, assumptions about the employment experience are

formed. These assumptions, combined with vocational anticipatory socialization experiences,

create expectations of what the job will be like. These expectations are expected to vary based

on the educational background and work history of the individual. Through the process of

sensemaking, deans compared their expectations of the job, acquired during the RJP, with their

experiences on the job. These expectations are psychological contracts that the dean has

formed with the organization. The components of the psychological contracts were either met

or unmet (Jablin, 2001; Rousseau, 2001; Weick, 1995).

RQ3: From the impressions formed during organizational entry, what initial expectations were reexamined by the dean during the course of several months of employment?

RQ3a: How are these impressions maintained or changed?

RQ3b: How have deans changed their behavior or actions as a result of this reexamination?

RQ3c: What course of action do deans intend to take based on their reflections of the RJP and job experience after several months of employment?

While intention to quit may be present prior to hire, it is also developed after joining an

organization. This occurs when expectations are unmet or psychological contract violations

occur. These violations can occur based on unfulfilled promises or a poor relationship with a

manager. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are frequently cited as variables

measured on intention to quit (Barrick & Zimmerman, 2005; Lee, Mitchell, Wise, & Fineman,

1996; Rousseau, 2001). Interviews conducted following hire within 2–15 months of continuous employment generated reflection on the employees' experience of what they thought the job would be like. This was followed with a discussion of their current experience. This reflection led to a discussion of their desire on whether they will stay or leave their job or profession (Weick, 1995).

These research questions were generated from constructs in the research literature including vocational socialization, realistic job preview, psychological contract, intention to quit, and turnover theories. In addition, the existing literature is deficient in examining fundamental process of communication and turnover. Through their explanations, participants' experiences shaped the examination of the employment lifecycle for employees. Semi-structured interviews were the best method to capture the complexity of individual experiences.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study used semi-structured interviews to understand community college deans' experience with the employment lifecycle from recruitment to position attainment. It also examined how the subjects' experiences within their initial months of employment affect their intention to remain in their jobs. The qualitative method was best suited to this type of research because interviews aided in understanding the complexity of participants' experiences and their assigned meaning to those encounters. Twelve community college deans were selected through a purposive recruitment process. The deans were in their position for 2–15 months to allow for a comparison of their expectations prior to starting their job to their experiences within the role. A constant comparative method was applied to the findings.

To understand exit, one must understand the communication process during the hiring process through the development of intentions to quit and the influences of all the variables that impact this process. Generally, the hiring process communication begins with the employment advertisement, a representation of the job description with some demographic information about the organization. For those employees vying for an internal promotion, communication about the position may also be initiated by managers or peers and may enhance the limited information contained in the job description or posting. Interviews provided additional information for the dean, further setting or clarifying expectations for the role.

Based on this communication, impressions are formed, opinions are developed, and implied promises are understood and accepted. Through the research on RJPs, the role and impact of this pre-hire communication is understood, but the challenge lies in how deans processed this information in a reflective manner post-hire. Little is known about the employment lifecycle because extant literature has been predominantly focused on the hiring process. Newcomer perceptions are measured, but equal attention is not given to departing employees. Despite the cost of turnover, explanations for exit have not received the attention deserving of the financial impact that turnover imparts, especially in the academic dean positions where the population receives little attention in extant literature (Murray & Murray, 1998). Turnover must be measured in terms of a variety of variables. It should not be measured using an overly simplified model of job dissatisfaction leading to searching for another opportunity and selection of a better alternative (Jolson, Dubinsky, & Anderson, 1987).

The purpose of this study, then, was to gain an understanding of how and why

community college deans choose to remain in their roles, despite the documented challenges,

or decide to exit. The intended outcome was to both increase understanding and use the

results to better educate community colleges on how to reduce turnover within this profession.

A qualitative study was best able to examine the complexity of the employment lifecycle. Semi-

structured interviews conducted in this study helped expose how the employee made sense of

the employment experience and actions in response to it (Sturges & Guest, 2001).

Community college deans within their first 2–15 months of employment were

interviewed to determine how their hiring experiences and expectations differ. This sample size

of 12 interviews allowed for repeated themes and saturation to occur. The goal was achieved

when no new information or insights were gained. During the first half of the interview,

participants were asked to reflect on some of their earlier experiences with pre-hire messages

and RJP to better understand how the process of intention to quit occurs. The second half of

the interview focused on current expectations, any violations and intention to quit.

Grounded Theory

This study uses a grounded theory approach. Glaser and Strauss developed the method.

Strauss desired to get out into the field to assess what was really occurring. He recognized "the

complexity and variability of phenomena and of human interaction" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.

9). Strauss recognized the importance of humans as actors both controlling their situations and

concurrently deriving meanings during that process. Glaser saw a need for comparing the

relationships in data to "identify, develop, and relate concepts" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 10).

Qualitative research is defined as data gathered from non-statistical or mathematical methods. These can be lived experiences, emotions, behaviors, or organizational functions. The analysis is interpretive. While researcher experience or interest may lead to choosing a particular qualitative research method, the nature of the research itself drives the selection of this method. The benefit to qualitative research is its ability to explore complex concepts to gain novel understandings. It also adds value by gathering intricate details like human emotions, thoughts and feelings that are difficult to capture during traditional quantitative data collection and analysis methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Grounded theory is theory that is derived from the data as it is systematically gathered and analyzed (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). According to Bryant & Charmaz (2007), "Data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously, and each informs and streamlines the other" (p. 1). The theory can emerge from the data, which is more representative of reality than a theory that is generated through speculation. Strauss & Corbin (1998) stated, "Grounded theories, because they are drawn from data, are likely to offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action" (p. 12). The process of moving back and forth between data and analysis makes the data more focused and the analysis more theoretical (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Because qualitative research is not sequential, concepts and definitions are viewed as a work in progress. They are conditional until stated otherwise (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Interview Data Analysis

The hiring process is multidimensional with a variety of antecedents that influence how employees make sense of their employment experience. Interviews permit the researcher to

gain additional information by asking further questions, beyond asking an employee to select a

measurement (i.e. agree/disagree) to best describe the complex employment experience from

vocational anticipatory socialization, RJP and the interviewing process, assimilation or

socialization after hire, psychological contract violations, intention to quit and turnover. Not

only do interviews permit a constructionist approach, changing direction as the employee

offers additional information, while interviews also allow for an evaluative response when the

employee can reflect on his/her experiences. Interviews create the ability to expose how,

through dialectic experience, the employee makes sense of the employment experience and

how the employee proposed to act in response (Sturgis & Guest 2001).

Analyzing interview data consists of data reduction, reorganization, and representation.

Meaning is gained through coding and memo writing as the researcher works to understand the

participants' meanings based on descriptions. Interviews may be edited to distill the

participants central ideas as they relate to answering the research questions, eliminating

duplicate language and concepts. Activities of reflective reading, coding, writing and rereading

may be utilized by researchers to gain an understanding of the key concepts as they relate to

the area of interest. Researchers should pay careful attention to data that might change

previous assumptions (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Qualitative research is complex, and thematic analysis is foundational to the method,

since qualitative researchers must frequently understand themes arising from data. Braun and

Clarke (2006) stated, "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting

patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). There are many decisions to be made in thematic

analysis, but ultimately researchers work to make connections across a data set, in this case, interviews, to find repeated patterns (Bowen, 2005).

The research design is an exploratory, qualitative approach, one that uses thematic analysis to organize the data. The theme captures and organizes data in relationship to the research questions. The repetitive, patterned responses generate meaning as a result of the data set. The researcher is actively engaged in the development of the thematic categories, meaning that the themes do not reside in the data, as some researchers may reference. Instead, these developed categories are created prior to the data being collected and modified as more information becomes available to the researcher (Braun & Clark, 2006).

The constant comparative method is used for data analysis with the goal of establishing grounded theory. It consists of four stages: comparing incidents to established themes, amalgamating themes, demarcating the theory and writing the theory (Glaser, 1965). A grounded theory approach is best utilized to advance a theory that explains phenomena to gain a new perspective on a familiar occurrence (Bowen, 2005).

The sample size does not attempt to achieve representativeness but instead relies on adequacy, which means that the sample must be composed of those individuals who are most knowledgeable about the subject (Bowen, 2005). Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) noted that saturation occurred in the first 12 interviews of their study involving a thematic analysis of interviews of 60 women. Dahl and Moreau (2007) interviewed 12 consumers to better understand motivations of embarking on creative tasks and subsequent constraints. Subsequently, 12 interviews were sufficient to achieve saturation in this study as well.

Sturges and Guest (2001) used the semi-structured interview in researching what characteristics are most likely to impact recent college graduates' desires to remain with or leave their first employers early in their careers. This research followed the model employed by Sturges and Guest (2001) and built upon procedures established in their research. Subjects were interviewed for one and a half hours, with the interviewer asking them to reflect on what might influence their commitment to the organization they joined upon graduation. Four core questions were asked, asking about whether their expectations were being met by the employer and what effect this had on their commitment to the organization and what factors would cause them to remain with or leave the employer. They were also asked to identify what major events impacted their current level of commitment and how their views on career management, training, and development impacted their willingness to remain with or leave the organization (Sturges & Guest, 2001). These interview questions influenced the questions in Appendix A.

The interviews were transcribed in full and thematic analysis was used to create thematic categories for responses. Selected responses were quoted in each coded category following a generalized statement of findings from the authors. Conflicting comments were identified in each category and the employees' quotations added to the understanding of their experiences. The author reiterated the importance of psychological contract for studying perceived violations and their impact on organizational commitment (Sturges & Guest, 2001).

Comparison and contrast are used in virtually all types of data analysis from establishing categories and setting the parameters of each of those categories to adding content to the categories and summarizing the content. The goal is to uncover similar concepts, refine the

boundaries of the categories, and discover patterns. The theory is developed inductively

(Boeije, 2002). Essentially, there are four steps to the constant comparative method: comparing

incidents in each category, integrating categories, outlining the theory and writing the theory

(Glaser, 1965). In a study by Chochinov, et al. (2002) using the constant comparative method of

semi-structured interviews, a unit of analysis was defined: "A unit of analysis could be a word,

phrase or paragraph that described an experience, feeling or perception reported by the

participant" (p. 435). Units of analysis were used to code the transcripts, with the responses to

each question being coded accordingly (Appendix D). These larger coding categories were

based on the research questions, which are guided by extant literature.

The first category included the types of messages received and environmental variables

(message deliverers, location of delivery) surrounding the receipt of vocational anticipatory

socialization messages. The types and delivery of messages throughout the RJP process was the

second coding category. Reasons for termination and how those are communicated was the

third coding category. These categories were refined as responses were coded. Subcategories

were created concurrently to better organize the coded data. For example, a subcategory under

the RJP process may include types of company literature, messages on websites, etc.

Participants

Prior to commencement of the recruitment, IRB approval was obtained through Ferris

State University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). A purposive sampling of subjects

meeting the required criteria occurred within Ferris State University's Doctorate of Community

College Leadership (DCCL) program. The researcher had access to the Ferris State University

Doctoral Program of Community College Leadership (DCCL) program through program

membership and participation in Cohort 5. The DCCL program has students who desire to become more actively involved in community college leadership roles. Students in the program are frequently in administrative leadership positions, making students in this program potential subjects, depending on their current career path. Through the students' network, they were able to identify others who have been recently promoted into community college dean roles.

This resource produced a limited sample, so additional research needed to be completed to gather consenting study participants that met the requirements of the purposive sample. When that inquiry was exhausted, a search of press releases identifying newly hired community college deans was completed. This activity produced the majority of the participants. The press releases contained the date of position acceptance, so it was likely that the deans would fit the study parameters within two months following the date of the press release.

The search parameters were based on job title and months of experience. Initial phone calls were made to potential study participants, confirming criteria for participation, and explaining the purpose of the study. Emails were sent to potential participants who met the months of experience and job title criteria to further validate the accuracy of their qualifications and confirm in participation in the study. Those candidates who returned signed consents, met the requirements of the study, and were willing to participate were contacted to schedule an interview. This process continued until 12 deans were interviewed.

The participants had to serve in a role of community college dean and had to have between two and 15 months of tenure in that role. Any tenure beyond 15 months may have caused the participants to struggle to remember their initial impressions of the RJP and

socialization experiences. Interim roles were excluded from the study. This should have naturally limited participants to the ages of 35–65, but age was not a question asked of participants. Both men and women were included in the study. Participants were limited to community college deans in the United States.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data for this study. The purpose of interviews is to achieve an understanding of occurrences and events from the subject's perspective, as opposed to a researcher's interpretation of events. Semi-structured interviews began with a series of questions prepared in advance by the interviewer that are designed to be open-ended. These open-ended questions can generate subsequent questions during the interview that are not planned in advance. These additional questions must be carefully developed and grounded in theory. This method of research is then able to simultaneously create and validate theory (Wengraf, 2001).

The interview schedule was set in concert with the availability of the participants and researcher. Interviews were conducted via phone and lasted approximately 60 to 120 minutes. Interviews were conducted via telephone and were recorded with consent. Twelve participants were interviewed and questioned about the hiring process and RJP with additional questions on psychological contract violations and intention to quit. The interviews followed the questions outlined in Appendix A.

Not everything can be observed, especially when events occur over the course of time. Interviewing allows the researcher to gain the participants' perspectives. The interview is predicated on the assumption that the participants' participation adds value to the research,

leading to a greater understanding of events. The expression of thoughts, feelings and perception were able to occur through the interactive nature of the semi-structured interview format. These interviews were able to capture information that could not be gathered through observation. It allowed for a more in-depth exploration of participants' responses to gain a more thorough understanding of some of the contextual variables related to the participants' thoughts and experiences (Patton, 2002).

The interviews were confidential. An alias was coded to the participant and the names used in this document have been changed to preserve that anonymity. Participants were assured prior to and following the interview that their responses were confidential, and names were changed to protect them. All interviews were recorded with permission and then transcribed. Notes were taken during interviews, and the interviews were audio recorded. No one other than the researcher had access to the interview notes. The researcher transcribed the audio taped interviews and presented the data in the words of the participants to facilitate understanding of the narratives (Appendix C).

Data Analysis

Questions asked participants what they thought the job would be like prior to starting the position, and from whom and how that information was received, and whether their perceptions were validated after hire. If their perceptions prior to hire did not match their experience after hire, the participants were asked to identify these contract violations to determine the level of importance and impact on intention to stay or quit. If interviewees stated that they are considering other job opportunities, the reasons for consideration were explored. The participants were asked what their current employers could do differently to

retain their employment. Throughout the process, participants were asked to whom they spoke of their progress and asked to provide specific accounts or summarize what was said. In this inquiry employment lifecycle theories (i.e., RJP, psychological contract) and method theories will operate in tandem to more thoroughly identify the employment experience.

Results from interviews created inductive categories which gave insight on how messages delivered during the hiring process are interpreted based on the anticipatory socialization of the message recipient, how the psychological contract is violated when perceived employer promises remain unfulfilled, how employees make sense of the differences between the hiring process and job, and how contract violations lead to intention to quit and finally retention or turnover. The interview questions required respondents to provide impressions of their experiences using a chronological format that reflects the hiring process through intention to quit.

Thematic categories were established based on anticipated findings validated in some of the pilot interviews completed and later refined as data was collected. The first category assessed whether and how the anticipatory socialization messages vary based on employment history. The second category considered the type and perceived accuracy of realistic job previews received by the dean. Types of psychological contract violations were contemplated in the third category. Messages involving intention to stay or quit were examined in the fourth category. The thematic categories were created prior to the interviews. The purpose of these categories was to organize responses to organize the data using a systematic process. Responses were transcribed following the interview, and coding occurred based on each interview question response (Bowen, 2006).

Interviews followed an open-ended, semi-structured format via telephone to allow a specific line of questions to be asked while giving the participant freedom to provide additional information outside the initial question. With additional information, the researcher asked questions outside of the initial interview questions to make sense of the new information provided. Any additional interview questions asked were derived the existing literature on the employment lifecycle to obtain knowledge of the subject matter, clarifying the purpose of this research (Kvale, 1996). Responses to these additional questions were collapsed into the previously asked question during the coding process.

To organize the data, each of the responses to questions were listed on a spreadsheet for each subject. Each line of the spreadsheet contained the response to the interview questions associated with each research question. Comments were made in the margins of the interview notes and transcriptions to code data (Chochinov et. al., 2002).

Following the collection and transcription of the interview data, it was then coded, guided by the thematic categories. The data was used to make sense of individual experiences, with attention given to employees' interpretations of organizational communication (brochures, new hire orientation videos). Some community college deans retained copies of their job descriptions which were used to create the advertisement for their positions. In some interviews the job descriptions were referenced and read, incorporated into the interview. Community college websites were also reviewed prior to the interview to find organizational communication texts and artifacts to create context. Any references to the websites were incorporated into the interview.

The following steps for the constant comparative method were employed. There was first a comparison within a single interview which summarized the main points of the interview. The result was a summary of one interview. Next, interviews were compared within the same group of individuals who share the same experiences, for example deans who took positions at new institutions excluded deans who were promoted internally from this shared experience grouping. This allowed previously established criteria for coding the interviews to be refined. There were times when the researcher had to make choices on how to most appropriately code the data. When this occurred, a memorandum was generated which records the researcher's rationale as suggested by Glaser (1965). The boundaries established in the initial coding scheme were solidified and the researcher began the process of conceptualization. Next, comparisons were made between groups sharing the same experiences that have different perspectives. The comparisons, in turn, were helpful with data triangulation. This phase allowed the results of the individual interviews to be placed into the appropriate coding categories (Boeije, 2002).

Boundaries established in the initial coding section were reviewed and modified as appropriate and the researcher continued the conventionalization of categories. If there was a change within the group, the comparison was reviewed. Whenever possible, the external data including employer generated documentation (job description, website) was reviewed and data relevant to the coding categories were extrapolated and documented in a memorandum. The coding categories were considered inadequate and required refinement when responses to interview questions fell outside of the themes in the coding categories. For example, if an interview response to a question of RJP included intention to quit references, the coding category of RJP was considered inadequate and refined.

What lends credibility to the research was the consistent approach to analyzing interview data and reporting the researcher's experiences and purposeful decisions made in the comments sections on the spreadsheets. The data was used to inform the discussion of theoretical constructs outlined in the review of literature, refining theoretical framework and potentially outlining a new theoretical approach. What is imperative is that a systematic approach to data analysis was maintained and documented. "A plan implies that the researcher knows beforehand which comparative steps are needed in the analysis regarding the elements that are compared, the aims, the questions asked and the expected results of each step" (Boeije, 2002, p. 406). Based on coded data, an outline of the theory was drafted after it was apparent that there are negligible changes made to the coding categories. Coding category saturation was visible when data can be placed into each category without the need for category refinement. This allowed the researcher to concentrate exclusively on the data relevant to the coding categories (Glaser, 1965).

An interpretive approach was used, with a focus on interpreting the meanings behind the patterns within each thematic category and their relationship to other categories and extant literature. An essentialist/realist paradigm was employed to understand the motivation, experience and meaning because of an assumed relationship between experience and language (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach to the research helped in understanding the complexity and uncertainty associated with the employment lifecycle. Data collection that involves uncovering similarities of experiences was valuable in establishing a more thorough understanding of shared interpretations of events.

CONCLUSION

Once data was collected and transcribed, it was coded to answer the research questions to better understand the employment lifecycle in the profession. The data collected demonstrated the impact of vocational socialization on organizational entry and the importance of realistic job previews on psychological contract violations. Furthermore, it explored the relationship between psychological contract violations and intention to quit and employee coping or exit. The findings and results will be identified in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter identifies and discusses interview data gathered from semi-structured interviews of twelve community college deans with 2–15 months tenure in their positions. The results are organized by research question addressing vocational socialization, realistic job previews, and impression management.

RQ1: WHAT VOCATIONAL ANTICIPATORY SOCIALIZATION MESSAGES ARE RECEIVED BY NEWLY APPOINTED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEANS?

The first introduction to community colleges happened in in a variety of ways for community college deans. Most deans were promoted within their colleges or moved to another college. Some attended community colleges and quickly realized that their career paths aligned with the core values of community colleges they attended. They desired to serve in an educational field, and their advanced degrees allowed them to return to the community college environment. In other cases, the deans had differing career paths that led them to the community college. There was a realization that a current job was not bringing the career satisfaction the deans desired, and they looked for opportunities within their field in a teaching position that then led to promotion. In other cases, they were encouraged by others to consider an opportunity at a community college without any community college experience.

However, there were cases where deans were hired without any teaching experience or community college exposure.

Community college deans interviewed obtained their position in a variety of ways. Some obtained their roles through internal competitive promotions, which required multiple interviews, as their qualifications were compared to other external candidates. One dean was merely appointed to her role without a competitive selection process. The internal promotions allowed for familiarity with the innerworkings of the organization. In more than once instance, the deans were able to identify the individual who either retired from the position, performed the role on an interim basis prior to the dean starting the job, or was promoted within the organization which left the dean role vacant.

In another internal appointment to the role, there was a reorganization of the department that occurred, which created the position for the dean. In these internal promotions, the dean could observe a predecessor performing some or all functions of the role, which created a more complete vision for what the requirements of the job may be when comparing the experiences of those deans who were hired from other institutions. The deans who were hired through internal promotions were able to communicate with their predecessors and colleagues about the role prior to applying for or accepting the position, and they took advantage of those opportunities.

The deans hired from other institutions formed their impressions of the role of community college dean largely from other individuals performing the functions at their prior institutions. Some deans even remained in contact with their prior employer's dean who continued to serve as a mentor. The deans who relocated for their opportunity cited spending a

lot of time on the college's website to get an understanding of the organization. Some of the deans relocated their households to serve in their positions, having to envision a new community in addition to a new role. One dean transitioned from a four-year institution to a community college opportunity. This newly developed position was a role that was unique to California community colleges, a state-mandated position that was not available in any other states. While the anticipatory socialization messages were constructed by the deans, they remained somewhat incomplete as compared to those deans who obtained their position through an internal promotion.

With respect to motivation to assume the role, many community college deans cited leadership experience that turned them on to the possibility of becoming a community college dean. For many, the transition to a dean role seemed like the logical next step in a career progression after getting more intensely involved in committee work. Sometimes, that need to transition was recognized by a mentor suggesting the opportunity. In other cases, like for Dean Tarant, this identification came from someone much closer,

> My wife actually recognized I was looking for a career change. She could tell I just wasn't happy with work anymore. She could tell I wasn't happy teaching anymore. So, I have to admit that was a big factor. She really pushed me to this direction. I would come home and wouldn't talk about the classroom anymore. I would talk about everything else besides teaching. She picked up on that.

Dean Tarant was not the only dean whose spouse suggested a career change was in order.

One recurring theme in applying for a leadership role was the desire to make a difference. Best captured by Dean Smith with respect to the motivation that led her to her position,

I think it was the opportunity to make a difference. Because if you're not the decision maker, and I've been involved in middle management for a long time which has its difficulties, at least I can affect change. And I'm a change agent.

Some deans made a deeper connection with the students at the community college, citing their own upbringings and educational transitions from high school as the reason for seeking a dean role. Dean Park said,

The biggest draw is that I have a bigger influence, if you will, on college students not only in how they complete and get their degrees but also that day-to-day management of being a college student. I started off as a community college student and I was the prototypical non-motivated student. I knew I wanted to go to college. I just didn't feel like going to actual class. That was important. I knew I could do the work. I was getting decent grades, but I was just showing up part time and doing the work outside of school…I was the same individual. I just didn't know what I wanted to do right out of high school, other than go to school. I just didn't know what else I wanted to do. So this is a good opportunity for me to be able to influence those types of policies and things of that nature for the college and for students, in my opinion, that get left out in the weeds sometimes when we are making all these great plans that work for a traditional student, but not for everybody.

Dean Park's position was echoed in the reasons that deans gave for wanting to do more. They desired to make an impact at their colleges beyond the classroom level. They wanted to affect the student experience, and many had a vision for what that experience could become, citing goals of retention for students who needed to find their way, soft skill development, and the students graduating with a favorable impression of their community college experience. The ability to inspire individuals, collaborate with others, and provide leadership were some of the other reasons cited for desired personal growth.

RQ2: WHAT MESSAGES DID THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEANS RECEIVE THROUGH THE REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW GIVEN BY THE ORGANIZATION?

There are essentially two phases in the RJP process, the attraction or recruitment phase and the interview process. During the recruitment phase, the deans gain an understanding of what the position requirements are and complete a comparison exercise, where they identify and compare their skills and experience with the job posting requirements. After the college acknowledges there is a potential match, the dean is contacted for the first interview. The interviews were used by the deans as a validation of what the job posting and college website depict. The interviews also served the function of the deans' measurement of the person-organization fit, to determine whether there is a philosophical agreement with their values and that of the institution and their immediate supervisor.

Recruitment

While applying for positions, the community college deans relied heavily on the employment advertisement on the college's website to gain an understanding of what the position may be like. The employment advertisement was essentially the job description for the position, inclusive of the duties, competencies, and required education and experience. Dean Kendall said,

> A lot of that was in the job description itself. I did a lot of research on my own about the school, as well, and about the initiatives they had going on. So, I had the opportunity to ask some of those questions in the interview process, but I had already known about that. I spent a lot of time researching stuff on my own, so I felt pretty prepared coming into this. They had a pretty thorough job description as part of the ad. I really took the time to make sure I went over every little thing in there, to make sure I saw what they had listed.

One dean was able to refer to the allocation of time projected for each function of his job description. The deans saw congruency with their previous experience, regardless of whether they performed an administrative leadership position in the past. This exercise of matching skills, experience and education prior to applying resulted in the deans tailoring their cover letters and other application materials to highlight some of their background to be viewed more favorably by the college. The deans approached this comparison of skills and experience differently. Some highlighted their strengths that masked what they lacked in skills and experience. Others focused more on their concerns of not being a perfect match for the position because they lacked experience in a few areas identified on the job posting. In both cases, the interview was used to identify these perceived weaknesses and work though how most of the position's functions could still be performed.

Interviews

Very little information was transferred to the candidates in the hiring committee interview, which was the initial interview. While the deans indicated their job descriptions were very thorough and accurately reflected their work, little information was gathered during the hiring committee interview. Some deans reported the opportunity to gain more information during the hiring committee interview, but the majority of the deans' questions were answered during the second interview which included the hiring managers.

The interviews also served a dual purpose of the candidate's introduction to the hiring committee, which was intended to reflect the college and its values. The hiring committee could be constructed of a combination of peers, faculty, students, and supervisors with six to 10 individuals serving on the committee. The hiring committee interview was the first step in the

hiring process for both internal and external applicants. Following the hiring committee interview, a second interview consisting of the hiring manager and other executives occurred, frequently on the same day for external candidates.

For internal candidates, the interview process is familiar. Dean Bedford said,

The way they do interviews here is always the same, and I've been on many interviews, here. …prior to my Dean position, I had actually applied to a different position in the registrar's office. I ended up being a finalist for it and I didn't get it.

Some deans reported prior membership on hiring committees.

Familiarity did not always equate to a level of comfort during the interview process.

Dean Vect described the interview as "intense."

I was interviewed by a committee of ten people. I knew everybody. Some of them were my former faculty peers/colleagues and the Vice President and the other deans, so it was a big committee. I worked really hard. I had to do a presentation and of course the interview questions. I spent quite a bit of time preparing. I practiced…I had not interviewed for a position for quite a long time.

Deans used the interview with the hiring committee as an opportunity to clarify the job description when they had the opportunity to ask questions of the hiring committee. Hiring timeframe and process were also some of the questions the deans had for the hiring committees.

Second interviews were completed with the dean's manager. Sometimes, another membership of leadership like a provost or president was present at the second interview. The second interview generally provided deans a greater opportunity to ask some questions about the role. Dean Shelby described receiving a much more visionary, big picture message than the minutia that the job description provided. Dean Shelby had a clearer understanding of the responsibilities by the questions he was asked during the interview. He was asked questions

related to developing new academic programs, experiential learning, and textbook coordination. Dean Bedford reported that the majority of the job description was reviewed during the second interview, but some of the components were not discussed. He assumed these unmentioned components were not significant to the job.

Dean Isla was told he could do anything he wanted to do, create his own schedule, and hire faculty. Not all deans were promised as much autonomy or information. Dean Tarant was given his expected work hours and was told he could manage his department. As an internal candidate, Dean Tarant did not agree that he received much information about the job during this second interview. He thought it was assumed that he was aware of the responsibilities because of his familiarity with the college. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Dean Monta said the second interview was a forum where she was asked questions but was not allowed to ask questions to gain additional insight.

Some deans had a public interview component, an open forum where they were asked questions by the community at large. Dean Garcia identified the challenge.

> There was a community forum where there was no real presentation, actually. There was supposed to be a presentation, and they decided to forget about the presentation and then just said this community forum where I was asked to answer questions. I got grilled at that interview.

To make Dean Garcia's experience more daunting, a heckler from another campus started firing questions at him during the community interview. No one knew who this individual was. Dean Tarant had a similar institution-wide interview where he was asked to do a five-minute presentation on his knowledge, skills, and abilities and then field two hours of questions. He said, "That was the most challenging thing. I remember leaving that and needing a drink."

Deans who were external candidates received a tour of the campus in most cases. One

of the deans, although relocating, did not receive a tour. Characteristic of the personality of

those interviewed, the deans did a significant amount of research on the college, position, and

location prior to accepting their job offer.

RQ3: FROM THE IMPRESSIONS FORMED DURING ORGANIZATIONAL ENTRY, WHAT INITIAL
EXPECTATIONS WERE REEXAMINED BY THE DEAN DURING THE COURSE OF SEVERAL MONTHS
OF EMPLOYMENT?

Autonomy was attractive to the deans, and some of them were achieving a satisfactory

relationship with their new managers. Others had to renegotiate those relationship as new

managers were hired. Some deans were fortunate to have a formal process for socialization,

sometimes referred to as onboarding, while others had to work independently to find

information. There were a few surprises along the way that could not be anticipated. The

deans' workload was more than anticipated for some. It became lonely at the top as deans had

to form relationships with new peers, even when deans received an internal promotion.

Autonomy

Autonomy was frequently promised in the interviews and attractive to the deans.

During the first few months of employment, some deans were granted the autonomy they

were promised. Dean Kendall said,

> I've got a fantastic vice president that I report to that gives us a lot of free rein to pursue
> things that we think are important, and things that we think are good for students of the
> college. As long as he can support that budgetarily, and we can make a justification for
> it, he supports it. I'm very lucky in that regard.

Dean Kendall reported being permitted to make decisions on student conduct matters without managerial approval. He appreciated the collaboration with his manager because he was concerned with making decisions that supported the college's culture and precedent.

In other instances, autonomy was not given, as anticipated. Dean Monta was surprised by the president's personality and micromanaging working style. "I think if I had known the personality of the president, that would have changed my decision to come here." A new vice president meant Dean Smith had to adapt to a new style of management shortly after she started. She mentioned, "Not having the autonomy is a big deal for me." She mentions missing interdepartmental collaboration under the new leadership and suspects that might be caused, in part, by her perceived lack of autonomy.

Workload

Deans have a range of different experiences that shape view of what the position will be like. Dean Bedford referenced a former role in financial aid that had a heavy volume of work but also had a predictable workflow. This changed as he became dean,

> Basically the issues kind of fly at you randomly, at random times…The end of the spring semester, there was a big spike in the number of conduct issues related to academic issues in particular with different things...I was just insanely busy for a couple of weeks…Then there's other stretches where the conduct issues aren't as prevalent and I work on some other things, get caught up on something, maybe do more things with committees, and different kinds of planning...

When she first started, the magnitude of her position and lack of resources was apparent to Dean Smith.

> I think about how big this role is and the lack of support that I have in order to do everything well…It didn't dawn on me that there wouldn't be an administrative assistant

for me. All the other deans have one. I am the only dean that does not have an administrative assistant, and my job description is really, really, really diverse.

Dean Tarant's job was vacant for a while, which meant there were overdue faculty evaluations and other administrative responsibilities. To cope, he began doing the job unofficially one month prior to his official appointment. Dean Monta was told during her interview that another dean was to be hired as her counterpart. The position was never filled, so her workload was larger than anticipated, with more administrative reporting responsibilities.

> I guess one of the expectations in my review was that this was not a 40 hour a week position, it's more like a 60 hour a week position. I would have liked to have originally worked 45 to 50 hours a week. I can even work more than that.

Pulled in several different directions, Dean Smith finds it challenging to balance the needs of all the individuals who require her time and attention,

> I am holding some meetings that are more instruction oriented than student services oriented. So, I get to spend a couple hours there and then I still need to come back and figure out how to catch up with my people…But on a Monday, it's very typical for me to spend nine and a half hours in meetings. Those are meetings that aren't related to student services.

Dean Tarant mentioned spending more time at work, which affected interpersonal relationships with his spouse, children, and siblings. He said, "I generally don't take lunch. I eat at my desk, and I try to get home by 5-5:30. But days like today, it will be 9 o'clock." He contrasted that with his former position as part of the faculty, mentioning that he is now more deadline driven and does not have the luxury of office hours to have some downtime.

Knowledge Transfer

The transfer of knowledge to the incoming dean ran the gamut from an organized event to an unstructured process. Organized socialization experiences had a written plan. Dean Shelby said, "So when I showed up, I had a two-week plan for something very specific like on Thursday at 2 o'clock, you're meeting with this assistant dean at another campus. On Friday, meet with the IT person." His hiring manager also delayed his start date during the negotiation phase to work around a budget document that was due. She told him she could not have him start on the date he proposed because she needed to be 100% focused on him. "It was both good from a practical perspective…and an emotional perspective. It just got me starting on a good footing and thinking, 'Yeah, these people really are concerned with my welfare.'"

Poor socialization practices lead to a feeling of being unwelcome. Dean Smith mentions her organization was unprepared for her arrival.

> Some people had no idea that I had been hired and had already started, and so I didn't have access to certain systems. My voicemail was set up weeks after I was here. It was just bad, bad, bad. I said, 'I cannot tell you just tell what kind of dangerous water y'all are treading to have set me up in this way. I am the first person of color who's ever hired for a cabinet level position in this organization. OK guys, you brought me in. You don't have tools for me, yet I have work that I am required to do. I don't have access to systems upon which my job is contingent, and I don't have an administrative assistant, but all the other deans do.'

In the absences of a written plan, the deans gleaned information from their direct reports, colleagues, and supervisors. In many cases, policies and procedures were not well documented, so deans had to rely more heavily on their direct report and fellow deans for guidance. They had to forge new relationships quickly. The desire for a more formalized plan is noted. Dean Isla captured it best.

I wish there was more formalized training for any new dean or any administrator. I've spent a year just kind of figuring it out and then trying to find the right people to ask questions to…not necessarily like leadership stuff, but the procedural stuff…Then, you know… depending on who you ask you get a different answer, too. So, you kind of spend a year figuring out who you can trust and who's doing it the right way… And when you get to that administrative leadership level, I think there's an expectation that while this guy's coming in, he obviously must know what he's doing, because he's coming into a leadership role. While I can lead people and I can communicate and have a vision, procedural stuff, policy stuff, and forms-those are organization specific. There's still that learning curve. And I had to overcome that there's absolutely no formalized process whatsoever to do that. You just kind of figure it out.

In about a third of the interviews, the deans mentioned the departure of their hiring manager either prior to their arrival at the college or within the few months following their arrival. Dean Isla's manager was hired shortly after his arrival, "It's tough when your boss was hired essentially the same day that you were hired, and you're both kind of figuring out, you know, as you go."

Sometimes the absence of a manager comes as a surprise. Dean Smith began her journey without a supervisor,

So, what I didn't when I interviewed was that the Vice President to whom I would have reported had already accepted a job as President of another institution. I got here, and he left a day and a half after.

Dean Ford says,

The other thing I didn't know about is the VP was really trying to get me in because he was on his way out, too. I think the day I came on board was the day that he was leaving.

Dean Ford also mentions other instability within the ranks, "The chancellor left…several of the other college presidents had left."

No Preparation Possible

A new supervisor can change a newly hired dean's expectations of the role significantly,

especially when leadership styles are different. Dean Smith shared, "I knew that autonomy was

important to me. There was alignment there. But there was no way that we could have been

prepared for the change that ultimately happened."

Dean Bedford described a "typical" day on the job where there is little training or

preparation for what a dean can encounter.

> It was like very soon after I started the position, I got a call from campus police that a
> student committed suicide and…I had no idea what to do. That was not something that
> had ever been discussed. And I had just started the job. I was like, oh boy, how do we
> handle this?...You just can't predict stuff like that. So that was part of the job, and that
> was explained to me, I guess, a little bit before I started, that basically there's somewhat
> of an unpredictable nature to it.

Dean Kendall also mentioned the positive side of learning so quickly, even when some of

those learning experiences are through unexpected crisis.

> You know, when I thought about challenges that I would face, especially working with
> students, I've had more challenges than I think I'd ever, ever expected to have: good
> things. They've challenged me. Some things, unfortunately, are tragic. We had a serial
> killer in the area and one of the first victims was one of my students. And that, and that
> was in the first couple of weeks that I started...The other things that have occurred and
> other student situations I dealt with have probably helped me learn and grow more than
> I expected in the position at a very quick, quick pace, which I think in some ways can be
> positive. But nothing's really positive in the face of tragedy.

RQ3A: HOW ARE THESE IMPRESSIONS MAINTAINED OR CHANGED?

Autonomy

Some deans are pleasantly surprised by the level of autonomy they are afforded in their

position. Others have less autonomy than they anticipated. Dean Park noticed a shift in decision

making at the dean's role, noting that most decision making was handled at the committee level is his previous position. He now must go to this manager to get her prompt feedback which is less time consuming. Dean Shelby remarks, "I'm getting really good support from my supervisor. My supervisor has been particularly committed to being available to guide me in my work, also making it really clear that she trusts me and that I need to make decisions."

In Dean Tarant's position, he was somewhat surprised by the "micromanagement" of the president. Dean Tarant wanted to cut a medical program with low enrollment and was told to recruit for a director position that has remained unfilled. The president wanted to keep the program because a board member had ties to a local hospital, where the program was viewed as useful. Dean Tarant wanted to eliminate the program and use the funds in other needed areas.

Dean Tarant mentioned his desire to have more collaboration and discussion. When he goes through a decision-making process, he wants to do so without another layer of oversight. He was planning on having a conversation with his manager about this. Similarly desiring more autonomy, Dean Smith is frustrated by being told how she will partner with other departments instead of being able to manage her group. She expressed her dissatisfaction to the vice president of Human Resources.

Relationships with Peers

For those being promoted within the organization, they had to find a new peer group. Membership on the faculty golf league was no longer a possibility for one dean simply because of his promotion. In some cases, former faculty friends distanced themselves from the promoted dean. Some formerly friendly faculty colleagues became openly challenging.

Evaluations of former peers was part of the job, according to Dean Tarant,

> I'll be honest with you: I was a little bit nervous. I am evaluating full time faculty, your old peer at some point, you know, only a few months into it. I felt like I was a bit challenged. I think that evaluation and the feedback I gave was thorough and in fact they were very appreciative.

The deans quickly had to assimilate with a new peer group to understand how to navigate administrative processes, irrespective of whether they were promoted within their current college or accepted a position at another college. When deans did not have someone dedicated to formal socialization, the transfer of knowledge also felt dismissive. Dean Ford mentions connecting with an interim counterpart who gave him access to Google Drive and information, "…but she was really in a rush to get out of her role."

While given a lot of attention from his supervisor, Dean Shelby did not experience the same commitment from colleagues.

> Sometimes I don't see, or feel, or experience that much support from peers. I get better support from the top as a new employee. Perhaps the rest of the organization hasn't gained all of the skills needed for the onboarding process.

Dean Shelby speculates that the diversity and fragmented nature of the organization is the reason he is not feeling support from peers.

Internal promotions do not always transform peers' expectations. The dean is put in a position of changing peers' impressions, which can be unexpected. Dean Janik says,

> I'm still located in that same department. That's another thing we're working our way through because I'm still here. They think sometimes what I did was office coverage and stuff like that. I will do office coverage, but I want it to be the last resort, not just on the rotation, you know what I mean…because I am all these other things now.

Some had negative experiences. Others were not able to be part of certain groups. Others were very supported and transitioned well.

Knowledge Transfer

The frustration with a lack of written policies and documented procedures led to deans desiring to complete this task for their departments. Some deans were quickly able to begin goals they wanted to accomplish. Others are quickly tasked with new responsibilities.

Not every formal socialization process is well organized, which leads to deans searching for information This process is systemic. Dean Garcia notes, "The one issue that we have, in my previous institution had this also, is you assume if someone reaches a certain level in the hierarchy that they don't need to be trained. That's not true, of course."

Dean Garcia mentions the lack of written documentation, "None of what is done as practice is written down anywhere. People know it because they've been there for 30 years or 25 years, and it's in their heads. And I can't go anywhere and reference them."

Dean Smith entered a new organization that was very different from her last one in terms of documented processes, which required more of her time,

> I was highly process oriented and everything was documented. Everything. You couldn't walk into a process that wasn't documented. And so, I came with this expectation that there would be processes on how work was accomplished, and those processes would be written down in a place that was accessible to the people who needed to access to it. I got here and learned that 'We have a rich oral tradition that governs how our processes occur.' So that was shocking…It was a nightmare come to life. And because of that, there have been some new processes adopted. It was extraordinarily frustrating because when I got here, I didn't have the tools that I needed to do my job.

Dean Garcia mentioned joining forces with another newly appointed dean,

> …both of us had to ask one of the senior deans or the senior dean, "Could you just sit down with us and explain how this thing works?" So, we took half a day on a Friday and went to one of the campuses and just sat down and can learned how to submit the student activity fee, budget process through SharePoint. We had to reach out for that.

Goals

Autonomy allows deals to establish personal goals for their departments. Enthusiasm and excitement are expressed in being able to make a difference in their roles. There is a lot of interference the deans face when trying to accomplish their goals. Many stakeholders and their time and attention, from paperwork requirements to frequent meetings. College leadership is frequently in flux with supervisors and presidents moving in and out of the organization. These leadership changes can affect the deans' willingness to start new endeavors for fear that their projects will be changed or eliminated with new administrations.

Dean Park captured the conflict of goal attainment and administrative requirements.

One thing that I do know that if I could do anything about the position, I would cut out some of the meetings. It's hard to accomplish some of the goals that we've set, some of the policies and procedures that we've put in place, when you're going from one meeting to the other and you just don't have time to actually implement some great ideas that people are coming up with. It's just a matter of when do I have time to actually work with our people who put them in place?

Dean Bedford was concerned about wasted efforts, putting actions on hold until a new leader arrived. "Do you really want to get too involved in too many changes, doing too many things when the dean is going to probably start in another month. It's not worth it." Dean Kendall captured the ability to shift focus, philosophies and direction with leadership changes, a frequent trend in community colleges.

You just have to understand where the president is coming from. Our previous president was all about, not all about, but had a big emphasis on growth and new building and having a very strong presence, physical presence here in the community. Our new president is very much more analytical in that she's looking at return on investment versus just growth. She's also very passionate about the impact that community college can have on students. She's very passionate about student transformation. And so they are very different.

But understanding those differences, as a dean, I know where she's coming from. Those are some of the changes I'm starting to institute here. We're taking much more of a return on investment approach to what it is that we're doing, looking at our enrollments, and the number of students that we bring in, which really is how we pay the bills, tuition and all that kind of stuff versus what our programs cost. How do we get our costs in line and or bring down our costs a little bit, but not so much that it's at the detriment of the quality of our classes? And how do we grow the enrollment and all that kind of stuff?

RQ3B: HOW HAVE DEANS CHANGED THEIR BEHAVIOR OR ACTIONS AS A RESULT OF THIS REEXAMINATION?

In most cases the dean's ability to manage the constant level of change in the college determines his or her need to make personal or behavioral changes. Time management skills help facilitate both job demands and work/life balance. Approaches to interpersonal communication have changed, from deans perceiving the need to be more direct in communication to sharpening conflict management skills. Deans have also had to become more flexible, accommodating and accepting change.

Time Management Skills

Some deans are still coming to terms with the changes they have experienced. Work/life balance can be quite different when shifted to a standard 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily schedule. Dean Kendall mentioned still having to resolve this conflict:

I've spent years as faculty where I had a ton of flexibility, and as an administrator I still struggle with that. Because now, I don't have that flexibility in my schedule and my contract like I did before. That's something that I still am challenged by, I'm still adjusting.

Dean Vect blocks out time in her calendar for administrative tasks and reserves several hour blocks for emails correspondence. She also comes in later on days that she knows she will work longer hours. To appropriately manage her responsibilities, she takes work home.

Dean Isla reallocated his time,

When I first started, I was afraid to say "no" to anything. So whether it was a lunch meeting or a presentation or just, you know, other administrative stuff that I would be invited to. I was kind of saying yes to everything and what that meant I wasn't available for those people that really needed me around.

Dean Vect mentioned a change in her health, "I'm not exercising nearly as much as I would like to with this job…the stress level is higher, and it impacts my sleep."

Dean Smith also voiced concern for her health because of the long hours the job demands.

I don't have a life. I am at work. If I am not at work, I am asleep. And then I get up, I work out and I come to work. I wasn't eating, which got me looked at by my doctor, so I am working on doing better.

Direct Communication

The rise of communication exchanges, whether face-to-face or via email, was mentioned by several deans. Within the year, Dean Isla mentioned giving between 75–100 community presentations. Coupled with the frequency of communication exchanges, the deans noticed that their delivery or style of communicating sometimes had to change.

Dean Isla was surprised how much of his day was spent listening to people and how important that was to the individuals. "I knew that would be important, but I didn't realize how important that giving my time, not because it's me, but because I'm the Dean, carries a lot

more weight and giving my time means a lot to people." Other deans remarked that their

communication styles needed to be more direct, even if the recipients became uncomfortable.

Dean Tarant noted,

I need to have some conversations. I let things go just because I do. I let it go. Common decisions...that I may not agree with...I need to be a little tougher in that regard. I hoped to take that stand a little later in my tenure in this position.

Dean Smith said,

I'm a really direct communicator. So, when I first encountered the situation, I spoke very directly with the people who introduced those problems to my life and I very directly spoke to the president. And people can think what they will, in my former institution direct communication was appreciated. I'm a direct communicator, and I don't see that changing.

Dean Vect mentions that with staffing changes come personality differences which can

result in conflict. The conflict can lead feelings of uncertainty. One instance resonated:

It was a disagreement with a couple of the division chairs in my area and they're men...I'd say three of them are quite challenging. I mean, I, I do well with them, but strong personalities and just a couple of things that happened that all of a sudden it made me feel that male dominant factor...

Right after the cluster meeting, these three male chairs outside of the room were huddled together and they were talking. I had to walk by them, and I knew they were talking about me, and it just gave me this real creepy feeling of like, you know, just that as a female, it was just a gender thing.

Dean Vect mentions that she has since had one-on-one discussions where these negative

feelings have been resolved. She concluded that she would always be dealing with gender

differences in leadership, even if she left her current institution.

Accepting Change

Some deans demonstrate the ability to accept new responsibilities or change with minor

adjustments being required. Dean Garcia explains the impact of accepting the role of lead dean

in functional areas which now included advising and student services for all campuses:

> I was really focused on being the Dean of Student Services at my campus and also
> having this other lead dean role and the other lead dean roles. I am in charge of college
> wide advising, so it's an interesting way to cut across the five campuses at the
> institution to have some sort of focus on those specific areas which is advising or
> recruitment or whatever it may be that I wasn't quite expecting. That doesn't take up a
> significant part of my time in terms of that role. I then tried to also balance the role of
> being of students for that campus.

> Dean Vect also acknowledges a personal transformation.

> I have changed probably the most because I've learned so much more about the
> program. So, I feel like I have become better at my job and better able to support
> people and act. The biggest change, I think, has come through me.

> Dean Smith views change as a function of leadership, "Change happens all the time.

There's an amount of agility that one has to have to function. It's the leadership role."

Despite an enthusiasm for a more diversity initiatives expressed by the college in the

interview, Dean Smith is having to come to terms with a different level of organizational

commitment to diversity than what was communicated.

> But there was an awareness that were challenges related to diversity that I understood
> at the time of my interview, from being on campus, from my interactions with some
> very key people in the organization. I understood that the college was actually
> committing to working toward mitigating those issues. And that is something that I
> learned. There are people who are interested in doing that work, and there are people
> who are okay with the status quo because the status quo isn't disruptive or
> uncomfortable. I thought, essentially, that the college was prepared to put its money
> where its mouth was. And that has been tough for me.

RQ3C: WHAT COURSE OF ACTION DO DEANS INTEND TO TAKE BASED ON THEIR REFLECTIONS OF THE RJP AND JOB EXPERIENCE AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT?

Some of the reasons that drive deans to stay are the same variables that deans cite for considering exit. Deans who desire to stay in their roles remain challenged by their position and remain supported in their relationships with their managers. They recognize that their work matters. By selecting their position, deans desire a significant level of responsibility. Family, friends, and community are also taken into account as considerations.

Remain an Active Contributor

Dean Vect mentioned having a long tenure at her institution. She is enrolling in a doctoral program, which means she may have some mobility in the next five years. Family and friends in the area along with feeling challenged kept her at her institution. "I still feel very challenged where I am right now, and I feel like I'm learning a lot. So I don't feel like, 'I know this, I need to go somewhere else.' I'm still challenged here."

Dean Janik echoed taking family into account when making the decision to stay. She said she has school-aged children who attended the college's day care and camps, so leaving the area is difficult, especially when her family is embedded in the college community. Like Dean Vect, Dean Janik mentioned the lure of more responsibility during her tenure at her institution, "I had a lot of jobs over the years, but every claim has been increased responsibility, you know, a promotion. So that enables me to stay. If not, I might have left a long time ago." Dean Kelly admitted he gets "bored easily," so it is the "ability to feel valued and continue to grow professionally" that has maintained his interest in his job and college.

Dean Kelly appreciates the autonomy,

I feel like we have a say to some degree as far as our budget so we can do what we feel we need to do…. things that we feel are important: helping students, helping our people grow as well, professional development and so on.

Citing colleagues and unfinished projects, Dean Park is motivated to stay by unfinished work that needs to be done. Dean Bedford also mentions being attracted by ongoing challenges of the job. Dean Shelby is encouraged by his ability to make a difference at his college. In addition to having the support of the president, Dean Shelby also mentions the significance of his work, "…it's my first shot at leading something big. I mean, I realize how important it is. That has made me completely committed to the organization."

Separations and Exit

The reasons for exit are the converse of the reasons for staying. Some of the deans had to speculate what might prompt them to exit, because they were not actively considering it. Many of the deans mentioned that they may consider exit if the college's leadership changes or their supervisor leaves. In the following examples, the deans' autonomy is closely tied to the leadership style for their supervisors and college president.

Dean Shelby cited his positive relationship with his supervisor and said he would consider exit if she left. Dean Tarant mentioned a micromanaging president was contributing to his thoughts of leaving the organization. Dean Shelby speculated he might consider leaving if he wasn't able to implement the new teaching and learning model. Dean Kelly echoed thought of departure would creep in if he was "hamstrung from being able to do our jobs effectively."

Other deans mention their personal lives and community balanced with their professional goals as part of their consideration of exit. Getting married might cause Dean Smith to reconsider her intention to leave. She has experienced racism and her direct reports

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are noticing how she is treated. She also desires a challenge, "I'm not the type of person who thrives without challenge. I want a different challenge, one that would challenge me every day." Dean Janik compared herself to another college president in terms of education, age, and experience and found many similarities. For the right position, like a vice presidency, she could consider relocating her family, despite their ties to the community.

There are times when both the dean and institution realize it is not a good fit. Dean Monta did not have her contract renewed, which was communicated to her after four months of tenure. She has a year-long contract and is actively searching for other employment while finishing her contract.

CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the results of three research questions regarding vocational socialization, messages received during the realistic job preview, impression management following several months of employment. Qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews was presented and analyzed as it pertained to each research. The Chapter Five will further link the results to the literature.

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The research questions examined the beginning of the employment lifecycle for community college deans. Beginning with vocational anticipation socialization, the deans began to seek information prior to job opportunities being pursued. Once the deans started to actively engage with the college, they began receiving realistic job previews, which became a dialogue between the dean and the college.

Following organizational entry, the deans went through a process of examining their initial impressions and reviewing how these impressions have been maintained or changed. As they reexamined their impressions, the deans began to make some behavioral changes, and some changed their approach to solving problems. The deans talked about the actions they intended to take with respect to their career goals.

RQ1: WHAT VOCATIONAL ANTICIPATION SOCIALIZATION MESSAGES ARE RECEIVED BY NEWLY APPOINTED COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEANS?

Prior to joining the college, deans engaged in information seeking activities (Jablin, 2001). These activities included responding to the college's job advertisement, perusing the college website, and going through a series of interviews. The deans were able to recite components of their job descriptions, which were identical to the advertisement. The deans gave significant consideration to the job description and determined their potential fit for the

position prior to applying. In some cases, deans talked to peers and supervisors prior to making the decision to apply to the job to validate that the opportunity was a good next step in their careers. Discussion with colleagues of the decision to apply reflected deans' uncertainty about their fit for the position and organization (Brashers, 2001).

Some deans in this study came from private industry and four-year institutions, but most community college deans were promoted within their own community college or transferred from another community college. As expected, the deans who received an internal promotion had a better understanding of the inner workings of the college than those who transferred from private industry or other educational institutions. While they learned the functions of their new role, they had a better understanding of how to complete processes within their organization. They also knew who to contact to assist with their agendas. Deans who transferred from other institutions made comparisons between what their previous institutions did and what their new institutions were doing to make sense of their new surroundings (Weick, 1995).

RQ2: WHAT MESSAGES DID THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEANS RECEIVE THROUGH THE REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW GIVEN BY THE ORGANIZATION?

Through the interviewing process, some deans were given the opportunity to meet their future colleagues and direct reports who participated in the hiring committee interviews. Most of the deans were able to meet their future manager, when one was in the position. In other cases, deans were able to meet the community college leadership. The hiring committees' list of predefined questions gave the deans little insight into the position. Expectations were

usually unveiled when the deans met with their future manger or community college leadership.

Sometimes these expectations were assumed through the questions the deans were asked, like in Dean Shelby's case where he was asked about developing new academic programs, experiential learning, and coordinating textbook adoption. In other cases, the message of the expectations for their positions were delivered more directly. In Dean Tarant's interview, he was given his expected hours and told he could manage his department. The deans used this limited information along with the job description to form an impression of what the college required of them. The interviews and job description did not provide much insight as to how deans could measure their success in the role.

When the number and length of the interviews were shorter, the deans reported that they gathered little information about the college and position from the interview process. In other instances where the interviews were longer and contained more than two cycles of interviewing, the deans reported that they understood more about the college and began to match their personal goals with the mission and vision for this new position. Those who went through a multi-step process interview were much more informed and linked to the institution, even the deans who had to do a public presentation. The public presentation components were not enjoyable. They were somewhat unpredictable experiences where the deans interacted with a larger audience perceived to have an influence on hiring. The challenge of the public interview was viewed positively after it was successfully completed.

In some cases, deans asked questions of their future manager or college leadership. Following the interviews, deans made assumptions about duties, goals for the position, and

their autonomy. In the case where Dean Monta had two one-hour long interviews and

relocated, she was surprised by her manager's goals for her position. She was not able to ask

any questions during the interview process because the structure of the interview did not allow

her the opportunity to do so. Dean Monta did not speak to whether this practice of a one-sided

interview was unique to her process or was the college's typical protocol for conducting

interviews. She later discovered her manager's unfavorable reputation in the community, which

resulted in positions remaining unfilled.

In some cases, relocating deans were offered a campus tour by college employees.

Others had to tour the campus independently. The introduction to the community itself was

lacking. Community colleges were not paying relocation for these positions and did not have a

structured process to help the dean relocate in the absence of a relocation concierge service.

The human resources departments played a limited role in the process, only discussing the

benefits and offer in a few instances.

RQ3: FROM THE IMPRESSIONS FORMED DURING ORGANIZATIONAL ENTRY, WHAT INITIAL EXPECTATIONS WERE REEXAMINED BY THE DEAN DURING THE COURSE OF SEVERAL MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT?

The deans are high performing individuals who actively sought responsibility. They come

with their own agendas, driven by their sense of purpose. Their sense of purpose is usually

student and community driven. The autonomy to accomplish their work was important to the

deans. Some of the deans were pleasantly surprised at how much autonomy they were given.

Although it was promised during the interview, the deans did not expect to receive as much

decision-making authority as they did. Dean Shelby's been told by his manager that he is

trusted and encouraged to make decisions. Dean Kendall's manager allows him to make

decisions, as long as he can justify them, and they can be supported within the budget. Dean

Bedford can make decisions on student conduct matters without involving his manager,

although he values the collaborative content of their discussions.

Other deans felt promises of autonomy were unfulfilled, or they were more

micromanaged than they desired. Dean Tarant indicated he was overruled on his decision to

cut a program because of a board member's influence. Dean Tarant mentioned that his

manager wanted to approve decisions, but collaboration was not valued in the decision-making

process. With respect to micromanaging, Dean Monta's manager told her she needed to work

more hours. Dean Smith's manager specified who she will partner with instead of allowing her

to manage her group. She wanted to make those decisions independently.

The amount of work the deans were expected to complete was perceived as

insurmountable to some of the deans. How the deans viewed their workload really depended

on the dean's personality. Some deans indicated that they expected to have a lot to do in their

positions. These deans approached their work by viewing it in smaller components, recognizing

that their goals could be completed over time. Others mentioned that the work appeared

overwhelming. These deans had a sense of urgency to complete their goals and felt stress

associated with that. Some deans had to catch up on remaining work because their role was

vacant for a while. Prioritizing was a challenge. How deans perceived their workload was based

on their personal reflections and assessments.

Some deans felt supported by having a formal socialization plan. They were able to find

out how and where to get information within the college. These deans reported having a good

relationship with colleagues and their managers, feeling welcomed in their roles. Other deans

did not have a formal socialization or onboarding plan. These individuals had to find their own way, researching who to talk with to get information about how to get their jobs done. While one dean reported this process was somewhat rewarding and expected, the majority of deans entering the college without a formal socialization plan mentioned uncertainty of taking action and a fear of failure. Constructing a process on how to get their tasks completed added to the stress of already overwhelmed deans, while lengthening the time it took for them to become acclimated to their roles.

A formal socialization plan supports role clarity and a healthy level of self-esteem during newcomer socialization. The absence of a plan can lead to uncertainty and job-related stress (Barksdale, Bellanger, Boles, & Brashear, 2003). Newcomer socialization activities became increasingly more important as the deans face constant change including leadership and managerial changes. While a formal socialization plan cannot prepare a dean for every anomaly, having more certainty during any decision-making process gave individuals the confidence to make changes to a plan as the need arises. Formal socialization also created connections between the deans and their colleagues who can be used as a sounding board for ideas and assist with problem solving.

RQ3A: HOW ARE THESE IMPRESSIONS MAINTAINED OR CHANGED?

Psychological contract violations (Rousseau, 2001) occurred when deans anticipated more autonomy following the interviewing process. Changes in management resulted in the deans working with different managerial styles when compared to the managers who initially conducted their interviews. In other instances, deans discovered that the management style of their hiring manager was different than they expected. Unrealistic expectations are a byproduct

of impressions formed during vocational anticipatory socialization (Jablin, 2001) which were validated during the interviewing process. The deans' interactions with their managers during the interview lasted fewer than five hours, which is likely not enough time to form an accurate impression of management style, especially when the manager is focused on attracting the candidate to the college (Wanous, 1992).

Deans interviewed as part of this study sought information from peers, direct reports and managers. They engaged in these information seeking activities to reduce uncertainty. Relationships with peers are generally developed though the socialization process. These relationships became part of socialization process and helped the deans validate their perceptions of the organization developed during entry.

The ability to obtain information is positively correlated to higher job satisfaction, reduced stress, greater organizational commitment and lower thoughts of exit (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Obtaining information has proved more challenging for deans in the absences of formal socialization. Written procedures were frequently sought to reduce uncertainty and became increasingly more valuable in the absence of a manager. Some colleges had procedures for socialization and documentation of processes, which reduced the time deans spend on information seeking activities.

Deans sought their roles because they hoped to make a difference. Motivated by the opportunity to do so, they set goals based on promises made during the attraction and interview process. They looked to leadership to validate the importance of these goals. With leadership positions remaining open in a college, the deans were concerned that their personal agendas would not be supported by new leadership. Uncertainty of future leadership initiatives

resulted in deans' reluctance to move forward with their goals, because they were concerned

their efforts would be counter to new leadership directions.

RQ3B: HOW HAVE DEANS CHANGED THEIR BEHAVIOR OR ACTIONS AS A RESULT OF THIS
REEXAMINATION?

With an increased workload in some instances and a larger diversification of

responsibilities, time management became seen as an essential skill. Deans had to set

boundaries to remain focused on the core responsibilities of their jobs. The choice whether to

remove or limit activities or attend meetings was difficult because deans are conflicted. They

understood the importance of learning about their role and organization during the

socialization process and began to appreciate how much positive influence they can have in a

variety of areas. Furthermore, their roles were emerging, and they needed knowledge and

relationships to be effective.

Deans recognized that their communication behaviors changed in terms of audience

and frequency. In some cases, they were required to give more public speeches in the

community. They identified that they communicated with a variety of people much more

frequently than in previously held positions. They also recognized that when they encounter an

unsupportive peer or leader, their communication became more direct with those individuals.

Following entry, the deans realized that their job responsibilities were different than

what they anticipated during the attraction and interview process. A resilient group, the deans

had the skills, ability, and desire to make necessary changes. Deans faced many changes, from

being assigned additional responsibilities through changes in management and leadership.

Whether accepting new responsibilities or facing departmental restructuring, the deans were

willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure success. When accepting new leadership, the deans were more hesitant to move forward with their visions for their departments. Deans were unwilling to give up on their personal goals, but instead put progress on hold until they were more certain that they will be supported.

RQ3C: WHAT COURSE OF ACTION DO DEANS INTEND TO TAKE BASED ON THEIR REFLECTIONS OF THE RP AND JOB EXPERIENCE AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF EMPLOYMENT?

Following the assessment of their experience and determining if there are any psychological contract violations, deans either remained as an active contributor to the organization or chose exit. When deans choose to remain at the college, they mentioned an alignment between the college's values and their own. The deans found their roles to be a good fit because, although challenging, they saw value in their work. The deans were able to articulate how they can positively contribute to the college and the community, stressing the impact they can have on the students. They could envision their future success, which is sometimes inclusive of upward mobility.

Exit was another option for some deans. When the desire to exit was more of an immediate goal, the deans recognized that the stress created by the psychological contract violations was affecting their physical and mental health. The obstacles they faced for aligning their personal goals with the college's vision became too great. Other deans identified their consideration of exit in the future. Those deans cited career advancement opportunities and benefits to their families as reasons for these thoughts of exit.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Resilient would best describe the community college deans who participated in the study. Their ability to get the job done without much direction is reflective of their entry into their earlier roles in community colleges or other organizations. They come to their roles with a vision for what their experience could become. A strong sense of purpose drives them. They come to the position with an agenda of how they want to influence change. A motivating factor is the desire to impact their community. They also seek personal growth, which includes inspiring individuals, collaborating with others, and providing leadership.

The deans went through information seeking activities when applying for the job. Some of this behavior included talking to colleagues and previous supervisors to validate their skills for the role. In most cases, the job description was heavily referenced during the application and interview process. The job description was where the deans gleaned the most information about the position. The deans went through an extensive exercise of matching their skills to the job description during the application process and interview. They continued to reference that document though their early tenure. The interviews did not provide as much information about the position, college, or manager as one might expect.

Corporations take significant measures to brand the employment experience. Some of these measures include videos on the employment experience on a webpage dedicated to hiring, social media recruitment pages, and management of employee feedback websites. This also aids in creating a more realistic job preview. Community colleges appear to be missing this opportunity.

Formal socialization, or onboarding, is lacking. This appears counter to the educational missions at many community colleges. There is an expectation that these high performing individuals can find their way. They can. However, it comes at a cost. There are missed opportunities for interactions and communications and a longer developmental period when deans are not fully functioning in their roles. Having identified resources would help promote perceptions of autonomy, would potentially lighten the workload, and assist with the transfer of information when leadership changes. Those supervisors who value formal socialization are likely to get loyalty and tenure in return.

Deans reported a significant amount of turnover in leadership. Some deans were not aware their manager took another position before they arrived for their first day of work. Presidents left; vision changed. Without a documented socialization plan, these deans are left to struggle unnecessarily, rather like attending a class without a syllabus. It would be like figuring out how they are measured and finding out how to get a passing grade by asking other students who have taken the class before.

Most deans find that their positions are a fit and want to stay in their roles. They will make it work, even if it is not perfect. They are fueled by making a difference which is permitted through the autonomy they are given. Limited autonomy breeds thoughts of exit. It is impressive what deans will sacrifice (familial relationships, social lives, sleep, health) toward this end. These deans will likely ascend to higher levels of responsibility within community colleges. The dedication these deans expressed inspires optimism for the future leadership of community colleges.

Limitations

A potential limitation in this study is that the researcher is the primary collector of the data using an interview format. Here, the researcher's human resources background and over 20 years of interviewing experience was useful in overcoming this obstacle (Patton, 2002). With the experience of the researcher there is a potential of reflexivity since the researcher has spent most of her professional career conducting interviews in the sales and administrative professions, guarding against the potential of a bad hire by eliminating candidates from the data pool, which cannot occur in this study.

Another potential limitation of this study includes the sample selection, as it is not designed to reflect diversity of race, age, and gender. These variables may impact the interviewee's experience. Of possible concern is the reliance on phone interviews which eliminates the ability of the researcher to see non-verbal cues that might differ from the responses received. These non-verbal cues have been relied upon by the researcher in the past to determine the forthrightness of the interview responses, although the researcher has also conducted an average of 85 phone interviews of salespeople per month during a two-year timeframe. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, the semi-structured interviews coupled with a thematic analysis collected rich data from community college deans who can make a direct contribution to our understanding of why, given the stress associated with this highly visible position, they remained in the role or decided to leave (Sturges & Harahan, 2004).

Recommendations for Future Research

Few researchers have examined the process of the employment lifecycle for community college deans. What makes this group unique is their desire to make a difference in the

educational communities they serve. Quantitative, qualitative, and triangulated studies could be conducted to gain a better understanding of vocational anticipatory socialization. What was not captured in this study was the transformational process in their personal and professional lives that led them to seek more responsibility in a leadership role. Understanding this process would likely lead to better targeted recruitment practices.

During the interviews it was also apparent that some spouses had a strong influence on the deans' desire to seek another opportunity, inclusive of finding the employment opportunity for their spouse. Extant research dedicates a significant amount of time to the employee's employment experience but does not recognize the voice of the family, which may be a significant influence on the job search process and the employee's desire to stay or exit.

Some interviews provided insight into deans differing experiences based on gender or race. While not addressed in this study, future research in demographic variables of race, gender and age would help better understand the unique experience of new hires. This study could be further expanded to other leadership roles in community colleges. Finally, a longitudinal study of these deans and their experience after they have been in their position for a more significant period of time would be beneficial.

CONCLUSION

Considerable attention has been dedicated to lifecycles of employee entry through exit, but voluntary turnover is a recurrent problem in organizations (Sager, Varadarajan, & Futrell, 1988). Extant literature has focused on intentions to quit or actual behavior in job but has not examined the antecedents to quit and quitting behavior in relationship to the hiring process (Chandrashekaran, McNeilly, Russ, & Marinova, 2000; Murray & Murray, 1998 Gmelch, 2003).

Current literature addresses turnover that occurs after years of employment and does not examine decisions made in the first few months of employment.

The termination of the employment relationship between community colleges and higher-level administrative positions continues to be a costly occurrence. Turnover of these high value, visible employees deserves continued research attention, so organizations can understand and mitigate the departure of deans, which is usually a gateway role into other leadership positions. Understanding of turnover begins with an examination of the hiring process. Uncertainty reduction theory provides a significant overview of the reasons new hires seek information from potential employers and provides the framework for how information is gathered by potential hires.

The realistic job preview may be one answer to supplying information to the employee during the interview process that is used to compare and contrast beliefs formed through anticipatory vocational socialization. Different mediums such as advertisements or videos are shared in the recruitment process to not only attract candidates but also provide insight to the type of work deans will perform and the culture of the organization they will join. This information will either encourage candidates to join the organization by validating their positive thoughts or help them select another employment option outside of the organization. Ultimately, they will decide to accept or reject an offer of employment.

Once an offer of employment is accepted, the newcomer is socialized within the organization. Employee socialization can occur through both formal and informal processes. The formal socialization process aids the new hire in becoming acclimated with their jobs in a more structured format. Employees actively seek information when entering organizations and

will attempt to reduce uncertainty about their roles and the organization while risking social status. When the employee gains additional information about the job and organization, the employee compares that information to what they thought about the job prior to hire. Employees attempt to make sense of differences between realistic job previews and on the job experiences.

Essentially, organizations and employee create a psychological contract prior to hire that establishes the content of the job and organization. Once the newcomer enters the organization or role, they validate the information received against the terms of the psychological contract. If a breach occurs, the newcomer will accept this violation and modify the "contract" or decide to leave the organization as a result of the breach. While this has been well documented in literature on employee exit, voluntary turnover can occur quickly following appointment and continues to be a costly problem for community colleges. Achieving an understanding of the relationships of retention or turnover from hire through socialization was addressed by this study. Additional research that helps employers understand the employee experience and transformation processes during the lifecycle of employment is needed.

Organizations continue to experience turnover without practical paths to follow to throughout the hiring lifecycle to correct these recurring patterns (Gmelch, 2003). Questions of causality remain unanswered. What remains unclear is the relationship between employees and organizational communication exchanges and behaviors that cause turnover beginning with applicant attraction. Continued research in this area should improve both the employee and employer experience, making the community college dean role a fulfilling one for both.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

Anticipatory Socialization Messages: RQ1

1. Looking back, what person or circumstances motivated you to become a college dean? What was it about that person or experience that was motivating? If you considered other careers, what were they? If you did consider other careers, what was it about that line of work that was attractive?

2. Prior to starting this job, what image did you have of a community college dean? What did you expect it to be like when you first started your job?

3. Name five things about a career in educational leadership that drew you into the profession.

Realistic Job Preview: RQ2

4. What did the employer tell you about the job prior to accepting the offer? When was this communicated? How did the employer communicate this information to you? Interview? Literature? Website? Presentation?

5. Please tell me what the interview process was like. What did your interviewer(s) tell you specifically about the job? What attracted you to this job?

6. During the interview what did you learn about the job or organization? What did you learn about the location where you would be working? What did you learn about the benefits or flexibility?

7. Based on what you were told during the interview, what did you really think the job and organization would be like before taking the job?

8. How did the information you received before you took the job match/not match the work you do? Please explain how it matches/does not match.

9. How did the information you received about the organization prior to taking the job match/not match your impressions of the organization now? Please explain how it matches/does not match. Are your expectations of the job being met? If so, how? If not, why?

10. Are your expectations about the organization being met? If so, how? If not, why?

11. Reflecting back on what you knew about the profession prior to taking the job, how closely are your expectations being met? How so?

Sensemaking/Psychological Contract: RQ3

12. Now that you have done the job for a couple of months, what are you thinking about what you initially expected and experienced?

13. Earlier in our discussion you talked about …. How has this worked out for you? Have your expectations been met? (Question may be repeated several times for variables identified in first interview.)

14. How have things changed? How do you feel about that? How did it affect you?

15. Have you made any changes as a result of the differences you mentioned? If so, what were they? Do you intend to make any changes in the near future? If so, what are you considering?

16. How committed are you to the organization? What makes you that committed/uncommitted?

17. How long do you plan on staying at your current organization? What are some of the things you take into consideration both at the job and in your personal life when deciding to stay?

18. Have you had thoughts of leaving the organization? If so, what events or situations have triggered these thoughts? What are some of the things you think about and take into consideration both on the job and in your personal life if you have had thoughts of leaving?

19. In relation to the job's responsibilities, what would cause you to stay longer than you thought you would when you first took the job? What would cause you to leave sooner than you anticipated?

20. Are there any expectations that are unmet? What are you planning to do about these unmet expectations?

Intention to Quit Identified: Fewer than Two Years (Connected to Earlier RQ)

21. Have you told anyone about your intention to quit? If so, who?

22. What did you say when you told them about your intention to quit?

23. What are the reasons you anticipate leaving? Other than the reasons you cited for leaving, are there any other reasons you might leave the organization?

APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects in Research

Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, 1010 Campus Drive FLITE 412F· Big Rapids, MI 49307

Date: March 8, 2017

To: Gary Wheeler, Sandra Balkema and Connie Jaracz
From: Dr. Gregory Wellman, IRB Chair
Re: IRB Application #160804 *(The Role of Vocational Socialization and Realistic Job Previews on Community College Dean Retention and Exit)*

The Ferris State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application for using human subjects in the study, *"The Role of Vocational Socialization and Realistic Job Previews on Community College Dean Retention and Exit"* (#160804) and determined that it meets Federal Regulations *Expedited-category 2F/2G.* This approval has an expiration of one year from the date of this letter. As such, you may collect data according to the procedures outlined in your application until March 8, 2018. Should additional time be needed to conduct your approved study, a request for extension must be submitted to the IRB a month prior to its expiration.

Your protocol has been assigned project number (#160804), which you should refer to in future correspondence involving this same research procedure. Approval mandates that you follow all University policy and procedures, in addition to applicable governmental regulations. Approval applies only to the activities described in the protocol submission; should revisions need to be made, all materials must be approved by the IRB prior to initiation. In addition, the IRB must be made aware of any serious and unexpected and/or unanticipated adverse events as well as complaints and non-compliance issues.

Understand that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and participant rights with assurance of participant understanding, followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document and investigators maintain consent records for a minimum of three years.

As mandated by Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46 (45 CFR 46) the IRB requires submission of annual reviews during the life of the research project and a Final Report Form upon study completion. Thank you for your compliance with these guidelines and best wishes for a successful research endeavor. Please let us know if the IRB can be of any future assistance.

Regards,

Ferris State University Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

You are being asked to take part in a research study of how newly appointed community college deans experience the job recruitment and employee socialization processes in comparison to their actual on the job experiences. The title of the study is *The Role of Vocational Socialization and Realistic Job Previews on Community College Dean Retention and Exit.* The principal investigator is Gary Wheeler. The faculty sponsor is Sandra Balkema. The co-investigator is Connie Jaracz, who will be completing the interviews. We are asking you to take part because you responded to an email requesting your participation. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of pre-hire messages and employee socialization on community college dean retention or exit. Additionally, it will further explore the employment lifecycle from attraction through hire and retention/exit.

What we will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, the researcher will conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about the hiring process, what your entry into the position was like and what you are experiencing with the job. The interview will take about 90-120 minutes to complete. With your permission, the researcher would also like to tape-record the interview. If permission is not granted to tape-record, the researcher will take notes during the interview.

Risks and benefits:

There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your job conditions to be sensitive. You may skip any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. While there are no direct benefits, there may be indirect benefits to participants through retrospective sensemaking of hiring experiences.

Your answers will be confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report made public will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records. If your interview is tape-recorded, the recording will be destroyed after it has been transcribed, which is anticipated to occur within two months following recording.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time. Should a participation opt out of the study after questions are answered, those responses will be destroyed.

If you have questions: The researcher conducting this study is Connie Jaracz under the direction of Gary Wheeler. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Connie Jaracz at cjaracz@ferris.edu or at 248-495-4461. You can reach Dr. Wheeler at gary.wheeler@memoryhole.net or 269-503-3069. If you have any questions or

concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 231-591-2553 or access their website: http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/academicaffairs/vpoffice/IRB/. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Your Name (printed) _____

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Signature of person obtaining consent _____ Date
_____

Printed name of person obtaining consent _____ Date
_____

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

APPENDIX D: TAXONOMY OF RESPONSES

Taxonomy of Responses

QUESTION	AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSES	OTHER RESPONSES
1(a)	Status, leadership opportunity, making a difference, relative or family friend in role	Not motivated for career, desire to leave profession
1(b)	Lifestyle, job duties, status	
1(c)	Other careers, did not consider anything else	
1(d)	Type of work, creativity, travel opportunity, income potential, advancement opportunity, leadership	
2(a)	Status, traveling, good income potential, flexibility of schedule, always busy	Don't know
2(b)	Busy, 8-5 schedule, budgetary responsibility, conflict management, making decisions	Didn't have any idea/impression
3	Status, making a difference, leadership, departmental oversight opportunity for advancement	Nothing drew me in, I felt pushed into it
4(a)	I would make a difference, job was hard, long hours, budgetary responsibility, number of direct reports	Nothing was said
4(b)	First interview, second interview, ad, at time of offer	Cannot remember, throughout entire process
4(c)	Interviews, literature, website, other colleagues, presentations	Cannot remember specifically
5(a)	Number of interviews, panel/individual interview	Testing
5(b)	Challenging, expectations of work hours, technical knowledge needed	Cannot remember
5(c)	Accolades, income, thought it may be fun, promotion, challenge	It's a job (I needed one).
6(a)	History of company, product knowledge, customers, stories of successful sales people, commission check amounts, length of employee tenure, competitive advantage	
6(b)	Close to home, rural or city experience, office location	
6(c)	Good health care, tuition reimbursement, vacation, schedule flexibility	I didn't ask.
7	Fun place to work, working with people like me, lot of technology, good benefits, advancement opportunities	
8	Closely/somewhat/not at all Matches: hours, location, duties Not match: effort required, hours	

QUESTION	AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSES	OTHER RESPONSES
9	Closely/somewhat/not at all Matches: co-workers friendly, staff helpful, family environment Not match: no support, budgets too restrictive, co-workers are difficult	
9(a)	Yes, expected it to be hard at first, still learning No, impossible to get anything done, not sure what is expected	Not sure
10	Met-people are nice, culture is good, pay is good Unmet-people are not helpful, it takes forever to get approval on jobs, red tape	
11	Closely-this is what I saw my dean doing Not meeting-difficulty, learning curve	
12	This is close to what I thought the job would be like. This is not at all what I thought it would be like.	
13	Work schedule-I work longer hours than I thought, I can flex my schedule Work environment- people are helpful, many resources, people are mean, manager is too busy to help, technology is poor Income-I see earning potential. Career advancement-I see upward mobility soon if I work hard. People never get promoted here. My manager will never leave.	
14	I think things are matching what I thought it would be like. I like this more than I thought I would and plan on staying for a while. Bad decision to come here, looking for another job, upset all the time.	Things have not changed.
15.	Yes-stopped asking my manager for help, found a mentor, applied for another job internally/externally, asked for more training No-did not make changes	Don't know
15(a)	Yes-new job, more training No	Don't know
16	Committed-nice people, good pay, good perks Not committed-not what expected, to many hours	
17	Retirement, a couple of years, a couple of months	
17(a)	Advancement opportunities, income potential, bills	
18	Yes/No	I don't know.
18(a)	Manager fired/left, turnover, college struggling, hard to sell ideas, hard to get things done	
18(b)	Can make more elsewhere, work from home, easier administrative process, having kids, relocation, job stability, economy, mortgage/debt	

QUESTION	AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSES	OTHER RESPONSES
19	Advancement opportunity, making more money, like it, larger budget, more administrative staff, making a difference	Advancement opportunity, don't know
19(a)	Travel excessive, don't like it, constant fighting with other departments, few resources, having to report into office daily, 8:00 a.m. meetings	New boss, don't know
20	Yes-look for new job, nothing, stick it out No	Don't know.
21	Yes-parents, co-workers, spouse, friends	Boss, leadership, former colleagues
22	Going to start looking for another job, considering returning to teaching…going to look into it, this wasn't what I expected	
23	Not working out, working too hard, not flexible schedule, college attendance declining, everyone else is leaving, college not doing well	