



Western Michigan University
ScholarWorks at WMU

Masters Theses

Graduate College

12-1990

How Work Experience Affects Personnel Selection

Donna T. Klein
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses



Part of the Industrial and Organizational Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation

Klein, Donna T., "How Work Experience Affects Personnel Selection" (1990). *Masters Theses*. 1037.
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/1037

This Masters Thesis-Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



HOW WORK EXPERIENCE AFFECTS
PERSONNEL SELECTION

by

Donna T. Klein

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts
Department of Psychology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
December 1990

HOW WORK EXPERIENCE AFFECTS PERSONNEL SELECTION

Donna T. Klein, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 1990

The literature concerning how work experience affects personnel selection for recent college graduates is reviewed and found to be unimpressive. This present study was designed to analyze employers' perceptions of work experience when considering recent college graduates for employment. A survey consisting of three résumés was reviewed by 56 small businesses (employing 100 or fewer people). The three résumés differed with respect to one of the part-time jobs: an internship, work related to field of study, or non-related work experience. The results showed that an internship was consistently rated better at the 0.05 level over related/nonintern and non-related work experiences. It is concluded that people which have internships while in college may increase their chances of obtaining a job after graduation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank foremost, my chairperson, Dr. Jack Asher, for his continued support and guidance. My deep appreciation goes to the members of my committee, Drs. Wayne Fugua and Richard Malott, for their patience and support throughout this project. Special consideration is due Harry Carswell for his unending encouragement and for the many influential conversations we have had. Thanks are extended to Gary Belleville from Student Employment Referral Service, Western Michigan University for his idea to do such a project. Finally, I would like to thank my parents, the late William Klein and Olga Popolizio Klein, for their interest and belief in me.

Donna T. Klein

INFORMATION TO USERS

The most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this manuscript from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

U·M·I

University Microfilms International
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600

Order Number 1342629

How work experience affects personnel selection

Klein, Donna Theresa, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 1990

U·M·I

300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. METHOD	8
Subjects	8
Materials	8
Variables	10
Experimental Design	12
III. RESULTS	14
IV. DISCUSSION	23
APPENDICES	
A. Human Subjects Protection	27
B. Job Description	30
C. Three Résumés	32
D. Demographic Information	36
E. Survey	38
F. Personnel Manager Letter	40
BIBLIOGRAPHY	42

LIST OF TABLES

1.	Summary of Mean Scores for the Three Résumés	15
2.	Summary of Median Scores for the Three Résumés	17
3.	ANOVA: Mean Likelihood Scores for the Three Résumés	18
4.	ANOVA: Mean Qualification Scores for the Three Résumés	19
5.	Tukey Method Test Results: Mean Likelihood Scores for the Three Résumés	21
6.	Tukey Method Test Results: Mean Qualification Scores for the Three Résumés	22

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Most people go to college in the hope of securing good employment upon graduation. Securing employment after college, however, may pose problems for some new graduates. Many graduates feel that because they have bachelor's degrees, employers should be more than willing to hire them. Many graduates fail to realize that much more is involved in a personnel manager's decision than knowing a person has a degree. One factor affecting a personnel manager's decision is the applicant's experience in the field under consideration.

Colleges offer opportunity for students to obtain practical experience relating to their fields of study by providing internship programs. These programs tend to be one-time experiences within an established organization and generally involve receiving college credit. The National Commission for Cooperative Education recently started a national advertising campaign stressing to college students the importance of obtaining internships before graduating (Mosser, 1990).

Many researchers (Cohen & Pfeffer, 1987; Hafer & Hoth, 1980, 1983; Kohn, 1975; Skeegan, 1985; Stevens, 1981) have

studied the criteria used by personnel managers when selecting people for available positions. However, the evidence to support work experience (including related experience such as internships) as a significant factor in the hiring decision has been less than impressive. Only Kohn's (1975) research which used a survey format showed a possible trend in which experience becomes important as the organization's size decreases. All the above researchers surveyed organizations employing 200 people or more, but there is little evidence that their results can be generalized to small organizations. In fact, Cohen and Pfeffer (1987) warn against generalizing the results to smaller businesses. What is considered a small business? According to Granovetter (1984), organizations consisting of 100 or fewer employees are considered small businesses. Research on businesses of this size has been inadequate.

This current study will survey the relative importance of work experience to small businesses when they evaluate applicants who are recent college graduates. In one Southwestern Michigan county alone, over 85% of the businesses that are members of the Chamber of Commerce are considered small businesses and employ 73% of the work force for the county.

While many researchers have studied selection criteria (e.g., Cohen & Pfeffer, 1987; Skeegan, 1985; Stevens, 1981), only Kohn (1975), Hafer and Hoth (1980, 1983), and

Taylor (1987) have found work experience an important criterion.

Kohn (1975) surveyed 50 businesses that employed 200 people or more. Of these 50 surveys, 35 were returned. He separated these employers by type of business, such as retail, manufacturer, food, and service. The survey consisted of a list of criteria from which the employer was to choose the five criteria he considered most important, then rank them in importance from 1 to 5. The overall rankings from most important to least important were: general appearance, future potential, personality, communication ability, and academic achievement.

Kohn (1975) noticed that some characteristics differed with the size of the organization. The larger the organization, the more important academic achievements and communication ability were and the less important work experience was. Although these findings reflect similar findings in other studies, Kohn's data were inconsistent. Not all 35 employers chose five characteristics. Those who did choose appeared to have difficulty in ranking them. Another problem was the lack of definitions for the criteria. Some of the criteria, such as assertiveness and personality, can be extremely subjective. This and other studies using criteria lists did not take into account the differing interpretations the individual filling out the questionnaire brought into his or her decision-making.

Hafer and Hoth's (1980, 1983) study expanded Kohn's (1975) study by increasing the number of criteria used. They surveyed not only employers, but also students to find out what they perceive businesses believe are important characteristics. The industries studied ranged from manufacturing to public service. Most of the organizations researched had nine or more branch offices and were considered to be national firms. A Likert scale was employed to identify preferences of 26 characteristics. The 55 businesses surveyed utilized college recruitment offices. Of these, 37 returned the survey. The results indicated that work experience was categorized as a neutral characteristic, but it ranked higher than extracurricular activities, the school attended, and grades, which also were considered neutral.

Hafer and Hoth's (1980, 1983) study lacked objective definitions for its criteria. These results, therefore, may not be as valid as they could be, although the criteria used were more specific than in Kohn's (1975) study.

Dipboye, Fromkin, and Wiback (1975) minimized confounding variables by using résumés to identify variations of specific characteristics. Dipboye et al. (1975) looked at the importance of the applicant's sex, attractiveness, and scholastic standing in the evaluation of résumés by recruiters. The researcher surveyed 30 recruiters. The recruiters were given a job description

of the position and 12 résumés, each containing a photograph of the applicant. Each résumé was rated for the strength of the interviewer's recommendations. Dipboye et al. (1975) concluded that the higher the grade point average, the more favorable the recommendations were. However, the recruiters' recommendations also were influenced by the physical attractiveness and sex of the candidates. The recruiters more often recommended attractive males than any other group of candidates. The group that was least recommended consisted of unattractive females. The study pointed out that the position for which the candidates were being considered was in a male-dominated occupation, which may have contributed to the preference for male candidates.

Cash, Gillen, and Burns (1977) concluded similar results in terms of sex role stereotypes in the decision-making process. They suggested that the sex of the applicant plays an important factor in the decision making of different occupations despite Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Cash et al., 1977).

The second half of Taylor's (1987) study focused on internship experience in relation to employment opportunities. A résumé-style survey was used for 101 recruiters. Three different résumés were used. The information on the résumés was held constant in all areas (e.g., grade point average, work experience, and career objective) except the

presence or absence of an internship in place of one of the part-time jobs. The results showed that employers were more likely to hire new graduates who had an internship than new graduates without this experience. However, the part-time jobs stated on the résumés involved a small degree of responsibility, which may have confounded the results.

That study indicated that an internship is an important factor in job offers, but the likelihood of obtaining an internship is small. Last year at a large midwestern university, approximately only 10% of the 2000 students searching for internships were successful in finding internships. The question here is: Is the word "internship" the positive factor or is the related work experience the important factor in the employers' decision-making process? Another issue is the size of the organization sampled. Taylor's (1987) study does not note the size of the organization as a factor.

The studies of larger organizations have shown that smaller organizations may have different criteria for selection. For example, work experience is more important in smaller organizations than in larger ones.

To what extent is work experience (whether it is related or not related to the student's field of study) a factor in the selection process? Is it important for a college student to obtain work experience that is related,

or is any type of work experience enough to make the student competitive in the job market?

This current study will replicate the second half of Taylor's (1987) study, which used a résumé-style survey to study the employment decision-making process as it relates to internships and their relative importance in obtaining employment offers. However, this study will focus more closely on three variations of work experience--an internship, related/nonintern experience, and general work experience--and how each experience affects personnel selection within small organizations (100 or fewer employees) using a generic job description.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

Approximately 100 small businesses, who were randomly selected in a Southwestern Michigan county area, that employ 100 or fewer people and are members of the Chamber of Commerce were surveyed. Small businesses that are not members of the Chamber of Commerce and self-employed people who have no need to hire were not surveyed.

To ensure confidentiality of the employers, the surveys were sent to the personnel department with precautions taken with the return mail. Before the survey was distributed to the employers, it was reviewed by the University's Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, for possible adverse impact (see Appendix A).

Materials

A generic job description was written with materials available at the Career Resource Center at the University (see Appendix B) so that employers evaluating the résumés would be looking at the same qualifications.

A survey consisting of a cover letter, demographic questionnaire, a job description and three résumés with evaluation sheets was sent to a sample of small businesses in the area. These résumés conformed as closely as possible to actual student résumés obtained from the placement office at the University. To preclude the employers' identifying the variable being analyzed, the résumés, although consistent, had slight variations. Each applicant had a nonspecific career objective, a grade point average of approximately 3.4, and a bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a major in Accounting and a minor in General Business. The applicants had memberships in one organization and one club and had two or three other interests. Each applicant also had three part-time work experiences while in college. Of these, one part-time experience differed significantly among the three résumés.

The work experiences were equal in responsibility, such as the attention to detail, responsibility for money, and customer contact. The work experiences, however, did differ significantly in form: an internship, related/nonintern work experience, and general work experience (see Appendix C).

A questionnaire attached to the survey asked demographic information of the individual and the organization (see Appendix D).

Another questionnaire attached to each of the three résumés asked the employer to rate the résumés on several dimensions (see Appendix E). The first half of the dimensions consisted of rating the characteristics of the résumés from poor to excellent. These characteristics were: career objective, activities/interests, overall work experience, leadership abilities, and responsibility level. The second half of the dimensions consisted of the employers' ratings from least likely to extremely likely using a Likert scale. These actions were: the likelihood of keeping the résumé on file, the likelihood of referring it to the relevant department, the likelihood of having the applicant come in for an interview, the likelihood of having the applicant visit the work site, and the likelihood of extending a job offer.

An introductory letter accompanied the survey to explain the purpose of the research and the extent of the employers' involvement and to assure confidentiality (see Appendix F). The introductory letter was written on Student Employment Service's from the University official letterhead to provide credibility for the employers. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was sent with the survey to increase the response rate.

Variables

A general job description was provided in the survey to ensure consistency among the employers when they evaluated the résumés. The résumés were rated for: career objectives, activities/interests, leadership abilities, and responsibility level.

Also measured were the employers' actions with regard to the résumés: keeping the résumé on file, referring the résumé to the appropriate department, setting up an interview with the candidate, setting up a visit to the work site, and extending an offer.

The information in the résumés differed only in one respect: work experience. The three groups were therefore identified by this experience: an internship, work experience relating to the field of study but not called an internship, and unrelated general work experience. All other aspects of the résumés work histories were held constant. Each résumé had three jobs totaling 28 months experience: one job required attention to detail and lasted approximately 20 months; another job occurred during a summer and lasted approximately four months; and the third job, which also lasted approximately four months; these were the independent variable. Thus, the independent variable consisted of: a nonintern work experience relating to the field of study, an internship, or a general unrelated job. All these had the same level of

responsibility. All the jobs were in the same geographical area so as not to provoke possible bias brought on by certain geographical regions.

Experimental Design

There were two hypotheses in this study. The null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between the likelihood of a job offer and the applicant's work experience while in college. The research hypothesis is that there is a significant difference in the likelihood of a job offer and the applicant's work experience while in college.

The data collected from each of the small businesses surveyed were analyzed by computing a mean ratings on the entire pool of scores, the top ten scores, the offer scores, and all the dependent variable scores. The scores were calculated by adding the ratings that the employers gave each dependent variable. The dependent variables are: (a) likelihood of keeping the résumé on file, (b) likelihood of referring the résumé to the proper department, (c) likelihood of having the candidate come in for an interview, (d) likelihood of having the candidate visit the work site, and (e) likelihood of extending an offer. The employers' responses to the items in the questionnaire are based on a Likert Scale, with 1 being not likely at all

and 5 being very likely. These scores ranged from 5 to 25 per résumé.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Of a total of 100 surveys mailed to local small businesses, 58 were returned; however, 2 surveys were rejected because the information was incomplete. Among the remaining 56 respondents, the average level of educational experience was 15 years (3 years of college). The majority of the respondents completed a 4-year college degree. The number of people employed at the respondents' businesses ranged from 2 to 90, with 20 being the average. Of the businesses surveyed, 17 were part of larger organizations. Finally, the hiring experience of the respondents were as follows: (a) less than one year, 3 respondents; (b) one to three years, 6 respondents; (c) three to five years, 3 respondents; and (d) more than five years, 44 respondents.

For purposes of this study, general work experience, related/nonintern experience, and internship will be referred to as Experience A, B, and C, respectively.

The mean scores for each of the three résumés are displayed on Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of Mean Scores for the Three Résumés

<hr/>				
Experience A - General Work				
Experience B - Related/nonintern				
Experience C - Intern				
<hr/>				
Variables	Experience A	Experience B	Experience C	Overall
<hr/>				
Total Scores	13.30	15.50	18.61	15.65
Top 10 Scores	22.40	22.60	24.90	23.30
Offer Scores of 5	23.80	24.00	24.73	24.35
<hr/>				
On-File Likelihood	2.88	3.29	3.91	3.36
Referral Likelihood	2.71	3.14	3.77	3.22
Interview Likelihood	2.73	3.05	3.75	3.21
Visit Likelihood	2.55	2.82	3.61	2.99
Offer Likelihood	2.39	2.71	3.45	2.85
<hr/>				

Note: Regarding composite scores and the likelihood of employers' response, numbers are based on a Likert Scale, with 1 being not likely at all and 5 being extremely likely.

Experience C's means were consistently higher than the overall means for all of the dependent variables (Experience C: offer = 3.45, visit = 3.61, interview = 3.75, referral = 3.77, file = 3.91). Although both Experiences A and B appeared to be consistently lower than the overall means, Experience B is higher than Experience A (Experience B: offer = 2.71, visit = 2.82, interview = 3.05, referral = 3.14, file = 3.29; Experience A: offer = 2.39, visit = 2.55, interview = 2.73, referral = 2.71, file = 2.88). This pattern and difference among the three résumés appeared across all variables examined.

A further examination of the descriptive measures using medians for each of the dependent variables shows that Experiences C and B had similar results with respect to the most important dependent variable: the likelihood of a job offer. An examination and another important dependent variable, the site visit, showed Experience C more likely to have an employer invite the applicant for a site visit than Experience B or Experience A (Experience C: 4, Experience B: 3, Experience A: 2). Employers were not as likely to have the Experience A applicant visit the work site, whereas the Experience B applicant was relatively neutral (see Table 2). Among the other dependent variables (keep on file, refer to the relevant department, and interview), Experiences A and B were neutral while the Experience C applicant was more likely to have those actions taken.

Table 2
Summary of Median Scores for the
Three Résumés

Experience A - General Work

Experience B - Related/nonintern

Experience C - Intern

	Experience	Experience	Experience
Variables	A	B	C
On-File Likelihood	3	3	4
Referral Likelihood	3	3	4
Interview Likelihood	3	3	4
Visit Likelihood	2	3	4
Offer Likelihood	2	3	3

Note: Regarding the likelihoods of employers' response, numbers are based on a Likert Scale, with 1 being not likely at all and 5 being very likely.

The results of the analysis of variance show a significant difference at the 0.05 level for the three résumé types (see Table 3). When the higher scored résumés are compared to each other, the higher the scores, the less significant the results were. The ten highest scored résumés showed an F value at 8.18 while the five highest scored résumés showed an F value at 2.46. A more detailed review of these high-scoring résumés showed that the

Table 3
ANOVA: Mean Likelihood Scores
for the Three Résumés

Composite Likelihood Scores			
Variables	Calculated \underline{F}		\underline{F} Value @ 0.05
Total Likelihood Scores	13.34	>	3.04
Top 5 Likelihood Scores	2.46	<	3.89
Top 10 Likelihood Scores	8.18	>	3.34
Offer Scores of 5	1.60	<	3.59
On-File Likelihood	11.07	>	3.04
Referral Likelihood	10.10	>	3.04
Interview Likelihood	16.27	>	3.04
Visit Likelihood	11.67	>	3.04
Offer Likelihood	11.80	>	3.04

résumés which had the highest score possible on the offer variable were not significant and indicated that no likelihood of an offer was given to low-scoring applicants.

The characteristics reviewed by the employers on the résumés were analyzed for possible confounding effects. The results showed that there were no significant differences for three of the four characteristics (see Table 4). An unexpected outcome was the career objective characteristic whose \underline{F} value was significant at the 0.05 level (\underline{F}

= 7.13). The work experience characteristic's F value was significant at the 0.05 level ($F = 27.13$). This outcome was anticipated since the varying work experience was the primary variable being analyzed.

Table 4
ANOVA: Mean Qualification Scores
for the Three Résumés

Variables	Calculated F		F Value @ 0.05
Total Qualification Scores	10.24	>	3.04
Overall Work Experience	27.13	>	3.04
Career Objective	7.13	>	3.04
Leadership	1.08	<	3.04
Responsibility	2.15	<	3.04
Activities	1.09	<	3.04

Tukey test was conducted to identify further the source of significance identified in ANOVA analysis (see Table 5). This analysis of the 56 employers' responses showed that when the Experience C résumé was compared to the Experiences B and A résumés, it was significantly higher at the 0.05 level ($q = 4.81, 7.17$, respectively), but when the Experience B résumé was compared to the Experience A résumé, there appeared no difference ($q =$

2.36). This pattern was evident across all the dependent variables analyzed.

Tukey tests also were conducted on the two characteristics on the résumés which were significant in the analysis of variance (see Table 6). The work experience characteristic showed a significant difference between Experience C and Experience B résumés ($q = 7.70$) and an even higher significance between Experience C and Experience A résumés ($q = 10.08$).

There was no significant difference between Experience B and Experience A résumés ($q = 2.38$). The career objective characteristic had similar statistical findings when Experience C was compared to Experiences B and A ($q = 4.57$ and 4.43 , respectively). Again, when the Experience B résumé was compared to the Experience A résumé, there was no statistical significance ($q = 0.14$).

Table 5

Tukey Method Test Results: Mean
Likelihood Scores for the
Three Résumés

Overall Likelihood Variables

Total Likelihood Scores Where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General	7.17
Intern vs. Related	4.81
Related vs. General	2.36

Top 10 Likelihood Scores Where $q = 3.49$

Intern vs. General	5.10
Intern vs. Related	4.69
Related vs. General	0.41

Specific Likelihood Variables

Keep On File Likelihood where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General	6.87
Intern vs. Related	4.13
Related vs. General	2.73

Refer to Department Likelihood where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General	6.38
Intern vs. Related	3.94
Related vs. General	2.44

Interview Likelihood where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General	8.07
Intern vs. Related	5.79
Related vs. General	2.29

Site Visit Likelihood where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General	6.63
Intern vs. Related	4.94
Related vs. General	1.69

Job Offer Likelihood where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General	6.63
Intern vs. Related	4.63
Related vs. General	2.00

Table 6

Tukey Method Test Results: Mean
Qualification Scores for the
Three Résumés

Qualification Variables

Career Objective where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General 4.57

Intern vs. Related 4.43

Related vs. General 0.14

Work Experience where $q = 3.31$

Intern vs. General 10.08

Intern vs. Related 7.70

Related vs. General 2.38

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This current study replicated the second half of Taylor's (1987) study, which used a résumé-style survey to study the employment decision-making process as it relates to intern experience and its relative importance in obtaining employment offers. This particular study focused more closely on types of work experience than on internships alone. It studied three variations of work experience: (1) an internship, (2) related/nonintern experience, and (3) general work experience, and how each experience affected personnel selection within small organizations.

From the information obtained from this study, it can be concluded that résumés containing intern experience (Experience C) will be received more favorably by employers than those containing either general or related/nonintern experience alone (Experiences A and B). These results were obtained by examining the employers' decisions regarding the three types of résumés. This supports Taylor's (1987) study, which indicated that people who had internships were more likely to be selected for hiring. Employers may perceive an internship as a formalized program which is

structured and better controlled than related/nonintern experience. The other characteristics of the résumés, such as grade point average and activities, appeared to have little impact on the employers' decisions. This correlates with Kohn's (1975) research, which suggested that the importance of work experience increases as the organization's size decreases.

Statistically significant differences consistently favoring the internship résumé were found in Table 3 and were confirmed through additional testing shown in Table 5. This pattern was apparent in employer responses to all variables, including the top 10 and the overall 56 scores. However, although not significantly different, related nonintern experience appeared to be the second choice among the employers as seen Tables 5 and 6.

The career objective score differed significantly among the three résumés. It is difficult to identify a cause for this; however, the career objective in the internship résumé stated an entry level position, whereas the other two résumé career objectives did not.

It can be reasoned from the results that there is a distinct advantage to possessing a field-related internship over field-related/nonintern experience or general work experience while in college. The current study's premise was that obtaining a field-related/nonintern job would present an image of the individual who was self-motivated

and showed initiative in obtaining related experience without the aid of a college program. However, the current study did not anticipate employers' responses to related work experience that lasted only four months in the middle of an individual's college career. The results may be related to the time frame of the experience. If related/nonintern experience was at the end of the individual's college career, then the results may have shown that this experience was just as important (if not more) as the internship was. Further, an internship may lose little value regardless of the time at which it was taken during a student's college career because of a definite ending date of the experience. Comparatively, if a person decides to obtain a related/nonintern job, he may need to take it at the end of his academic career for optimal advantage when applying for a job after college.

The responsibilities of the three work experiences and job description used may have also unwittingly influenced these results. Although a pretest was conducted, an empirical study in this area would have strengthened the similarities among the descriptions. Further studies on the descriptions and the time frame of related/nonintern versus intern experiences need to be conducted for a better understanding of the roles they play in a student's college career.

Continued research in this area is imperative to validate the importance of work experience during college. Research in following recent graduates' job searches who have had either internships or related/nonintern experiences would further expand this current study.

Appendix A
Human Subjects Protection

Human Subjects Protection

Confidentiality

To ensure confidentiality of the employers participating in this survey, the letters were sent to "Personnel." The return envelope was addressed to a Post Office box rather than to Student Employment, where several people handle the mail, to provide confidentiality for the employer. The surveyor took the contents from the P.O. box daily and inspected the questionnaires for identifying marks. If there were identifying marks, either they were removed or the answers were rewritten on a blank questionnaire. Once this was done, the surveys were analyzed for statistical significance.

Benefits

The participants had the opportunity to obtain a copy of the completed research results by completing the bottom half of the demographic questionnaire sheet.

Risks

To ensure that the employers would not contact the applicants, the résumés have fictitious names and addresses and do not contain telephone numbers.

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

TO: Donna T. Klein
FROM: Ellen Page-Robin, Chair *EP-R*
RE: Research Protocol
DATE: February 28, 1989

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research protocol "How Work Experience Affects Personnel Selection" has been approved as exempt by the HSIRB.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at 387-2647.

Appendix B
Job Description

JOB DESCRIPTION

This fictitious job description is a general position opening by which the employers participating in this survey evaluate the applicants.

Please rate each applicant on the basis of his or her résumé as it pertains to the following job description.

Staff Accountant

Responsible for general accounting systems which includes but is not limited to accounts payable/receivable, payroll administration, and tax information relative to the organization. Applies principles of accounting to implement and administer the above-mentioned systems.

Appendix C
Three Résumés

Résumé #1

TERRY K. ANDERSON

824 Douglas Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVE	Desiring to obtain a responsible position where growth and opportunity are available.
EDUCATION	Bachelor of Business Administration, April 1989. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Major: Accounting Minor: General Business. GPA 3.46
EXPERIENCE	
4/89 - Present	Security Guard, Kalamazoo Center Hotel, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Responsible for overall security of hotel, and customer relations.
4/87 - 12/88	Assistant Manager of small appliances, K-mart, Battle Creek, Michigan. Sold items in small appliances department, responsible for layaway payments, total customer purchases, and restock shelves.
5/86 - 8/86 5/85 - 8/85	Manufacturing, Kellogg Company, Battle Creek, Michigan. Responsible for quality control on cereal line.
INTERESTS	Western Michigan University's Business club, Western Michigan University's biking club, American History and Golfing
REFERENCES	Furnished upon request

Résumé #2

ROBERT W. CARROLL

Current Address:
652 South Drake Rd. #12
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009

Permanent Address:
39683 Grasmere St.
Northville, Michigan 48167

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To work with a firm that enables me to use my skills and experience in my field of interest.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business Administration, April 1989.
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
Major: Accounting Minor: General Business. GPA 3.39.

EMPLOYMENT

Stock Person, March 1989 to Present, Larry's Food Mart, Portage, Michigan. Responsible for stocking shelves, signing for deliveries and keeping accurate inventory.

Accounts Receivable Clerk, May 1988 to November 1988, Bayside Medical Supply Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Responsible for posting and preparing deposit slips, handling balances of vendors and other customers.

Laundry Attendant, April 1987 to September 1987, Dud's-n-Suds, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Responsible for self-management of snack bar, making change and general upkeep of facility.

ACTIVITIES

WMU field hockey club, Beta Alpha Psi - active member

INTERESTS

Fishing, Cross-country skiing, Reading

REFERENCES

Furnished upon request.

Résumé #3

JOHN C. SMITH

1708 Davis Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008

CAREER OBJECTIVE	To obtain a responsible entry level position which offers development and opportunity.
EDUCATION	Bachelor degree of Business Administration, December 1989. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Major: Accountancy. Minor: General Business. Overall GPA 3.42
EXPERIENCE	<p>Internship. January 1989 to April 1989. Howard Miller, P.C., Kalamazoo, Michigan. Assisted in preparing corporate and private tax returns. Calculated deductions on investments.</p> <p>Office Clerk. May 1987 to August 1988. Financial Aid Department, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Responsibilities included running errands, answering phones, filing and typing.</p> <p>Cashier. May 1986 to August 1986. The Produce Patch, Richland, Michigan. Mainly responsible for front check-out in fruit and vegetable market.</p>
ACTIVITIES/ INTERESTS	Active member of Sigma, Sigma, Fraternity Western Michigan University Ski club Reading.
REFERENCES	Furnished upon request.

Appendix D
Demographic Information

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is the nature of your business?
☐ Retail ☐ Sales ☐ Food ☐ Service
☐ Manufacture ☐ Other (please
specify) _____
2. How many people are employed at your organization?

3. Is your place of business a branch of a larger
organization? ☐ YES ☐ NO
4. What is your position title?

5. What department do you work in?

6. How many years of hiring experience do you have?
☐ less than 1 yr ☐ 1-3 yr ☐ 3-5 yr
☐ More than 5 yr
7. What level of educational experience do you have?
(please circle last year completed)
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Thank you for your time in filling out this
questionnaire.

Yes, I would like a copy of the research findings
regarding this survey once completed.

NAME: _____

ORGANIZATION'S NAME: _____

ORGANIZATION'S ADDRESS: _____

Appendix E
Survey

SURVEY

Please rate on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent and 1 being poor, the qualifications of the following:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Poor.....				Excellent
1. Career objective.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. Activities/Interests.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. Work experience.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. Leadership abilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. Responsibility level.....	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle the number that indicates the degree of likelihood of your actions based only on the information from this résumé.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Not likely at all				extremely likely
1. What is the likelihood of keeping this résumé on file?.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. What is the likelihood of referring this résumé to the relevant dept.?.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. What is the likelihood of having the candidate come in for an interview?.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. What is the likelihood of having the applicant visit the work site?.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. What is the likelihood of extending an offer to the applicant?.....	1	2	3	4	5

6. Please indicate the factors that influenced your decision in regard to this résumé.

Appendix F
Personnel Manager Letter

PERSONNEL MANAGER LETTER

Dear Personnel Manager:

This survey is intended to study the process of résumé evaluation and how an employer prioritizes an applicants' résumé when considering someone for a position. The confidential information obtained will be used as information for a master's thesis on selection priorities for employment.

When considering employing recent college graduates, you may see a variety of different résumé styles and formats. Enclosed are three résumés from the college Placement Office. Please take a few minutes to answer the survey questions and return it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided. The instructions for evaluating these résumés are in the top paragraph of the survey attached to each résumé.

Your time and thoughtful effort are much appreciated.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the research findings, please fill out the bottom half of the demographic information sheet and return it with the survey.

Sincerely,

Donna Klein

Enclosures

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cash, T.F., Gillen, B., & Burns, D.S. (1977). Sexism and beautyism in personnel consultant decision making. Journal of Applied Psychology, 62, 301-310.
- Cohen, Y., & Pfeffer, J. (1987, March). Organizational hiring standards. Administrative Science Quarterly, 31, 1-24.
- Dipboye, R.L., Fromkin, H.L., & Wiback, K. (1975). Relative importance of applicant sex, attractiveness, and scholastic standing in evaluation of job applicant resumes. Journal of Applied Psychology, 60, 39-43.
- Granovetter, M. (1984, June). Small is bountiful: Labor markets and establishment size. American Sociological Review, 49, 323-334.
- Hafer, J.C., & Hoth, C.C. (1980, July). Research finds students misinformed on hiring criteria. Marketing News, 14, 18.
- Hafer, J.C., & Hoth, C.C. (1983, March). Selection characteristics: Your priorities and how students perceive them. Personnel Administrator, 28, 25-28.
- Kohn, M. (1975). Hiring college graduates through off-campus selection interviewing. Public Personnel Management, 4, 23-31.
- Mosser, J. (Ed.). (1990, Spring). Newsletter of Cooperative Education Marketing. (Available from Kalamazoo College, 1327 Academy Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007).
- Skeegan, S. (1985). Six steps to hiring success. Management World, 14, 11-13.
- Stevens, G.E. (1981). Selecting employees--how to make a gamble a better bet. Management World, 10, 8-11.
- Taylor, M.S. (1987). Effect of college internships on individual participants. Journal of Applied Psychology, 1, 393-401.