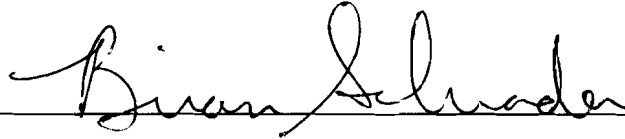


AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Terri Lynn Bober \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ Masters of Science in  
Psychology \_\_\_\_\_ presented on \_\_\_\_\_ August 25, 1999.

Title: An Examination of Realistic Job Previews by Personnel Decision-makers  
and Job Incumbents.

Abstract approved: \_\_\_\_\_



Realistic Job Previews (RJPs) are used to present information to those in the applicant pool about specific characteristics of a job. Premack and Wanous (1985) suggests RJPs reduce employee turnover and increase employee satisfaction. However, research is scarce on the potential difference between decision-makers' and job incumbents' preferences of RJPs. This two part field study examines differences between decision-makers and incumbents on terms of preference for RJPs. Participants in the first study were 28 incumbents of a wholesale distribution company. Seventy percent of the incumbents were asked to rate job characteristics in terms of: (a) the realism of the job characteristics, (b) the degree of importance for an applicant to know, and (c) if these characteristics were positive or negative issues an applicant should have knowledge of when making an informed employment decision. Of these 20 statements, 10 were considered to be Descriptive-Organizational (DO) items and 10 were considered to be Prescriptive-Judgmental (PJ) items. Fifteen percent of the incumbents were asked to provide positive and negative examples of the DO items and 15% of the incumbents were asked to provide positive and

negative examples of the PJ items. Based on these ratings and examples, four RJPs were created. Two RJPs contained Descriptive-Organizational information, one positive and one negative, DO-P and DO-N, respectively. The other two RJPs contained Prescriptive-Judgmental information, one positive and one negative, PJ-P and PJ-N, respectively. Manipulation checks were conducted to be sure the previews actually contained either positive or negative information, as well as, descriptive-organizational or prescriptive-judgmental information.

The second part of this study asked both decision-makers and job incumbents to rate these four previews when considering which preview was: (a) most optimal for the organization, (b) most optimal for the applicant with prior work experience, (c) most realistic, (d) likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job and (e) likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization.

Five one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted on each dependent variable. Although no significant results were found between these two group's ratings of RJPs, specific within group trends emerged. The cell means indicated decision-makers perceive the positive judgmental preview (PJ-P) as most optimal for the organization's use, the applicant with prior work experience, and the most realistic. Incumbents' cell means indicated the positive and negative descriptive-organizational previews (DO-P and DO-N) were most optimal across all five dependent variables. Decision-makers and incumbents indicated agreement on descriptive-organizational previews when considering which is most likely to reduce unrealistic expectation about the job and organization. Both groups rated the prescriptive-judgmental negative

preview lowest across all five measures. These within group trends suggest future research should continue to explore various preferences among populations affected by RJPs such as decision-makers, incumbents, and those in the applicant pool.

AN EXAMINATION OF REALISTIC JOB PREVIEWS BY PERSONNEL

DECISION-MAKERS AND JOB INCUMBENTS

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A Thesis Proposal

Presented to

The Division of Psychology and Special Education

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements of the Degree

Master of Science

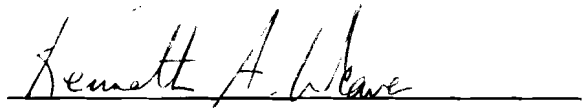
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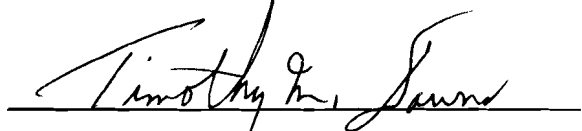
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Psychology and Special Education



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

A Realistic Job Preview (RJP) is a useful selection tool which introduces the realities of the job to persons in the applicant pool. In general, a RJP provides applicants with both positive and negative information about the job such that they obtain a more “realistic” preview of what the job actually entails. Given this information, persons in the applicant pool may determine if the job is really what they expected before making a decision to work for an organization. As Wanous (1977) explains, RJP’s have been thought to reduce unrealistic expectations about a job. This information provides lowered expectations which are easier to satisfy; hence, employee satisfaction increases while turnover decreases. Thus, Wanous (1977) concludes, RJP’s are considered to create an “inoculation” or “vaccination” effect. After a review of several studies on RJP’s, Wanous (1980) concludes that there is empirical support for RJP effectiveness on employee satisfaction and voluntary turnover.

Despite this general agreement, researchers have tested several theories to investigate how RJP’s affect those in the applicant pool and why they “appear” to effectively reduce voluntary turnover and increase employee satisfaction. Breugh (1983) suggests there are four distinct psychological processes which have been hypothesized to mediate the effectiveness of RJP’s: (a) met expectations, (b) ability to cope, (c) air of honesty, (d) self-selection. The met expectation hypothesis is similar to the paradigm proposed by Wanous

(1977); those applicants who receive a RJP prior to employment will find the work environment congruent with previously held expectations about the organization. Several studies report equivocal results. Reilly, Sperling, and Tenopyr (1979) found no turnover differences as a function of RJP for their sample of telephone operators. Other studies, however, have reported higher level of employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, job retention, and lower turnover (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Meglino, Denisi, & Ravlin, 1993; Premack & Wanous, 1985).

The second explanation for RJP effects is hypothesized as increasing one's ability to cope. According to Dugoni and Ilgen (1981), this hypothesis suggests RJP which provide employees with problems they might encounter on the job will increase the employees' ability to cope with such problems. Applicants are less disturbed by the problems because they have been forewarned (Breaugh, 1983). According to the person-environment theory, four specific components present in the work place help explain work stressors: (a) organizational stress, (b) strain, (c) coping, and (d) social support. Although all four components are present in the work place and are relevant to work survival, organizational stress is addressed with RJP. Berry and Houston (1993) define organizational stress as the potentially threatening conditions of the job. These conditions may include but are not limited to job complexity, workload, peer interaction, and employee-supervisor relations. Role ambiguity is a well-known organization stressor and is usually present when the work role is unclear and employees do

not know what is expected of them. Therefore, the ability to cope hypothesis seems reasonable; presenting potential problems encountered on the job will increase the applicants' ability to cope.

The third hypothesis to explain the effects of RJPs addresses the perceived honesty of the organization. Often, organizations are reluctant to introduce to the applicant the negative aspects of the work environment. When this situation occurs, applicants may feel a dissonance between what they expected when making a job acceptance decision and what really exists after the acceptance was made. According to Berry and Houston (1993), cognitive dissonance results in tension within the individual that leads to efforts to restore balance. Congruent with the dissonance theory, Breugh (1983) explains that RJPs increase applicants' commitment to their decision because they feel a greater degree of freedom in their organizational choice. Therefore, RJPs communicate an "air of honesty" to applicants because "they make a decision without coercion or strong inducement from others" (Wanous, 1980, p. 42).

The final explanation for the effects of RJPs involves the self-selection hypothesis. Because RJPs provide realistic information, those applicants who find the information provided through a RJP as unacceptable will self-select out of the process (Bretz & Judge, 1998). In contrast, those who accept the job are more likely to be satisfied with it and less likely to leave (Breugh, 1983). Rynes, Bretz, and Gerhart (1991) suggest that better qualified applicants react differently to negative information because they can exercise options that other

applicants do not have. Applicants who have better work resources may have more options available to them than those who are not as well educated or enter the applicant pool with less resources. Bretz and Judge (1998) found those persons who are considered as the highest quality applicants may be less willing to pursue jobs for which negative information has been presented. Colarelli (1984) suggests self-selection is not a reasonable explanation for the observed relationship between realism and turnover. When individuals have made up their minds to accept a job offer, a brief RJP is unlikely to change this decision, which may have developed over a period of several days, weeks, or perhaps months (Colarelli, 1984).

In an attempt to gather content valid items for a RJP, Dean and Wanous (1984) collected information from bank teller incumbents to create and test the effects of three types of previews (realistically specific, realistically general, and no preview). There were no significant differences among job-preview groups in terms of their attitude toward the organization. However, the rate of turnover was greater within the first 3 weeks of training for those in the preview conditions whereas those in the no preview condition tended to leave during the first 20 weeks after training. Dean and Wanous (1984) suggest 3 weeks of training will "overwhelm" any possible effects due to reading an RJP booklet. Therefore, the effect of any information provided through a RJP may be extremely small compared to the direct exposure of said practices. These results are consistent with Dugoni and Ilgen's (1981) statement, "lowering expectations

does not raise satisfaction in the RJP process" (p. 588). Results such as these, have led researchers to conclude that self-selection is not likely to function as a mediating process of RJP effects on job survival (Wiesner, Saks, & Summers, 1991).

In addition to the four hypotheses, other variables may impact the effectiveness of RJP. In comparison to applicants who do not see a job preview, RJP have demonstrated advantages for both the applicant and the employer (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Premack & Wanous, 1985). Premack and Wanous (1985) point out that the RJP utility varies with the severity of an organization's turnover problem. More specifically, Reilly, Brown, Blood, and Maletesta (1981) found that the RJP increased job survival rates from 74.0% to 80.2%, whereas Wanous (1983) calculated the increase in job survival to be from 79.7% to 83.5%. Regardless of the differences, utility improves using RJP (Premack & Wanous, 1983; Reilly et al. 1981).

Vandenberg and Scarpello (1990) suggest organizational socialization processes are important as newcomers gather information about different facets of the job which enhance employee adjustment and stability. Meglino et al. (1993) found that applicants were less likely to accept a job offer if they had prior work experience in the job and were exposed to a RJP. In addition, Meglino et al. (1993) determined applicants entering the job at an entry level position or on a probationary period "had a greater propensity to withdraw at the beginning of their probationary period, and a lower propensity to withdraw

after they had become permanent employees” (p. 815). This finding suggests that permanent, in contrast to probationary, employees who saw the preview had lower turnover rates.

Several findings (Costigan, 1997; Saks & Cronshaw, 1990; Wanous & Colella, 1989) suggest the medium of a RJP may alter the effect of the job preview. Premack and Wanous (1985) report in their meta-analysis that the criterion performance was strongly influenced by audio-visual RJP. This effect must be cautiously interpreted because the number of studies were relatively small, which increases the potential effect of an “outlier” study. According to Wanous and Colella (1989), the interview is the most commonly used medium for delivering RJP information. Historically, when interviewees request unfavorable information about the company or ask tough questions of the interviewer, the interviewer will attach greater weight to this applicant’s interview ratings; hence, unfavorable information usually translates into lower interview ratings (Costigan, 1997). Regardless of the harmful effects reported in the past, using the interview as a medium of RJP information, may prove to benefit both the interviewee and interviewer. Too many favorably worded questions may be perceived as an impression management tactic. Likewise, applicants who request unfavorable information may be perceived as bold or courageous by the interviewer (Costigan, 1997).

Saks and Cronshaw (1990) compared the effectiveness of oral RJP to written RJP. The oral RJP was more effective in creating positive perceptions of

interviewer and organizational honesty. Both oral and written RJPs lowered the job expectations of the participants and increased role clarity but did not affect job acceptance or commitment to job choice. Costigan (1995) found using a confederate who verbally projected incorrect job impressions, which were found to be opposite of those printed in the RJP booklet, made the job more attractive to the RJP participants than the RJP itself. Not only will a perusal of the RJP literature leave both the researcher and the practitioner confused about the results of RJP studies, but there is little consensus among investigators as to what information should be included on a RJP.

#### Lack of Operational Definition

Breaugh and Billings (1988) suggest that beyond the general concept of “presenting both positive and negative aspects of a job” (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998, p. 71), researchers have failed to operationalize the definitions of a RJP. Recognizing this failure, Reilly et al. (1981) point out there is no consistent guideline to follow when developing an RJP. Frequently, the RJP is general in definition (Breaugh & Billings, 1988). Wanous (1992) described the RJP as a recruitment strategy that provides applicants with an accurate, realistic view of the job and can lead to higher employee job satisfaction and longer job tenure. However, correctly pointing out that RJPs typically address organizational expectations (e.g., policy leave, compensation systems) rather than job expectations (e.g., supervisor’s leadership style or type of coworkers), Wanous (1978) suggested that the term “realistic job preview” may be a misnomer.



Therefore, the lack of an operational definition has provided researchers with equivocal results about the effectiveness of RJPs.

### Types of Realistic Job Previews

Few studies actually pursue, contextually, what RJP information was provided to those who accepted or declined a job offer. In general, there are two types of RJPs. The first, and most common, is the descriptive or organizational issue preview. This type of preview generally addresses extrinsic characteristics of the job (i.e., compensation, vacations, and leave of absence). The second type of job preview addresses the prescriptive or judgmental issues of the job. Although used less frequently, this type of preview provides those in the applicant pool information on intrinsic issues such as a co-worker's attitude or a manager's leadership style. Dilla (1987) used a descriptive preview aimed at presenting expectations concerning objective information about the job (i.e., steps in performance) and a prescriptive preview aimed at general methods of how to approach the job to enhance a newcomer's adaptation to the new work environment. Dilla found the descriptive preview was effective in enhancing initial adaptation to the job; however, results did not support the traditional "met expectations" model.

Descriptive-organizational issues. As noted above, there is little consensus among researchers as to what content should be included in the RJP and how the difference in content impacts the RJP's effectiveness. Descriptive or organizational issues are considered to be objective items which pertain to the

organization's expectations of employees. More specifically, studies using this approach have included in the RJP mostly objective information about the job (nature of the work) or its context (work setting, pay; Dilla, 1987). Other researchers describe descriptive organizational content as specific job conditions, hours of work, and compensation (including at least some of the specific negative components of these characteristics such as equipment breakdown and extended work hours to meet time sensitive demands; Buckley, Fedor, Veres, Wiese, & Carraher, 1998). In the past, one might suppose the only way to construct an accurate RJP would be to include mostly descriptive material (e.g., starting salaries, average length of time until a promotion, hours of work). According to Wanous (1989), one advantage to this approach is that it is easier to defend descriptive material as being unbiased by individual differences in what people will find satisfying.

Prescriptive-judgmental issues. Although not as easily defined because of the subjectivity, judgmental aspects of the job entail personnel characteristics that satisfy and dissatisfy employees (interpersonal relations in the office, co-workers' socialization processes, overall attitudes towards direct supervisor). According to Kacmar and Ferris (1989), judgmental factors are typically more potent contributors to overall job satisfaction than are extrinsic factors, or descriptive issues. What occurs early in the socialization process influences the subsequent attitudes and behaviors of newcomers (Buckley et al., 1998). Therefore, judgmental and somewhat subjective information (and negative

aspects of these components) are less common on RJPs. Organizational members may feel disloyal or perceive the information to be damaging to the organization. Therefore, recruiters may not perceive this type of RJP as an optimal tool to select the best applicant for the job believing applicants who view the RJP may self-select out of the process.

Wanous (1978) suggests that RJPs typically provide descriptive organizational factors such as compensation systems and job characteristics (e.g., standing for long periods of time) instead of judgmental information the applicant may want to know (e.g., one's immediate supervisor's leadership style or dynamics of co-worker's socialization habits). Cascio (1998) concedes, stating that recruiters find it much easier to communicate descriptive material than to articulate subtle, intrinsic aspects of organizational climate. Therefore, one could presume that applicants may already know some of the descriptive information about a particular job but would find judgmental information about the co-workers interpersonal work relationships much more useful when making an employment decision. Hence, applicants may prefer prescriptive-judgmental information provided about the job rather than descriptive-organizational issues.

Positive and negative content. Wiesner et al. (1991) exposed participants to a RJP or a Traditional Job Preview (TJP), or to both the RJP and the TJP. Typically, only positive aspects of the job are presented in a TJP. There was no significant difference between the applicants who previewed the RJP and the

applicants who previewed the TJP. However, those applicants who previewed both the RJP and the TJP, reported that the RJP provided them with more adequate job information, yet rated the TJP as significantly more attractive. Bretz and Judge (1998) determined the type of negative information is less important to the applicant than the presence of negative information. That is, the presence of negative information presented in the recruiting process has a harmful effect on organization attraction.

Meglino, DeNisi, Youngblood, and Williams (1988) designed two types of previews to assess voluntary turnover and to clarify the processes responsible for any such effect. The first type of preview enhanced overly pessimistic expectations; the other preview was designed to reduce overly optimistic expectations. U. S. Army trainees were given either preview, both previews combined, or no preview. Trainees exposed to the combined previews had significantly lower turnover, whereas, those exposed only to the reduction preview had significantly higher turnover. Finally, the use of previews were more effective in reducing turnover among more intelligent trainees and those initially more committed to the Army than the absence of previews.

Supervisor-incumbent agreement. Recently, organizations recognize the importance of incumbents' ideas which contribute to the work process and their evaluation of peers' work performance. In previous work history, supervisors directed and monitored an employee's work behavior and perceived an employee's idea as unimportant. Meyer (1959) compared foremans' and general

foremans' ratings of the foremans' responsibilities and observed disagreement on 42% of the job functions. In addition, O'Reilly (1973) reported disagreement between supervisors and incumbents when asked to rate the level of skill or knowledge needed to perform a task satisfactorily. These studies suggest that supervisors and incumbents disagree when evaluating job duties and responsibilities.

However, many facets of current work environments are the results of managers' direct involvement in the job evaluation process and the inclusion of employees' input in the evaluation process. This dyadic relationship has led to an emphasis of study which focuses on supervisor-incumbent agreement on incumbent work performance and incumbent responsibilities. According to Harris and Schaubroeck (1988), no firm conclusions can be drawn regarding the extent of self-supervisor ratings. Mabe and West (1982) and Thorton (1980) found that research on self-supervisor ratings show a wide range of conflicting results. Williams and Seiler (1973) reported an average of self-supervisor correlations of .60 on performance measures; Pym and Auld (1965) found an average of self-supervisor correlations of .56 across three independent studies of performance appraisals. Conversely, Klimoski and London (1974) reported an average of self-supervisor correlations of .05, and Ferris, Yates, Gilmore, and Rowland (1985) found a self-supervisor correlations of .02 when identifying job functions. These studies suggest that supervisors and incumbents disagree when evaluating job performance and job functions; the studies do not however,

identify the cause of the rating disagreement. There is evidence that job incumbents tend to assign greater worth to their own jobs than will their supervisors when rating the same job. As Huber (1990) has noted, when job evaluation ratings are tied to important decisions (i.e., promotions, pay raise, transfers), incumbents will benefit more than supervisors by having higher ratings. However, supervisors have more organizationally sanctioned power to influence the evaluation outcome than do incumbents (Huber, 1990).

Although several researchers have attempted to identify causation for supervisor-incumbent disagreement, one explanation concerns observational opportunities. As opposed to supervisors, peers and incumbents tend to have more opportunities to observe incumbents' work behaviors and during more revealing times (Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988). Another explanation for disagreement between self- and supervisory ratings is posited by the theory of attribution (Weiner, 1980). According to this theory, actors (i.e., self-raters) attribute good performance outcomes to their own behavior and poor performance outcomes to environmental factors. In contrast, observers (i.e., peers-supervisors) attribute the actor's good performance outcomes to environmental factors and poor performance outcomes to the actor's disposition (Jones & Nisbett, 1972).

Due to other demands, supervisors do not have the opportunity to observe work performance every day for long periods of time. Therefore, a supervisor might catch only a glimpse of an incumbent's work performance. If

that employee is having a bad day (i.e., trouble with equipment, running late due to bad weather), the supervisor will likely ignore these environmental factors and place an average or poor rating on the individual's performance believing this poor performance is due to the employee's disposition. In contrast, the incumbent may deliver an outstanding self-rating because overall, work performance is above average due to personal work ethics or high work standards.

Another area of extensive research pertains to delegation and participative management styles and organizational decision making. Through delegation, subordinates are given autonomy in making organizational decisions and are vested with authority to make choices regarding decision outcomes. In contrast, participative management does not entail this autonomy. Instead, managers share the decision-making responsibility with the subordinate while holding more weight in the process. In this regard, delegation has correctly been conceptualized as the more complete form of subordinate involvement in decision making (Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Despite recent shifts in value and attempts to include the incumbent's evaluation, discrepancies exist between supervisors' and incumbents' job evaluation ratings, regardless of the work processes being rated (i.e., job responsibilities, performance appraisal).

Regarding the direction of rating differences, research concerning supervisor-incumbent agreement on the content of RJPs is virtually non-existent. Wanous (1989) argues acceptance by top management is likely to

be forthcoming using straightforward information found on descriptive organizational previews. Wanous (1989) suggests increasing judgmental information does increase the risk of management resistance to RJPs; he also noted that an alternative view of RJPs is that one should try to maximize those judgmental factors that are known to cause dysfunctional turnover (e.g., unrealistic expectations are more difficult for an employer to satisfy).

#### Attempts to Construct a Theoretical Framework

According to Bretz and Judge (1998), RJPs have received more attention over the past two decades than practically any other recruiting issue. However, because of the tenebrous results of the previous RJP research, persons interested in RJP effectiveness must begin to establish a theoretical framework so effects of RJPs can be extended within the boundaries they are hypothesized to work (Breugh, 1983). Wanous (1980) sets these boundaries stating that RJPs are of limited use when: (a) the selection ratio is high (i.e., when one has to hire virtually anyone that applies), (b) the job is not an entry level position, and/or, (c) there is high unemployment. At first glance, Wanous's (1980) boundary conditions appear reasonable; however, according to Breugh (1983) one can take exception to the conditions set forth by Wanous (1980). Referring to the four psychological phenomena thought to impact RJP's effectiveness, Breugh (1983) explains that even if selection ratios are high, providing a RJP to everyone who applies may (a) lower job expectations, (b) help employees cope with job demands, and (c) communicate an air of honesty. In addition, Breugh (1983)



argues, regardless of whether the job is entry level or not or whether the person is an "insider" or an "outsider," the important underlying issue is the realistic information about the job that the individual possesses. In this sense, RJPs are most useful if applicants are lacking a realistic perspective of the job. In contrast to Wanous's (1980) second condition, RJPs are of limited use when the job is not an entry level position, Breugh (1983) suggests the most useful situation for RJPs are higher level and/or more complex jobs being filled by outsiders.

Reilly et al. (1981) found a significant interaction between job complexity and RJP effectiveness; the "less complex nature of most non-management jobs militates against RJPs having much of an effect" p. 831). Wanous (1980) argues if the unemployment rate is high, then the applicants given an RJP may accept an offer even if it does not satisfy their expected needs. Again, Breugh (1983) takes exception to this set boundary suggesting the researcher should consider the local unemployment rate for the job in question. This rate would more closely align with the choice variable rather than the nationwide unemployment rate or the overall local unemployment rate.

In summary, Breugh (1983) states "RJPs will be most effective when the job applicant (a) can be selective about accepting a job offer, (b) has unrealistic job expectations, and/or (c) would have difficulty coping with job demands without an RJP" (p. 615). These research premises are found to be in stark opposition to Wanous's (1980) boundary study limitations. Furthermore,

Breaugh (1983) calls for manipulation checks to be sure the RJP manipulations are consistent in the way intended by the researcher.

### The Present Study

There are several key issues which have not been delineated in the RJP literature. First, research is scarce, on the potential difference between groups in terms of which preview is perceived to be optimal for the company and the applicant. That is, personnel who are responsible for making employment decisions may find one type of preview optimal for the organization than the actual job incumbents. Specifically, do decision-makers perceive one job preview as the best selection tool, while the incumbents of the company prefer a different RJP? Furthermore, limited studies have actually looked at the effect of the RJP's content (e.g., descriptive-organizational issues contrasted with prescriptive-judgmental issues) and the degree to which the RJP reduces positive expectations or enhances realism through characteristics of the job (i.e., positive or negative). One of the key elements of this study was to create four different types of RJP's to determine if there decision-maker's and the incumbent's preference in terms of the optimal RJP used in the selection process significantly differed. More specifically, this study attempted to determine if differences between these two groups existed under various selection conditions. Based on the literature discussed, the following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1. Both decision-makers and job incumbents would show a greater preference for the Descriptive Organizational-Positive (DO-P) and the

Prescriptive Judgmental (PJ-P) previews, when asked to rate which preview is optimal for the organization. Specifically, decision-makers would demonstrate a greater preference for the DO-P preview, whereas incumbents would demonstrate a preference for the PJ-P preview.

Hypothesis 2. When asked to rate which preview is optimal for the applicant with prior work experience, decision-makers would demonstrate a greater preference for the PJ-P preview, whereas incumbents would demonstrate a greater preference for the Prescriptive Judgmental-Negative (PJ-N) preview.

Hypothesis 3. When asked to rate which preview should be used in the future to present the most “realistic” picture, the decision-makers would demonstrate a greater preference for the DO-P preview, whereas incumbents would demonstrate a greater preference for the PJ-N preview.

The first and third hypotheses were based on Wanous’s (1989) work which suggests acceptance by top management is likely to be more forthcoming with descriptive and/or positive items on the preview. In addition, organizational members may feel disloyal or perceive the information to be damaging in that it is not optimal for the company to present negative aspects about the job. Hypothesis 2 was based on the work of Meglino et al. (1993), who reported that applicants were less likely to accept a job offer if they had prior work experience in the job and were exposed to a RJP. As reported earlier, Cascio (1998) reports that applicants care more about the intrinsic aspects of a position rather than the straight-forward aspects found in descriptive previews.

Therefore, the present study makes the assumption that applicants who have prior work experience in the field do not necessarily care about the descriptive organizational aspects of the job (DO-N and DO-P). For example, one who has experience in the field may maintain a basic understanding about companies in a specific market. Likewise, most competitive markets do not vary greatly in salary, vacation policies, and scheduled work hours. Hence, the applicant with prior work experience may be very interested in the intrinsic aspects of the organization. Therefore, when considering an applicant with prior work experience, decision-makers will perceive the positive aspects of the intrinsic characteristics as most optimal for an applicant with prior work experience. The incumbent will perceive the PJ-N preview's content as the most optimal knowledge for an applicant with prior work experience.

Hypothesis 4. Both decision-makers and job incumbents would show a greater preference for the PJ-N preview, when asked which preview is most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job.

Hypothesis 5. Both decision-makers and job incumbents would show a greater preference for the DO-N preview, when asked which preview is most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization.

Hypothesis 4 and 5 were based on the met expectation, air of honesty, and ability to cope hypotheses which is based on previous findings (e.g., McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Premack & Wanous, 1985) that applicants provided

with job realism will experience greater job satisfaction through a reduction of unrealistic positive expectations of the organization and the job's tasks.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

The purpose of this study was to determine if personnel decision-makers and job incumbents significantly differed in their preference of realistic job previews (RJPs). Both groups were asked to rate which RJP was optimal for (a) the organization, and (b) the applicant who had prior work experience in the job. Another purpose of this study was to determine if differences existed between these two groups when rating the RJPs as: (a) most realistic, (b) most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job, and (c) most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization. Four RJPs were created by gathering rated preview statements from those who work in customer relations positions. These four previews differed as follows: (a) Descriptive-Organizational Positive (DO-P), (b) Descriptive-Organizational Negative (DO-N), (c) Prescriptive Judgmental-Positive (PJ-P) and (d) Prescriptive Judgmental-Negative (PJ-N).

#### The Job

This company's primary focus is the distribution of graphic art materials to more than 1000 printing companies on a national basis. The positions selected for this study consisted of customer relation positions (e.g., customer service, sales, purchasing) for a wholesale distribution company which services the printing market. These positions exemplified Breugh's (1983) call for job complexity; persons involved with customer relations must understand the

complex process of offset printing in order to accommodate the customers' needs. In addition, the local unemployment rate for this position is low because of its specialization. Because applicants who are trained in this area are in high demand, the theoretical implication for RJP measures was enhanced. This position is highly specialized and most applicants have prior work experience in the industry; however, prescriptive judgmental aspects of similar organizations may vary. Therefore, applicants who have prior work experience in distribution to the printing industry may have very a different set of subjective experiences if working for another graphic arts distribution company.

### Participants

Incumbents. In Study 1, the researcher collected data from 30 customer relations personnel in 12 different branches across 7 states. All participants were asked to volunteer for this study. The age range was 25 to 77 years of age with an average age of 50.25 years. Fourteen percent were female and 4% were African American or Hispanic. In addition, their work experience and tenure ranged from 3 years and 4 months to 25 years and 8 months with an average of 15 years and 5 months. In addition, the incumbents' length of employment with this distribution company averaged slightly over 6 years, and experience in the graphic arts industry averaged 20 years and 4 months. The incumbents represented personnel from departments such as customer service, purchasing, technical support, service and outside sales for a large multi-million dollar wholesale distribution company.

In Study 2, the researcher collected data from 27 volunteers, 12 incumbents and 15 personnel decision-makers. The incumbents represented the aforementioned customer relations departments, and the decision-makers represented positions such as managers and supervisors. This group of participants processed customers' needs from 14 different locations across eight states. The mean age of both incumbents and decision-makers, as participants in Study 2, was 49 years. Four percent were female, 94% were White, and 2% were Hispanic. In addition, their work experience in this industry ranged from 5 years and 6 months to 45 years with an average of 19 years experience in customer relations. The incumbents' and decision-makers' length of employment with this distribution company averaged 9 years and 7 months with a range of 1 year and 3 months to 28 years and 7 months.

Personnel decision-makers. At most branch levels personnel decision-makers were appropriately titled general manager. However, a few branches also employed operations managers or sales managers who were responsible for personnel decision-making. In any position, the decision-maker(s) maintain the direct and final say about who is hired for the position(s) of customer relations for that branch. Therefore, the decision-makers in this study represented branch managers, sales managers, and operations managers of the said organization and were the immediate supervisors of the aforementioned incumbents.



Students. A manipulation check was conducted using 28 student volunteers. These students were enrolled in psychology courses at a medium sized midwestern university. These students were given research credit for their participation in the manipulation check. This diverse group of volunteers consisted of 50% male and 50% female students, and the age range was 18 to 53 years with an average age of 22 years and 9 months. Thirty-nine percent were freshman, 32% were graduate students and the remaining 28% were sophomore, juniors, and seniors. Data regarding the students ethnicity were not collected.

### Design

In Study 1, 70% of the incumbents were mailed a questionnaire of realistic job statements. Of the remaining 30%, 15% of the incumbents were asked to provide a positive and negative example of descriptive-organizational statements and 15% of the incumbents were asked to provide a positive and negative example of prescriptive-judgmental statements. Information collected from Study 1 was used to create four RJPs which were used in Study 2.

Between-Subject Variables. Study 2 had both incumbents and decision-makers rate the four RJPs to determine if there were significant differences between these two groups in their preference of RJPs.

Measures for Study 1. In Study 1, 70% of the incumbents rated a list of general statements which included both descriptive and prescriptive statements (AppendixA). Questions numbered 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, and 19 were considered to be descriptive-organizational issues. Questions numbered 1, 2, 4,

6, 8, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 20 were considered to be prescriptive-judgmental issues. Incumbents were asked to read each statement and rate it based on their own personal, internal values and standards. Each item was rated by the incumbents on three 9-point Likert scales. First, the incumbents were to determine the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the item reflected a current job characteristic (1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Disagree, 5 = Indifferent, 7 = Agree, 9 = Strongly Agree). Any item with a mean rating of 6 or more on the reflecting a current job characteristic, was considered a “realistic item” and examples, positive and negative, provided for this statement were included on the previews, respectively. Second, each item was rated on how important it may be that a potential new employee understands this aspect of the job (1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Disagree, 5 = Indifferent, 7 = Agree, 9 = Strongly Agree). Items with a mean rating of 1 to 4.5 were considered not important and were not used on any preview. All other items were included in the study. Third, each item was rated on the extent of how positive or negative this information would be, if provided to a potential new employee (1 = Extremely Negative, 3 = Negative, 5 = Indifferent, 7 = Positive, 9 = Extremely Positive). Any item with a mean rating of 1 to 4.5 on the third scale was considered a negative item and was used to create the DO-N or PJ-N, respectively. Items with a mean rating of 4.6 to 5.5 were considered neutral and were used on any of the four previews. Items with a mean rating of 5.6 or greater were considered positive items and therefore, were used to create the DO-P or the PJ-P, respectively.

Realistic job preview examples. The same general statements in the above questionnaire were sent to 30% of the incumbents. Because the items were general in nature, this pool of incumbents was asked to provide a specific positive and negative example, for each item listed. These specific examples generated by the incumbents were used to create the four types of RJPs. The examples represented important aspects of the job; something that a potential new employee should have knowledge of when considering the possibility of working for this company. Fifteen percent of the incumbents were asked to provide a positive and negative example for each of the 10 descriptive- organizational statements as advice for the newcomer (Appendix B), and 15% of the incumbents received instructions to provide a positive and negative example for each of the 10 prescriptive judgmental statements (Appendix C) as advice for the newcomer. Neutral statements were not requested because the four final previews were created based on their ability to reduce overly positive examples (i.e., DO-N and PJ-N) or enhance expectations (DO-P and PJ-P).

Realistic job previews. Using the returned rated statements and examples provided by the incumbents', four types of RJPs were created: (a) Descriptive Organizational-Positive (DO-P), (b) Descriptive Organizational-Negative (DO-N), (c) Prescriptive Judgmental-Positive (PJ-P), and (d) Prescriptive Judgmental-Negative (PJ-N) (Appendix D).

Measures for Study2. Incumbents and decision-makers were asked to rate the RJPs in terms of their preference for the organization, the applicant, and the applicant who had prior work experience. Also, the rating sheet asked the participants to rate the preview in terms of its “realism”, its ability to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job, and its ability to reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization (Appendix E). The four RJPs were rated on 9-point rating scales (1 = Strongly Disagree, 3 = Disagree, 5 = Neutral, 7 = Agree, 9 = Strongly Agree). In addition, the participants were asked to state their current position at the company. Customer relations personnel who handle customers’ needs were coded as a 1; managers or supervisors were coded as a 2.

Demographics questionnaire. A demographic profile was also included in all of the participants’ packet. There were two demographic forms (see Appendix F). The first consisted of items relating to sex, age, ethnicity, current job title, prior work experience, branch location and tenure with the company. This demographic profile was mailed to the incumbents in the first mailing with the statement ratings, positive and negative example request. The second demographic profile was identical to the first but, in addition, asked decision-makers how many employees were under their direct supervision, and specifically how many fill specific customer relations positions. This demographic profile was mailed to the incumbents and the supervisors with the second mailing which asked the participants to rate the RJPs.

### Procedure

Study 1. After obtaining permission from the owner of this organization (Appendix G) and the Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects (Appendix H), the data collection began. The initial step involved obtaining a list of names representing the customer relations personnel and the personnel decision-makers at each branch.

Once the list of employees was received, packets were mailed to those persons listed as customer service personnel. Each envelope included a transmittal letter (Appendix I), an informed consent letter (Appendix J), and a demographic profile. To ensure confidentiality to the participants, two self-addressed envelopes were enclosed; one envelope was used to return data and the other was used to return the informed consent letter. All packets contained the aforementioned information. Seventy percent of the incumbents received the rating questionnaire. Fifteen percent of the incumbents received a mailing requesting positive and negative examples of the descriptive-organizational statements used in the rating questionnaire. Another 15% of the incumbents received a mailing requesting positive and negative examples of the judgmental-expectations statement used in the rating questionnaire.

The incumbents were not asked to provide a rating of the statements, plus a positive and negative example for each because this request would have been too time consuming. The sample was split into three groups to remove any excessive demands which might have otherwise existed. The three

questionnaires were mailed to customer relations personnel by random selection. Once 30% of the sample was selected to fill out the example request, the balance of the participants received the rating statements questionnaire.

The transmittal letter explained the purpose of this study, the importance of their participation, and the confidentiality of responses and anonymity of participants. In addition, the letter explained that the owner was advised of this study and that, in response, permission was granted to conduct the study. Finally, the letter explained the importance of their participation and requested that they not mention their participation or their responses to anyone until the study was completed.

Manipulation check and comprehension check. Before initiating Study 2, a manipulation check was conducted using 28 student volunteers from a medium sized midwestern university. Using a simple forced choice rating, the students were asked to circle whether they perceived the content of the RJP to be: (a) descriptive organizational items, (b) prescriptive judgmental items or (c) not sure which RJP type was being presented. A brief description of what is considered to descriptive-organizational issues and prescriptive-judgmental issues was provided (see Appendix K). Next, the manipulation check asked the participants to determine the degree to which they perceived the item content as positive or negative (1 = Extremely Negative, 3 = Negative, 5 = Indifferent, 7 = Positive, 9 = Extremely Positive).

A comprehension check was also conducted. The actual rating sheets that

were used to measure the ratings by decision-makers and incumbents were also administered to this university sample. This questionnaire was administered as a pilot study to detect any potential problems in the instructions before the second study's mailing to the decision-makers and incumbents.

Study Two. Once the four RJPs were created, the manipulation check and the comprehension check were conducted, the previews were mailed back to the customer relations personnel and their immediate supervisors. RJP rating questionnaires and demographic questionnaires accompanied this mailing.

The four previews were placed in the envelopes in a random order to reduce order effect. For methodological purposes, a sheet was created to maintain consistency with the rotation of RJPs.

Final Manipulation check and comprehension question. A final survey (Appendix L), printed on a colored piece of paper for instructional purposes, asked participants to identify two of the four previews they perceived to contain the most negative information. This information provided the researcher with a second manipulation check to determine the degree of negativity for both descriptive-organizational and prescriptive-judgmental previews. In addition, the survey asked the participants "Do you feel you understand all the instructions and questions asked throughout this packet and are able to answer them in an honest and accurate manner?" The responses to this question allowed the researcher to determine how well the participants comprehended the instructions of the study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

#### Manipulation Check

The initial manipulation check asked the student participants to determine if the preview was descriptive organizational, prescriptive judgmental, or not sure. Using a Chi Square Goodness of Fit analysis, the students reported both prescriptive previews (PJ-P and PJ-N) as containing judgmental information  $X^2(2, N = 28) = 20.21, p < .05$  and  $X^2(2, N=28) = 17.64, p < .05$ , respectively. These findings indicate the realistic job previews containing judgmental information significantly differed from the other previews containing descriptive-organizational content. In addition, the student participants rated the DO-P as descriptive  $X^2(2, N = 28) = 20.21, p < .05$ . However, the DO-N was rated as a Judgmental Preview  $X^2(2, N = 28) = 9.50, p < .05$ . Because the students categorized the DO-N as a judgmental preview, the preview was reviewed and a revised DO-N preview was created using concrete descriptive items from the first mailing. This revised preview was used in the mailing for the second study.

The students in the manipulation check and the participants in Study 2 were asked to express which two of the four previews appeared to contain the most negative information. These data were analyzed using a Chi Square Goodness of Fit Test. The students in the manipulation check reported the DO-N and the PJ-N as the two most negative RJPs  $X^2(3, N = 28) = 31.57, p < .05$ .



The participants in Study 2 also reported the two most negative RJPs to be the DO-N and PJ-N,  $X^2(3, N = 27) = 17.54, p < .05$ . These findings indicate the student participants and the participants in Study Two clearly categorized the the negative previews, PJ-N and DO-N, as the most negative previews which were rated significantly different from the other previews containing positive content.

To test the five hypotheses a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on each dependent variable and was analyzed at a .05 alpha level of significance by using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). Each ANOVA was calculated to determine if there were differences between decision-makers' and incumbents' ratings of four different Realistic Job Previews (RJPs). The effect of different positions (decision-makers and incumbents) was not statistically significant on all five dependent variables. That is, five questions were presented and these two groups' ratings of RJPs did not vary significantly. All means and standard deviations of these ratings can be found in Table 1.

### Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis stated that decision-makers and incumbents would indicate a greater preference for the positive previews (DO-P and PJ-P) when asked to rate which preview was optimal for the organization. Specifically, decision-makers would demonstrate a greater preference for the DO-P preview, and the incumbents would demonstrate a preference for the PJ-P preview when considering each as optimal for the organization. There were no significant

Table 1

Realistic Job Preview's Mean Ratings for Each Hypothesis

	Decision-maker			Incumbent			Both Groups		
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n</u>
Hypothesis 1									
DO-P	6.00	2.07	15	6.40	1.83	12	6.18	1.94	27
DO-N	5.53	2.53	15	5.50	2.43	12	5.52	2.44	27
PJ-P	6.67	1.84	15	5.83	2.48	12	6.30	2.15	27
PJ-N	4.33	2.05	15	3.50	1.24	12	3.96	1.76	27
Hypothesis 2									
DO-P	5.93	2.25	15	6.33	2.14	12	6.11	2.17	27
DO-N	5.60	2.16	15	5.17	2.12	12	5.41	2.11	27
PJ-P	6.53	1.46	15	5.83	2.12	12	6.22	1.78	27
PJ-N	4.60	1.88	15	3.42	1.56	12	4.07	1.81	27
Hypothesis 3									
DO-P	5.66	1.98	15	5.50	1.93	12	5.59	1.92	27
DO-N	5.66	2.35	15	5.66	2.38	12	5.67	2.32	27
PJ-P	5.80	1.85	15	5.33	2.53	12	5.59	2.15	27
PJ-N	4.33	1.75	15	3.66	1.55	12	4.03	1.68	27
Hypothesis 4									
DO-P	5.60	2.09	15	5.75	2.30	12	5.67	2.15	27
DO-N	6.60	1.64	15	6.66	2.35	12	6.63	1.94	27
PJ-P	5.53	1.64	15	4.58	2.02	12	5.11	1.85	27
PJ-N	4.33	1.44	15	3.75	1.81	12	4.07	1.62	27
Hypothesis 5									
DO-P	5.47	2.09	15	5.75	2.30	12	5.59	2.15	27
DO-N	6.33	2.02	15	6.08	2.35	12	6.22	2.14	27
PJ-P	5.06	1.62	15	5.33	2.38	12	5.19	1.96	27
PJ-N	4.46	1.41	15	4.00	1.95	12	4.26	1.65	27

differences between the decision-makers' and incumbents' ratings of the RJPs, DO-P,  $F(1, 25) = .299$ ,  $p < .59$ , DO-N,  $F(1, 25) = .001$ ,  $p < .97$ , PJ-P,  $F(1, 25) = 1.05$ ,  $p < .33$ , and PJ-N,  $F(1, 25) = 1.516$ ,  $p < .23$ .

### Hypothesis 2

When these two groups rated which preview was optimal for the applicant with prior work experience, the second hypothesis stated that decision-makers would demonstrate a greater preference for the PJ-P preview and incumbents would demonstrate a greater preference for the PJ-N preview. There were no significant differences between the decision-makers' and incumbents' ratings on the RJPs, DO-P,  $F(1, 25) = 1.07$ ,  $p < .22$ , DO-N,  $F(1, 25) = .27$ ,  $p < .61$ , PJ-P,  $F(1, 25) = 1.03$ ,  $p < .32$ , and PJ-N,  $F(1, 25) = 3.05$ ,  $p < .09$ .

### Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis stated the decision-makers would demonstrate a greater preference for the DO-P preview, and incumbents would demonstrate a greater preference for the PJ-N preview when they considered the "realism" of the previews. There were no significant differences between these two groups on each preview DO-P,  $F(1, 25) = .05$ ,  $p < .83$ , DO-N,  $F(1, 25) = .00$ ,  $p < 1.00$ , PJ-P,  $F(1, 25) = .31$ ,  $p < .59$ , and PJ-N,  $F(1, 25) = 1.06$ ,  $p < .31$ . With the exception of the PJ-N preview, both groups' mean ratings were neutral in terms of realism, DO-P ( $M = 5.59$ ,  $SD = 1.93$ ), DO-N, ( $M = 5.67$ ,  $SD = 2.32$ ), PJ-P ( $M = 5.59$ ,  $SD = 2.15$ ), and PJ-N ( $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 1.67$ ), respectively.

#### Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis stated both decision-makers and job incumbents would show a greater preference for the PJ-N preview when asked which preview was most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job. No significant differences were found between decision-makers and incumbents  $F(1, 25) = .86, p < .36$ .

#### Hypothesis 5

The fifth hypothesis stated both decision-makers and job incumbents would show a greater preference for the DO-N when asked which preview was most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization. Again, the results were not significant,  $F(1, 25) = .09, p < .77$ .

Although no significant differences were found between decision-makers and incumbents, several patterns emerged across all five dependent measures. First, there appears to be a within group preference for the descriptive organizational previews as reported on all five dependent measures by the incumbents. That is, incumbents' ratings for the descriptive organizational previews were higher on all five dependent measures than the prescriptive judgmental previews' ratings. The incumbents rated the DO-P as most optimal for the organization and the applicant with prior work experience; the DO-N as most realistic and most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job and the organization. The decision-makers' preferences of RJPs were mixed as indicated by their ratings. When considering which preview was most optimal

for the organization, the applicant with prior work experience and most realistic, the decision-makers indicated their preference for the PJ-P. However, when asked to rate which RJP would reduce unrealistic expectations about the job and the organization, the decision-makers agreed with the incumbents and indicated their preference for the DO-N.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

In the present study, the researcher investigated the relation between decision-makers' and incumbents' ratings on four Realistic Job Previews (RJPs). The four previews used in this study were the Descriptive Organizational-Positive (DO-P), Descriptive Organizational-Negative (DO-N), Prescriptive Judgmental-Positive (PJ-P) and the Prescriptive Judgmental-Negative (PJ-N). Previous research on RJPs has demonstrated that organizations which utilized RJPs in the selection process reported positive outcomes, such as higher employee satisfaction and reduced turnover (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Premack & Wanous, 1985). Beyond these positive outcomes and a known reduction of overly positive expectations for the newcomer, research is still needed to assess why RJPs seem to be so effective in the selection process. In addition, research investigating RJPs' optimal effectiveness as reviewed by decision-makers and incumbents is virtually non-existent. In this study, there were no significant findings between the decision-makers' and incumbents' ratings of the previews; however, several trends emerged from the data. As mentioned previously, a within group preference for the the descriptive organizational previews was indicated by the incumbents, while the decision-makers within group preferences were mixed.

#### Interpretation of Results

The researcher's first hypothesis stated both the decision-makers and job

incumbents would express a greater preference for the positive RJPs, DO-P and PJ-P, when asked to rate which preview was optimal for the organization's use. More specifically, this first hypothesis argued decision-makers would rate the DO-P as most beneficial for the company's use while incumbents would prefer the PJ-P under this same condition. There were no significant differences found between decision-makers and incumbents. Within the four different types of RJPs, decision-makers indicated the PJ-P as most optimal for the organization, not the DO-P as hypothesized.

Cascio (1998) suggests recruiters find it much easier to communicate descriptive material than to articulate subtle, intrinsic aspects of organizational climate. Congruent with this argument, Wanous (1989) argues that management's stamp of approval for RJP use may more likely be forthcoming if only descriptive organizational issues are conveyed in RJPs. Decision-makers may recognize that descriptive objective items (salary, paid vacations) initially, attract an applicant to the organization. Unlike previous research suggests, it is possible that decision-makers may also recognize that prescriptive judgmental items are key to reducing dysfunctional turnover and increasing tenure. Decision-makers usually operate under constrained budgets and oftentimes these budgets do not allow for outrageous salaries, an unusual amount of time-off with pay, and other generous benefits that any employee would find beneficial. Therefore, managers may realize that money and other descriptive organizational items are not always key to keeping top performers.

Incumbents rated the DO-P as most optimal for the organization, not the PJ-P as hypothesized. Cascio (1998) also suggests the subtle, intrinsic aspects of organizational climate are what applicants may be most interested in observing before making an informed employment decision. Possibly, incumbents believe an applicant's decision to work for an organization is much more likely to be based on descriptive organizational items such as salary, paid vacation, and leave of absence issues. Incumbents may feel judgmental positive information is too speculative for an applicant to have knowledge of when making an employment decision.

The second hypothesis asked the two groups to determine which preview was most optimal for an applicant with prior work experience. Because decision-makers rated the PJ-P as most optimal for the applicant with prior work experience, it is possible that managers understand top performers require satisfying work environments. This is even more important when the applicant already has previous work experience. In a competitive market, managers may feel their organization is different from the competition's culture, based on the work attitudes and atmosphere. This may be exactly what separates their organization from their competition. As stated earlier, most competitive markets do not vary greatly in descriptive organizational items. That is, the salary range, weeks of paid vacation and computer systems in a specific market are similar in their features. However, the culture of any organization is dependent upon the personnel in that organization. Managers may feel their biggest advantage in



obtaining top performers with previous work experience is this separation of culture from one competitor to another. Incumbents rated the DO-P as the most optimal preview for the applicant with prior work experience, not the PJ-N as hypothesized. Incumbents may believe applicants want to know hard measurable facts about employment with an organization before making a decision. It should also be noted that individuals establish a sense of status based on descriptive organizational items such as annual salary and number of weeks vacation with pay. It is understandable how incumbents perceive the descriptive organizational items as key elements to the applicant's employment decision, especially for the applicant with prior work experience. This sense of status may also explain why the incumbents and decision-makers both rated the PJ-N as the least preferred RJP throughout this study. It appears both decision-makers and incumbents are reluctant to admit negative judgmental conditions exist in the work place. This is a sign of individual weakness. To admit one works in this type of organizational environment everyday causes others to ask "why do you stay?"

Meglino et al. (1993) reported applicants were less likely to accept a job offer if they had prior work experience in the job and were exposed to a RJP. Since participants reported positive information should be presented to an applicant with prior work experience, this finding supports Meglino et al. (1993) study which identified applicants with prior work experience were less likely to accept a job offer. Those applicants with prior experience have more than likely

been exposed to the negative aspects of the job and it appears that decision-makers and incumbents recognize this important fact.

The third hypothesis stated decision-makers would rate the DO-P as the most realistic RJP and incumbents would indicate the PJ-N as the most realistic preview. Once again, the decision-makers indicated the PJ-P as most realistic. One can assume the manager's job (i.e., problem-solving and coordinating teamwork) becomes much easier if the work atmosphere is pleasant and the workers are motivated.

The incumbents indicated the DO-N as the most realistic preview. This is understandable since incumbents do not really have control over judgmental prescriptive issues. Furthermore, incumbents rarely have the ability to improve or change the leave of absence policy or the required numbers of years worked before receiving a paid vacation. In addition, the daily complications of computer down time and customer rage are handled by the downstream employees. Managers generally get involved with these types of problems only when they have reached a level of intensity beyond the incumbents control. Likewise, the daily problems of system downtime will exist regardless of judgmental issues such as, managerial styles and co-worker's attitudes. Needless to say, these productivity delays are much more pleasant to deal with in a positive work environment. However, the judgmental attitudes and work behaviors are subject to change with personnel changes but the realism of these

descriptive organizational items will still exist. Hence, the incumbents perceive the DO-N to inform the applicant of the true realism of the job.

The fourth hypothesis stated that both decision-makers and incumbents would show a greater preference for the PJ-N when asked which preview would reduce unrealistic expectations about the job. Both groups indicated the DO-N was most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job. As opposed to prescriptive judgmental items, descriptive organizational items are much easier to identify. Furthermore, unless a problem is causing so much havoc that it affects productivity, organizations generally do not spend large sums of money to reduce these problems. For example, computer system problems affect most everyone in many types of organizations on a daily basis. Infrequently, computer problems can be a major problem (i.e., system shut-down) but more commonly, it is not generating a report needed on a time sensitive project or an e-mail correspondence was not transmitted without problems. Incumbents and decision-makers rarely have the power or funding to overhaul systems without being accountable to a budget and corporate personnel. Therefore, the negative measurable daily events experienced by incumbents and managers tend to present the most realistic picture. Furthermore, incumbents do not have the ability to improve or change the subjective work attitudes of their cohorts or managers. At best, they can improve upon their own work attitude and this improvement may contribute to

a positive work environment. Hence, both groups agree the DO-N preview presents the most realistic information to those in the applicant pool.

The fifth hypothesis stated that both decision-makers and incumbents would show a greater preference for the DO-N when asked which preview would reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization. Although significant results did not emerge, both groups indicated the DO-N was most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the organization. Both decision-makers and incumbents agreed the DO-N would reduce any overly positive expectations about the job or organization. It appears congruency exists between these two groups; negative items that can be measured (i.e., descriptive organizational issues) are rated far more important to those in the applicant pool, than those items which are difficult to measure and articulate (i.e., prescriptive judgmental).

The DO-N was preferred by both groups when considering how to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job and organization, and the PJ-N was rated lowest by both groups in all conditions. These findings offers support for the third psychological concept proposed by Breugh (1983) "air of honesty." Those in the applicant pool may perceive the company as honest if negative information is presented in the RJP. However, as Wanous (1989) suggests, many organizations are reluctant to present negative aspects of the job or company environment. The assumption can be made that both decision-makers and incumbents believe it would be easier to reduce unrealistic expectations with

descriptive organizational items found on a DO-N, such as “on occasion, our computer may create system errors, problems or even system shut-down” as opposed to a prescriptive judgmental items found on a PJ-N such as, “because it is rare when customers come to our facility, you may find the office environment is subject to tempers and attitudes which, otherwise, would not normally be displayed.”

Although a small sample size is reported and no significant differences between these two groups were found, a very clear pattern of within group preferences emerged. These identified patterns within groups argue for future research for several important reasons. As mentioned before, RJPs have received more attention over the past two decades than practically any recruiting issue (Bretz & Judge, 1998), yet studies involving RJPs which consider differences between decision-makers and incumbents are virtually non-existent.

Bretz and Judge (1998) found that those persons who are considered as the highest quality applicants (those with prior job experience) may be less likely to pursue jobs when negative information has been presented. Again, the results of this study indicate support for Bretz and Judge’s (1998) research finding. The positive previews were rated as the most optimal previews for applicants with prior work experience by both decision-makers and incumbents.

### Limitations

Two limitations to this study were the small sample size and the DO-N preview being rated as a judgmental preview by the students in the first

manipulation check. Although a field study lends to a lower response rate than a laboratory study, the response rate, in order, for Study 1 and Study 2 were 25% and 21%, respectively. Significant differences between decision-makers and incumbents RJP ratings are much more likely to be detected with an adequate sample size. A far less damaging limitation to this study was the DO-N preview being rated by students as a judgmental preview. As stated before, once this was detected through a manipulation check, a new preview was created using concrete descriptive items. Furthermore, this revised DO-N preview was used in Study 2.

### Implications for Future Research

This study contributes to the previous research conducted using RJP. Decision-makers rated the PJ-P as most optimal for the organization, the applicant with prior work experience and most realistic, while rating the DO-N as most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job or organization. Incumbents rated the DO-P as most optimal for the organization, the applicant with prior work experience, while rating the DO-N as most realistic, most likely to reduce unrealistic expectations about the job or organization.

Another important finding which emerged from this study is that both decision-makers and job incumbents consistently gave the lowest rating to the prescriptive judgmental-negative (PJ-N) preview. Vandenberg and Scarpello (1990) suggest organizational socialization processes are important as newcomers gather information about different facets of the job which enhance

employee adjustment and stability. Both groups rated the PJ-N as least optimal and the DO-N as most optimal for reducing “unrealistic” expectations about the organization and the job. Future research should consider how RJPs can be used to introduce some of the negative subtle issues in the work force to the newcomer. One possible suggestion is to combine both positive and negative descriptive items and positive and negative prescriptive items on two separate previews, respectively. In the future, research which combines issues considered in this study (i.e., descriptive, prescriptive, positive, and negative) will further contribute to understanding decision-makers’ and incumbents’ preferences for particular RJPs.

Some conclusions and theoretical implications which can be drawn from this study are indicated by within group preferences by decision-makers and incumbents. The decision-makers used in this study were managers (i.e., branch, operations, or sales) who had direct input into the personnel selection process. Wanous (1989) argued that acceptance by top management is likely to be forthcoming with descriptive, and/or positive items on the preview. Since managers in this study rated prescriptive positive items as most optimal for the organization and applicant with prior work experience, further research is necessary to better understand the discrepancy found in this study and Wanous’s (1989) argument. In addition, it can be concluded that descriptive organizational-negative items appear to reduce overly positive expectations about the organization and the job. The strongest argument for use of RJPs

indicates a reduction of overly positive expectations expressed by higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985; Premack & Wanous, 1985). Future research should consider which objective items should be included on the RJPs to further delineate the specific items beneficial to those in the applicant pool.

Research conducted on RJPs is extensive, and results often indicate the use of RJPs as an employee selection tool will benefit the employer (i.e., lower turnover) and employee (greater job satisfaction). This study adds value to the understanding of RJPs by introducing within group preferences by decision-makers and incumbents in terms of RJP content. Further research is needed to identify if preferences between other populations, affected by RJPs, exists.



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APPENDIX A  
RATING STATEMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR RATING STATEMENTS**  
**DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE READ**  
**THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS**

On the following 4 pages you will find 20 statements that reflect general ideas about customer relations. **You will be asked to rate each item three times.** Below each question you will find three blank lines for you to record your response.

The **FIRST** rating is asking you about the "realism" of these job tasks, that is, how much do you agree that the item is a current feature of your job you are expected to maintain.

The **SECOND** rating is asking you how important is is for a potential new employee to have a clear understanding of this aspect of your job.

The **THIRD** rating is asking you rate your opinion of the how positive or negative this item would be, if provided to a potential new employee.

**EXAMPLE:****SCALES**

1. The first rating should reflect how much you agree or disagree that this item is a current job feature you are expected to maintain.  
 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree Indifferent Agree Strongly Agree
2. The second rating should reflect how important it is for an applicant to have a clear understanding of this aspect of your job before making an employment decision.  
 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree Indifferent Agree Strongly Agree
3. The third rating should reflect your opinion of how positive or negative this information would be, if provided to an applicant, before making an employment decision.  
 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Extremely Negative Indifferent Positive Extremely Positive

**(EXAMPLE)**

1. **Before making an employment decision, applicants should be made aware of all job tasks, including those that are not generally part of their daily duties as a customer relations person (i.e., filing, cleaning the rest rooms, or maintenance work).**
  1. \_\_\_\_\_(7)\_\_\_\_\_ **current job characteristic**
  2. \_\_\_\_\_(9)\_\_\_\_\_ **important for new employee**
  3. \_\_\_\_\_(6)\_\_\_\_\_ **how positive or negative**

This means that for the first question on rating 1) you agree this item is expected of you at your job, on rating 2) you strongly agree this is important for a new employee and on rating 3) you believe this is somewhat positive information.

**SCALES**

1. The first rating should reflect how much you agree or disagree that this item is a current job feature that you are expected to maintain.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Indifferent Agree Strongly Agree

2. The second rating should reflect how important it is for a potential new employee to have a clear understanding of this aspect of your job.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree Disagree Indifferent Agree Strongly Agree

3. The third rating should reflect your opinion of how positive or negative this information would be, if provided to a potential new employee.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Extremely Negative Indifferent Positive Extremely Negative Positive

1. Before making an employment decision, applicants may be curious about interpersonal relationships with their immediate supervisor (level of interaction, communicate effectively, respond appropriately etc...).

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

2. Before making an employment decision, applicants may be curious about interpersonal relationships with co-workers (level of interaction, communicate effectively, respond appropriately etc...).

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

3. Before making an employment decision, applicants should have a good understanding of what is expected of them to fulfill their responsibilities.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

4. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about co-workers' work attitudes.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

5. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about the dress code they are expected to maintain.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative



SCALES

1. The first rating should reflect how much you agree or disagree that this item is a current job feature that you are expected to maintain.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree Indifferent Agree Strongly Agree

2. The second rating should reflect how important it is for a potential new employee to have a clear understanding of this aspect of your job.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree Indifferent Agree Strongly Agree

3. The third rating should reflect your opinion of how positive or negative this information would be, if provided to a potential new employee.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Extremely Negative Indifferent Positive Extremely Positive

6. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be given a basic understanding of their supervisor's interpersonal behaviors (tone of voice, non-verbal cues)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

7. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be told of the rude customers and the potential problems associated with servicing them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

8. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be told if there is a need to compete with co-workers.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

9. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about the office politics often found in organizations.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

10. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about the job tasks for which they are going to be held accountable.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
 2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

**SCALES**

1. The first rating should reflect how much you agree or disagree that this item reflects a true picture of your job.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree                      Disagree                      Indifferent                      Agree                      Strongly Agree

2. The second rating should reflect how important it is for a potential new employee to have a clear understanding of this aspect of your job.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Strongly Disagree                      Disagree                      Indifferent                      Agree                      Strongly Agree

3. The third rating should reflect your opinion of how positive or negative this information would be, if provided to a potential new employee.

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Extremely Negative                      Negative                      Indifferent                      Positive                      Extremely Positive

11. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about the company policies such as leave of absence, absenteeism, or vacation schedules.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

12. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about a supervisor's leadership style and how it can affect to office environment.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

13. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about the pros and cons of the computer operating system.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

14. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know the organizations policies regarding break-time, lunch hour, and possible overtime.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

15. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about possible friendships developed with the customers they service.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

**SCALES**

1. The first rating should reflect how much you agree or disagree that this item reflects a true picture of your job.
- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9
- Strongly Disagree                      Disagree                      Indifferent                      Agree                      Strongly Agree
2. The second rating should reflect how important it is for a potential new employee to have a clear understanding of this aspect of your job.
- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9
- Strongly Disagree                      Disagree                      Indifferent                      Agree                      Strongly Agree
3. The third rating should reflect your opinion of how positive or negative this information would be, if provided to a potential new employee.
- 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9
- Extremely Negative                      Negative                      Indifferent                      Positive                      Extremely Positive

16. Before making an employment decision, applicant should know they are expected to respond to a co-worker's demand.
1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative
17. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be told that there may be other job tasks they will be responsible to maintain, if the primary employee in that position were to be absent.
1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative
18. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know how the work atmosphere is affected by their co-workers.
1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative
19. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be made aware of company issues such as workplace violence and sexual harassment.
1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative
20. The level of company loyalty expected of a new employee should be expressed at the time of the interview.
1. \_\_\_\_\_ current job characteristic  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ important for new employee  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ how positive or negative

APPENDIX B  
DESCRIPTIVE-ORGANIZATIONAL EXAMPLES

## DESCRIPTIVE-ORGANIZATIONAL EXAMPLES INSTRUCTIONS

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE READ  
THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS

On the next two pages you will find 10 statements that reflect general ideas about customer relations.

You will be asked to provide two examples for each statement. One example should reflect a **positive** aspect about this particular job statement. The second example should reflect a **negative** aspect about this particular job statement.

Reflecting upon your prior interview process, you should try to create these example considering what you would have like to have known **prior** to making an employment decision.

To ensure confidentiality, **please** do not use a co-workers name (i.e., Dan or

**EXAMPLE**

**If the statement were to read:**

A new employee should be told that there could be a possibility they will have to travel.

**Your negative example may be something like this:**

I was not told that travel expectations would involve 70% of my working schedule and, often times, weekends.

**AND**

**Your positive example may be something like this:**

Although travel is necessary on occasion, 100% of my travel expenses are covered, plus extra spending money has accommodated my weekend stay-overs.

Carol) or a customer's name. Instead use a general title such as a position (i.e., manager, purchasing, CSR) or the term "co-worker" and Company X.

**PLEASE TURN THE PAGE TO BEGIN.**

Using your own personal, internal values and standards, please provide one **positive** and one **negative** example of each statement that you think a potential new employee should know when considering working for this company. A brief one or two line sentence should explain your point.

1. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should have a good understanding of what is expected of them to fulfill their responsibilities.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should know about the dress code they are expected to maintain.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should be told of the rude customers and the potential problems associated with servicing them.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. It is important for an applicant to know about company policies such as break-time, lunch hour, or possible overtime. What should they be told?

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should know about the job tasks for which they are going to be held accountable. What should they be told?

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should know about the job tasks relating to the computer system.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Issues concerning vacation, leave of absence, absenteeism should be discussed upon one's hire. However, these issues do not always meet previously held expectations prior to working for the company. What should an applicant really know?

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should know they are expected to respond to a co-worker's demand.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should be told that there may be other job tasks they will be responsible to maintain, if the primary employee in that position were to be absent.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Before making an employment decision, an applicant should be made aware of company issues such as workplace violence and sexual harassment.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C  
PRESCRIPTIVE-JUDGMENTAL EXAMPLES



## EXAMPLES INSTRUCTIONS

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE READ  
THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS

On the next two pages you will find 10 statements that reflect general ideas about customer relations.

You will be asked to provide two examples for each statement. One example should reflect a **positive** aspect about this particular job statement. The second example should reflect a **negative** aspect about this particular job statement.

Reflecting upon your prior interview process, you should try to create these example considering what you would have like to have known **prior** to making an employment decision.

To ensure confidentiality, **please** do not use a co-workers name (i.e., Dan or Carol) or a customer's name. Instead use a general title such as a position (i.e., manager, purchasing, CSR) or the term "co-worker" and Company X.

**EXAMPLE****If the statement were to read:**

A new employee should be told that there could be a possibility that they will have to travel.

**Your negative example may be something like this:**

I was not told that travel expectations would involve 70% of my working schedule and, often times, weekends.

**AND****Your positive example may be something like this:**

Although travel is necessary on occasion, 100% of my travel expenses are covered, plus extra spending money has accommodated my weekend stay-overs.

PLEASE TURN THE PAGE TO BEGIN.

Using your own personal, internal values and standards, please provide one **positive** and one **negative** example of each statement that you think a potential new employee should know when considering working for this company. A brief one or two line sentence should explain your point.

1. Before making an employment decision, applicants may be curious about interpersonal relationships with their immediate supervisor (level of interaction, communicate effectively, respond appropriately etc...).

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Before making an employment decision, applicants may be curious about interpersonal relationships with co-workers (level of interaction, communicate effectively, respond appropriately etc...).

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about co-workers' work attitudes.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be given a basic understanding of their supervisor's interpersonal behaviors (tone of voice, non-verbal cues)

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. Before making an employment decision, applicants should be told if there is a need to compete with co-workers. What does a new employee really need to know?

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about the commotion some customers can potentially create when they are dissatisfied with service.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about a supervisor's leadership style and how it can affect to office environment.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know about possible friendships developed with the customers they service.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Before making an employment decision, applicants should know how the work atmosphere is affected by their co-workers.

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. The level of company loyalty expected of a new employee should be expressed at the time of the interview. What should a new employee be told?

Positive: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX D  
REALISTIC JOB PREVIEWS

A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW  
DESCRIPTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL- POSITIVE - DO - P

1A

A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW

**The Routine Tasks:**

The vast majority of customer relations work consists of routine tasks. You will interact with customers, take their orders for merchandise, and process these orders through a computer networking system. Other tasks may include identifying customer needs, making suggestions for problem solving, preparing sales proposals, checking quantities of on-hand inventory, handling unexpected delays of shipment and purchasing inventory on a schedule or, in some cases, an emergency type basis.

**The Risks and Challenges:**

Employees are expected to assume the job tasks of an absent employee whenever possible so that the service to the customer is maintained. Whenever possible, you will be provided with advance notice of these additional duties. Compensation in addition to your normal salary may be an option if additional work duties continues for a long duration of time. Possibilities of additional pay will be discussed on an individual basis with your immediate supervisor. In general, good attendance will warrant time requested off with few questions asked. This is a very important position for the success of the company. We hope that any time needed for leave of absence, absenteeism, or vacation days would be scheduled with a reasonable advance notice so that we may maintain customer service with minimal disturbances. You will be provided in writing, all company policies.

Our company promotes a comfortable and safe work place, free of violence and sexual harassment. Every attempt is put forth to educate and train our employees on issues such as these. Although we do not have a specific dress code, employees are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for their position. The employee's clothing must compliment the professionalism of the organization.

**With this understanding, you should be able to answer:**

"Am I the type of person that will be an effective customer relations person?"

A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW  
DESCRIPTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL- NEGATIVE - DO - N

**1B****A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW****The Routine Tasks:**

The vast majority of customer relations work consists of routine tasks. You will interact with customers, take their orders for merchandise, and process these orders through a computer networking system. Other tasks may include identifying customer needs, making suggestions for problem solving, preparing sales proposals, checking quantities of on-hand inventory, handling unexpected delays of shipment and purchasing inventory on a schedule or, in some cases, an emergency type basis.

**The Risks and Challenges:**

Our computer system requires an overall knowledge of the operating system. Some menus have codes that are not used due to their unknown purpose or meaning. On occasion, you may encounter the system errors, problems, or even system shut-down.

The long periods of routine tasks will often be suddenly interrupted by an urgent call. You will need to prioritize the severity of the call and ensure the appropriate response. Other emergencies may include situations in which low inventory requires you to stop your routine and create rush purchase orders while making high demands on other personnel, branches, or even manufactures.

In addition, employees are reminded that a customer may be under the pressure of meeting a production deadline. Often, under these conditions, there are some demanding customers that may blame you for merchandise not being shipped on-time, even if it was clearly not you or your organization's fault. In these cases you are to operate in a professional manner such that our customer's needs are maintained.

**With this understanding, you should be able to answer:**

**"Am I the type of person that will be an effective customer relations person?"**

A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW  
PRESCRIPTIVE JUDGMENTAL- POSITIVE - PJ - P

1C

**A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW**

**The Routine Tasks:**

The vast majority of customer relations work consists of routine tasks. You will interact with customers, take their orders for merchandise, and process these orders through a computer networking system. Other tasks may include identifying customer needs, making suggestions for problem solving, preparing sales proposals, checking quantities of on-hand inventory, handling unexpected delays of shipment and purchasing inventory on a schedule or, in some cases, an emergency type basis.

**The Risks and Challenges:**

We have an open door policy and you will find that advice flows freely. You are encouraged to develop a good working relationship with your immediate supervisor. You should feel free to talk to you supervisor about any concerns or opinions you may have. In addition, the co-workers are great! They are willing to share their knowledge and will make you feel right at home. Your company loyalty is expected to be undivided, that is, all company business should be kept confidential to ensure our success in the market place. This also means that if you believe improvements could be made in this area we keep an opened mind to your expressed opinions and feelings.

**With this understanding, you should be able to answer:**

“Am I the type of person that will be an effective customer relations person?”

A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW  
PRESCRIPTIVE JUDGMENTAL- NEGATIVE - PJ - N

1D

**A REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW**

**The Routine Tasks:**

The vast majority of customer relations work consists of routine tasks. You will interact with customers, take their orders for merchandise, and process these orders through a computer networking system. Other tasks may include identifying customer needs, making suggestions for problem solving, preparing sales proposals, checking quantities of on-hand inventory, handling unexpected delays of shipment and purchasing inventory on a schedule or, in some cases, an emergency type basis.

**The Risks and Challenges:**

Because it is rare when customers come to our facility, you may find the office environment has a "loose" atmosphere. Although this may sound inviting, it also means you are more subject to tempers and attitudes which, otherwise, would not normally be displayed. In addition, most of our managers are also sales representatives for the company, their frequent absences may cause the office to be in state of turmoil at times. You are expected to remain a professional under these circumstances. Other areas of professionalism expected involve relationships established with our customers. Although we encourage you to develop a professional relationship with our customers; socialization, such as happy hours or dating, is strongly discouraged. Interactions at this level, in the past, have created a loss in business and "intimate friendship" may encourage the customer to ask for "unrealistic favors".

**With this understanding, you should be able to answer:**

"Am I the type of person that will be an effective customer relations person?"



APPENDIX E  
REALISTIC JOB PREVIEW RATINGS

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE READ  
THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS

**Please state your current position held at this company: \_\_\_\_\_**

Before you begin answering any questions, please locate the #10 envelope which contains examples of Realistic Job Previews. You will be asked to answer a one page questionnaire about each Realistic Job Preview. These four different examples have an alpha-numeric code (i.e., 1A) that can be found on the upper-right-hand corner of each preview for identification purposes only. **Although the material found under the label "Routine Tasks" is identical, the content found under "Risks and Challenges" is varied.** Before you begin to answer the questionnaires, **please review each preview carefully** so that you have a basic understanding of the four previews.

**Note: Questions 1 - 5 are identical on all four rating sheets. Be sure you are looking at the specified preview when answering each question.**

**Question 1** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most optimal for the organization.

**Question 2** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most optimal for an applicant with prior work experience.

**Question 3 - 5** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most realistic.

There are no right or wrong answers. Therefore, please answer the questionnaires in such a way that it reflects your own personal, internal values and standards. **At all times, be sure you are looking at the specified RJP being questioned.**

After you have completed the four questionnaires pertaining to the Realistic Job Previews, please answer the three questions on the yellow sheet of paper.

Thank-you for your time and your participation in this study.

**You may now turn to the next page to begin.**

Please locate the Preview labeled **1A** and answer the following questions.

**Question 1** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most optimal for the organization.

**Question 2** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most optimal for an applicant with prior work experience.

**Question 3 - 5** are asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most realistic.

**Using the scale provided below, please rate the preview labeled 1A.**

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9  
 Strongly Disagree                      Disagree                      Neutral                      Agree                      Strongly Agree

1. I believe Preview **1A** is the most optimal preview for **the organization** to use.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Your response
2. Prior to making an employment decision, I believe Preview **1A** is the most optimal preview for **an applicant with prior work experience in this industry**.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Your response
3. When considering all four of the previews, I believe Preview **1A** presents the most realistic picture and should be used in the future.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Your response
4. Often an applicant, with or without prior experience, will have unrealistic expectations about a **job**. When considering all four of the previews, I believe Preview **1A** presents the most realistic picture and should reduce any unrealistic expectations about **the job** before making an employment decision.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Your response
5. Often an applicant, with or without prior experience, will have unrealistic expectations about an **organization**. When considering all four of the previews, I believe Preview **1A** presents the most realistic picture and should reduce any unrealistic expectations about **the organization** before making an employment decision.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Your response

APPENDIX F  
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

INCUMBENTS, FIRST MAILING

**Information collected on this sheet will not be associated with your responses. This information is useful only to better understand the demographic characteristics of those who volunteered to participate.**

**Do not sign your name on this sheet!**

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am a  
 male  
 female
3. I am  
 African American  
 Asian  
 Hispanic  
 White Caucasian  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_
4. My current position is:  
 supervisor/manager  
 customer service  
 purchasing  
 sales  
 accounting  
 other
5. How long have you  
 been employed with this company: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ mos.  
 been working in customer relations: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ mos.  
 been working in this industry: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ mos.
6. My branch location is: City \_\_\_\_\_
9. As a supervisor/manager I currently have \_\_\_\_\_ full or part-time  
 employees under my direct supervision.  
 Number
- 9a. Of this number of employees, how many work in these specific  
 customer relation areas?  
 Customer service? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Purchasing? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Accounts Receivable? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sales? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other? \_\_\_\_\_ (Please list the position)

*Thank you for participating in this study.*

INCUMBENTS AND DECISION-MAKERS, SECOND MAILING

Information collected on this sheet will not be associated with your responses. This information is useful only to better understand the demographic characteristics of those who volunteered to participate.

**Do not sign your name on this sheet!**

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
2. I am a
  - male
  - female
3. I am
  - African American
  - Asian
  - Hispanic
  - White Caucasian
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
4. My current position is:
  - supervisor/manager
  - customer service
  - purchasing
  - sales
  - accounting
  - other
5. How long have you
  - been employed with this company: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ mos.
  - been working in customer relations: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ mos.
  - been working in this industry: \_\_\_\_\_ years and \_\_\_\_\_ mos.
6. My branch location is: City \_\_\_\_\_
7. As a supervisor/manager I currently have \_\_\_\_\_ full or part-time
 

Number

 employees under my direct supervision.
  - 7a. Of this number of employees, how many work in these specific customer relation areas?
    - Customer service? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Purchasing? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Accounting? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Sales? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Office (Clerical) \_\_\_\_\_
    - Warehouse/Delivery? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Technical Support? \_\_\_\_\_
    - Other? \_\_\_\_\_ (Please list the position)

*Thank you for participating in this study.*

APPENDIX G  
APPROVAL LETTER FROM  
OWNER OF COMPANY

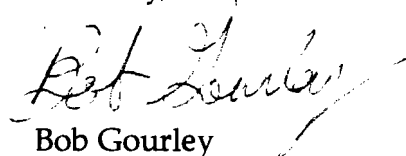
February 22, 1999

Terri L. Bober  
1638 Somerset Ridge  
Fenton, MO 63026

Dear Terri,

This letter extends my permission for you to contact those persons who are employees of ABV Graphics and Lawrence Imaging Systems such that you may collect data on Realistic Job Previews via mail surveys. I understand that each employee has been informed of their confidentiality and that their participation is strictly voluntary. There will be no record of any employees' name, data, or responses reported to me or any other person in this organization.

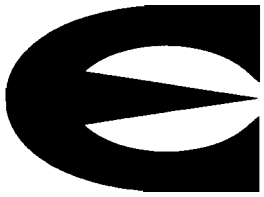
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob Gourley".

Bob Gourley  
Chairman, Heartland Imaging Systems



APPENDIX H  
APPROVAL LETTER FROM  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD



# EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

1200 Commercial  
Emporia, Kansas  
66801-5087

316-341-5351  
316-341-5909 fax  
www.emporia.edu

GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH  
RESEARCH AND GRANTS CENTER  
Campus Box 4003

March 9, 1999

Terri Bober  
1638 Somerset Ridge  
Fenton, MO 63026

Dear Ms. Bober:

The Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects has evaluated your application for approval of human subject research entitled, "An examination of realistic job previews as perceived by personnel decision makers and job incumbents." The review board approved your application which will allow you to begin your research with subjects as outlined in your application materials.

Best of luck in your proposed research project. If the review board can help you in any other way, don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Timothy M. Downs, Ph.D.  
Dean, Graduate Studies and Research

pf

cc: Dr. Brian Schrader

APPENDIX I  
TRANSMITTAL LETTER

## INCUMBENTS, FIRST MAILING

February 22, 1999

Dear ABV/LIS Employee,

I am a graduate student at Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas. I am working towards my masters degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. As partial fulfillment of my degree requirements, I am conducting a thesis project for which I am requesting your participation.

This study is intended to examine what characteristics of the job you consider to be important for an applicant to be aware of before making a decision to work for your organization. If you are willing to participate, please fill out the enclosed informed consent. Your informed consent will be kept separate from your responses, therefore, your confidentiality will be maintained. Please be as honest as possible in your response since I am interested in clearly understanding what the job incumbent actually perceives as important job features to a potential new employee. The entire questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Since this is a two-part study, you may receive a similar letter, informed consent sheet, and request for participation, please do not ignore this second mailing believing you have already completed the request. Your participation in the second mailing will be very important to the entire study.

It is VERY important that you do not discuss your participation to anyone until the study is completed. What this means is that all information about this study should be kept completely confidential by myself, as the researcher, and by you as a participant..

I have contacted Mr. Bob Gourley and he has given his permission for my request of your participation. Although permission has been given for me to conduct this study, there is no possible way I could identify an individual's response. In addition, you should be informed that NO ONE, but myself, will see your responses. Since many of you may know me or my husband, John, it is important that you understand he knows no details of this study, as he may very well be a participant like yourself. I would greatly appreciate your response to be completed and returned in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelop **by March 5, 1999**. Furthermore, **do not identify yourself** on any form other than then enclosed informed consent. I realize your schedule is busy and your time is valuable, but your response will help further explain the process of employee selection.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this research, you may contact me at (314) 349 - 5334. I want to thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Terri L. Bober  
Graduate Student

## INCUMBENTS AND DECISION -MAKERS, SECOND MAILING

April 29, 1999

Dear ABV/LIS Manager & Employee,

I am a graduate student at Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas. I am working towards my masters degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. As partial fulfillment of my degree requirements, I am conducting a thesis project for which I am requesting your participation.

This study is intended to examine which realistic job preview should be used when interviewing an applicant for a position in customer relations. If you are willing to participate, your responses will be kept completely confidential. Your informed consent will be kept separate from your responses, as such, your confidentiality will be maintained. Therefore, please be as honest as possible in your response since I am interested in clearly understanding the effects of a realistic job preview in an actual workplace setting. The entire questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Since this is a two-part study, you may have received a similar letter, informed consent sheet, and request for participation, **please do not ignore this second mailing** believing you have already completed the request. **You are encouraged to participate in this second mailing, even if you did not participate in the first part of this study! Your participation in this second mailing is *very important* to the entire study.**

Some of you may think you are personally associated with the actual survey you complete. However, for two reasons, this could not be further from the truth. First, I am required by the American Psychological Association (APA) and APA's Division #14 Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychologist to follow a code of ethics for conducting research. One of these ethical codes prohibits me from identifying anyone's individual response. Second, I personally have promised you confidentiality and I am not interested in any single individual's response. **I am very interested in obtaining a high response rate** so that my statistical data will have greater validity. I have enclosed a copy of a letter from Bob Gourley stating that **any data collected will not be recorded or reported to him or any other person in your organization.** Under these conditions, **please take the few minutes to participate in this study. Furthermore, do not identify yourself on any form other than the enclosed informed consent.** I realize your schedule is busy and your time is valuable, but your response will help further explain the process of employee selection.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this research, you may contact me at (314) 349 - 5334. **I want to thank you in advance for your support and cooperation.**

Sincerely,

Terri L. Bober  
Graduate Student

APPENDIX J  
INFORMED CONSENT

INCUMBENTS, FIRST MAILING

**Read this consent form very carefully.**

You are invited to participate in a study investigating realistic job previews, an employee selection tool. This data collection session will ask you to complete a survey which concerns customer relation issues. You will also be asked to complete a simple questionnaire with regard to demographic characteristics. The total process should take about 20 minutes.

Information obtained in this study will be identified only by the code number on the upper-right hand corner of an manila envelope you will receive. Your name will never be used in this study and you are not associated with this code number. You are to return only this informed consent form in the white letter size envelope. This will ensure your confidentiality in this study. **All other materials should be returned in the self-addressed, stamped, manila envelop, provided.**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to terminate your participation, you are welcome to do so at any point in this study. There is no risk or discomfort involved in completing this study.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, feel free to contact Terri Bober, (314) 349 - 5334.

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the requested information and mail to the researcher **NO LATER THAN March 5, 1999.**

Thank you for your participation and remember do not identify yourself on any other form but this one. Mail all other information in the manila envelop, provided.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the above information and have  
print your name  
 decided to participate in the present study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw, should I choose to discontinue participation, at anytime without prejudice after signing this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 signature of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
 date

**This project has been reviewed and approved by the Emporia State University Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects for the protection and use of human subjects.**

## STUDENTS, MANIPULATION CHECK

**Read this consent form very carefully.**

You are invited to participate in a study investigating realistic job previews, an employee selection tool. This is a two-part data collection session. **FIRST**, you will review four different realistic job previews and answer two questions about each preview. **SECOND**, You will be asked to put yourself in a manager's position and answer 6 simple questions about each realistic job preview. The total process should not take more than 30 minutes.

Your name will never be used in this study, therefore, you can be sure of complete confidentiality in this study. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to terminate your participation, you are welcome to do so at any point in this study. However, you must complete both sections of this study in order to receive a participation slip which provides class credit. There is no risk or discomfort involved in completing this study.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, feel free to contact Terri Bober, (314) 349 - 5334.

Thank you for your participation.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the above information and have  
print your name  
 decided to participate in the present study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw, should I choose to discontinue participation, at anytime without prejudice after signing this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 signature of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
 date

**This project has been reviewed and approved by the Emporia State University Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects for the protection and use of human subjects.**



INCUMBENTS AND DECISION-MAKERS, SECOND MAILING

**Read this consent form very carefully.**

You are invited to participate in a study investigating realistic job previews (RJPs). This data collection session will ask you to rate **four different** types of realistic job previews. You will also be asked to complete a simple questionnaire with regard to demographic characteristics. The total process should not take more than 20 minutes.

Your name will never be used in this study and you are not associated with any code number. You are to return **only** this informed consent form in the white letter size envelope. This will ensure your confidentiality in this study.

Due to postage costs, please **do not return the realistic job previews. Only the four questionnaires (survey) and the yellow sheet should be returned in the self-addressed, stamped, manila envelope, provided.**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Should you wish to terminate your participation, you are welcome to do so at any point in this study. There is no risk or discomfort involved in completing this study.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, feel free to contact Terri Bober, (314) 349 - 5334.

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the requested information and mail to the researcher **NO LATER THAN May 15, 1999.**

Thank you for your participation.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the above information and have  
print your name  
 decided to participate in the present study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw, should I choose to discontinue participation, at anytime without prejudice after signing this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 signature of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
 date

**This project has been reviewed and approved by the Emporia State University Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects for the protection and use of human subjects.**

APPENDIX K  
STUDENT MANIPULATION  
AND COMPREHENSION CHECK

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE READ  
THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS

**What is your current school status: (circle one)**

Freshman    Sophomore    Junior    Senior

**What is your Sex: (circle one)**

Male    Female

**What is your age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This is a two part study.** The following instructions pertain ONLY to the FIRST part of this study. Once you have completed this portion of the study you are to place the material in the manila envelop provided and return it to the researcher in the room. At this time, the researcher will provide you with a second manila envelope which contain instructions for the second portion of this study. After you have completed **BOTH** portions of this study you will receive a participation slip stating as such for class credit.

The following information contains examples of Realistic Job Previews. You will find the Realistic Job Previews in an envelope marked accordingly. You are NOT to turn these in with the first part of this study. You will be required to use them with the second part of this study, as well. Therefore, **RETURN THE REALISTIC JOB PREVIEWS WITH THE SECOND PORTION OF THIS STUDY.**

The content under these four different examples are labeled 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D for identification purposes only. Although the material found under the label "Routine Tasks" is identical, the content found under "Risks and Challenges" is varied. You will find a one page questionnaire about these four Realistic Job Preview examples. The questionnaire is asking you to state to what degree you believe the specified preview is descriptive organizational issues, prescriptive judgmental issues, or not sure. (See definitions of each at the top of the page).

Also, this questionnaire asks you to determine the degree to which you perceive the item content as positive or negative (1 = Extremely Negative, 3 = Negative, 5 = Indifferent, 7 = Positive, 9 = Extremely Positive).

Please answer the items in such a way that it reflects **your own opinion**. At all times, be sure you are looking at the specified RJP alpha-numeric code that can be found found on the upper-right-hand corner of each preview for identification purposes only.

**Before you begin to answer the questionnaire, please review each preview carefully so that you have a basic understanding of the four previews before answering the questions.**

Thank-you for your time and your participation in this study.  
**You may now turn to the next page to begin.**

1. After reviewing the realistic job preview labeled **1D** read the descriptions of a Descriptive-Organizational Issue and Prescriptive-Judgmental Issues and circle which best describes that specific preview. Your choices are Organizational, Judgmental, or not sure.
2. Using the scale provided, determine if the content on each preview is positive, negative or neutral.

### **Definitions**

#### **Descriptive-Organizational Issues**

Descriptive or Organizational issues are considered to be objective items which pertain to the organization's expectations of employees. More specifically, the RJP contains information about the job (nature of the work) or its context (work setting, pay, etc.). Descriptive organizational content may contain items which are specific job conditions, hours of work, and compensation, average length of time until a promotion.

#### **Prescriptive-Judgmental Issues**

Although not as easily defined because of the subjectivity, Prescriptive or Judgmental aspects of the job entail personnel characteristics that satisfy and dissatisfy employees (interpersonal relations in the office, co-workers' socialization processes, overall attitudes towards direct supervisor.) Prescriptive-judgmental factors are typically what occurs early in the socialization process at work and influences the subsequent attitudes and behaviors of newcomers.

### **Rating of Realistic Job Preview 1D**

1. Realistic Job Preview **1D** is: (circle one)

Organizational

Judgmental

Not Sure

2. Realistic Job Preview **1D** is: (circle a number)

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9  
 Extremely Negative                      Indifferent                      Positive                      Extremely Positive

### **Keep the Realistic Job Previews.**

Place all other materials in the manila envelope and return this first portion of the study to the researcher.

You will be given the second portion of this study at this time.

DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE READ  
THE ENTIRE INSTRUCTIONS

This is a two part study. The following instructions pertain **ONLY** to the **SECOND** part of this study. You should have already completed the first portion of this study; if not, please see the researcher in the room.

The following information contains examples of Realistic Job Previews. These four different examples have an alpha-numeric code (i.e., 1A, 1B) that can be found on the upper-right-hand corner of each preview for identification purposes only. Attached to each of these four examples is a one page questionnaire. Although the material found under the label "Routine Tasks" is identical, the content found under "Risks and Challenges" is varied. **Before you begin to answer the questionnaires, please review each preview carefully** so that you have a basic understanding of the four previews before answering the questionnaires.

**NOTE: Questions 1 - 5 are identical on all four rating sheets. Be sure you are looking at the specified preview when answering each question.**

**Question 1 & 2** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most optimal for the organization or the applicant with prior work experience.

**Question 3 - 5** is asking you to state the degree to which you view a specific preview as most realistic.

Try imagine that your are in the position of a manager who would make employee selection decisions. Please answer the items in such a way that it reflects your own personal, internal values and standards. At all times, be sure you are looking at the specified RJP alpha-numeric code that can be found found on the upper-right-hand corner of each preview for identification purposes only.

After completing the second portion, finalize your participation by answering three final questions on the **yellow** piece of paper. When you are finished, you are to place the material in the manila envelop provided and return it to the researcher. At this time, you have completed the current research project and the researcher will provide you with a participation slip for class credit.

Thank-you for your time and your participation in this study.  
**You may now turn to the next page to begin.**

APPENDIX L  
FINAL QUESTIONS AND COMPREHENSION CHECK

**Only after** you have completed each questionnaire, please return to this page and answer these final three questions.

1. Using the numbers (1, 2, 3, or 4, ) rank the following four realistic job preview in order, describing which preview was most and which preview was least preferred. (1) indicates the most preferred preview, (4) indicates the least preferred preview. **You can only use each number only one time.**

RJP 1A        \_\_\_\_\_  
RJP 1B        \_\_\_\_\_  
RJP 1C        \_\_\_\_\_  
RJP 1D        \_\_\_\_\_

2. Using 1A, 1B, 1C, and/or 1D, please list the two previews which you feel contains the most negative information about the company

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel you understand all the instructions and questions asked throughout this packet and are able to answer them in an honest and accurate manner?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES    \_\_\_\_\_ NO

***Thank you for your participation in this study***

I, Terri Lynn Bober, hereby submit this thesis to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available to use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

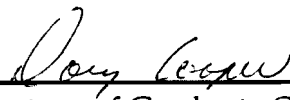


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Signature of Author

August 16, 1999  
Date

An Examination of Realistic Job  
Previews by Personnel Decision-makers  
and Job Incumbents

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Thesis

  
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Signature of Graduate Office Staff

August 24, 1999  
Date Received