Behavioral Contracting with Community Based Inmates for Job-Seeking Behavior

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BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTING WITH COMMUNITY BASED INMATES FOR JOB-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

by

Thomas Krupar

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

Western Michigan University
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks go to Pat Murray, Mary Rizzo and Joseph J. Gonzales for their help with the weekly job-finding club meetings, and to Cheryl Poche and Thomas Vassil for their help in the initial preparation of this manuscript. I also want to thank R. Wayne Fuqua for his patient consulting on the design, planning and running of this experiment along with his constructive editing of the many drafts of this final paper. In addition, thanks go to Deborah Gang for her assistance in the editing of this paper. Lastly, I want to thank my girlfriend for her patient understanding and support for the duration of my return to school.

Thomas Krupar
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INTRODUCTION

Unemployment has been a major concern for the individual as well as the population at large. It has been associated with higher rates of crime (Johnson, 1964) and costs the taxpayer millions each year in lost revenue, unemployment benefits, and welfare. Blacks, the elderly, females and teenagers all currently suffer especially high rates of joblessness (Azrin, Flores & Kaplan, 1975).

The need exists for a comprehensive approach to training the individual to seek employment. The job-seeker may use the common method of looking through the help-wanted ads and inquire with friends (Sheppard & Belitsky, 1966) in an unstructured manner. There is evidence that the efforts of the individual job-seeker are inefficient when compared with counseled individuals (Azrin, Flores & Kaplan, 1975). In this study they found that a job-counseling program led to jobs that were obtained within two weeks as compared to eight weeks for non-counseled subjects. Job-seeking requires a number of complex skills; learning job-seeking skills demands a structured training approach. Most job placement services advise clients what to do to organize an efficient job search, but they lack
instruction and practice on how to perform these job-seeking skills.

A review of the literature shows two programs that were concerned with experimentally validating job-seeking techniques and methods of obtaining employment. In the first study, Jones and Azrin (1973), conducted a survey that attempted to determine how much job-seekers rely on information, influence, and help from friends to find jobs. The study also sought to determine the effect of offering informants monetary rewards for job tips that led to a subject being hired. They found that two-thirds of all job placements were initiated by friends and relatives and that these informants played an active role in influencing the employer to hire a specific applicant. Finally, the information reward procedure was effective in producing nine times as many job leads and eight times as many placements as the control group.

In the second study, Azrin et al. (1975), demonstrated that a job counseling program was more effective than the usual job-seeking practices. Using a matched control design, the experimental group used a mutual assistance procedure among members of a job-finding club that included a buddy system, sharing of job leads, searching want-ads, role-playing job interviews, telephoning employers and resume writing. Results indicated that the average counseled subject found work within two weeks compared to eight weeks for the non-counseled group.
The present study used a job counseling program combined with behavioral contracting. The behavioral contract was an effective tool used by the experimenter in organizing the job-seeking effort. The contract was a means by which the experimenter structured the job-seeking effort by making the necessary elements explicit and writing this into an agreement for behavior change (DeRisi & Butz, 1975). A contract contains a description of Who is to do What for Whom and under what Circumstances (Weathers & Liberman, 1975).

A review of the literature of behavioral contracting shows numerous programs that were similar to the present study in their use of contracting as a method of controlling behavior in a community setting (Tharp & Wetzel, 1968). Contracting has been applied to a wide variety of problem areas including school problems (Homme, 1969; Cantrell, Cantrell & Huddleston, 1969; Williams, Long & Yookley, 1972), in weight control (Mann, 1972; Aragona, Cassady & Drabman, 1975), in the deacceleration of smoking behavior (Tighe & Elliot, 1968), in delinquency (Stuart, 1971; Stuart & Lott, 1972; Stuart, Jayartne & Tripodi, 1976), juvenile offenders (Fitzgerald, 1974), drug abuse (Boudin, 1972; Beatty, 1975), and with alcoholics (Miller, 1972; Bigelow, Strickler, Liebson & Griffiths, 1976). These studies have demonstrated repeated successful control over the many target behaviors.
In summary, Jones, et al. (1973) demonstrated that the unemployed benefit from professional assistance in obtaining a position that matches the person to their work skills and that monetary rewards for information leading to employment increased the number of job placements. The second study, Azrin, et al. (1975) indicated that a comprehensive approach to job counseling led to better positions for the subjects in less time if they attended the program regularly. Behavioral contracting was used in the present study in an attempt to increase regular attendance. The studies of behavioral contracting demonstrated that this procedure can be effective in structuring counseling so that the terms of an agreement for behavior change are explicit and the exchange of rewards are scheduled between two or more persons.

Using these guidelines, the present study was designed to address the following questions:

1. Would a behavior contracting program increase the amount of job-seeking behavior by the subjects?
2. Would an increase in job-seeking by the experimental subjects lead to employment sooner than non-counseled subjects?
3. If such a program is successful would it be cost-effective by showing the amount of money saved by the government in unemployment benefits, welfare and
food stamps.

Keeping these things in mind the present study incorporated three elements not present in previous investigations. Behavioral contracting was used in an effort to organize the job counseling situation. This technique was helpful in structuring an agreement on the amount of job-seeking behavior required to receive privileges and reinforcers. The second element was the use of self-report in order to obtain information on the effort of the individual job-seeker. Included were measures of the number of applications, number of calls to employers and the number of job tips from friends and relatives. Finally, the design used was a variation of the multiple baseline technique (Baer, Wolf & Risley, 1968). This design allowed the experimenter to assess the amount of job-seeking behavior that occurred before and after the behavioral contract was employed.

The present study sought to evaluate the effects of a job counseling program and behavioral contracting on the frequency of job-seeking behavior.
METHOD

Subjects and Setting

Subjects consisted of nine community based inmates, seven males and two females. Ages of the subjects ranged from 19 to 36 with a mean of 25.7 years. Four of the subjects had not completed high school. Four subjects had never been employed and four others had only limited work records.

The nine subjects were assigned to the Resident Home program by prison officials; inmates were chosen on the basis of a non-violent prison record and a lack of a history of narcotics trafficking. The subjects had from three to eighteen months left before their parole. The Resident Home Program is considered the lowest form of security within the Michigan prison system. The main objective of the program was to assist the inmates in finding employment and, thus, regaining financial responsibility.

The non-counseled subjects who were used as a comparison group were in the Resident Home Program during the nine months previous to the present experiment. The non-counseled group had approximately the same amount of education and limited work records. They reported to the Resident Home Agent weekly, but they were not given training in job-seeking skills.
The Job-Finding Club was conducted at a parole office, located in a moderately populated industrial city. The subjects met once a week for approximately two hours.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in the present study were the number of applications to employers or employment agencies, number of calls to employers for information concerning work, number of job tips from newspapers, relatives or friends, and the number of calls made to employers where the subject had already applied or had attempted to apply.

An application to an employer consisted of a subject going in person to the employer's place of business and requesting an application. In order to receive credit for an application, the subjects had to report the employer's address, phone, position qualifications and whether or not the employer was accepting applications. They were to give this information to the experimenter on report days.

A "job-tip" consisted of a subject finding information about employers who were hiring from the newspaper, friend or relative and reporting this information to the experimenter. Criterion for receiving points included reporting the employer who was hiring, the address, phone number and the name of a contact person for the position. The subject was also required to furnish the name and
phone number of the person who gave the employment tip or produce the want-ad from the newspaper.

A "phone call" to an employer consisted of the subject asking for information by phone concerning employment. The criterion for receiving points included reporting the name, address and phone number of the employer. The subject was also required to state whether the employer was hiring.

Self-report was chosen as a method of obtaining information on the subject's job-seeking behavior because it permitted the experimenter to procure data that would have otherwise required enormous amounts of time to observe. Independent observers and the experimenter assessed the accuracy of the information reported by the subjects. Observers randomly selected 25% of the written self-report of applications, phone calls, and job tips per week for each subject. The observer called the employers by phone and assessed the accuracy of information reported.

Reliability

Interobserver agreement for the accuracy of the reported job-seeking behavior was assessed by having an independent observer randomly select 25% of the calls to employers. Reliability was calculated by dividing the smaller figure by the larger one and multiplying the result by 100 to obtain a percentage.
Job-Finding Club

Each group met weekly with the experimenter to discuss the most efficient ways to look for work beginning the first week of intervention. The two groups did not meet during the baseline period. Group 1 met three times while Group 2 met only twice. The experimenter lectured during the first half-hour of the job-finding club for both groups. The subjects were instructed to look for work by obtaining job leads from other job-seekers, newspaper want-ads, friends, relatives and from employers. The experimenter stressed the importance of record keeping in an effort to organize the job search. The subjects were taught to document their work skills by describing previous work experience, related work experience, related work experience, aptitude and hobbies. The importance of appearance and mannerisms was stressed during the lecture. The necessity of being clean and wearing appropriate clothes when visiting employers was emphasized. The subjects were told to maintain good eye contact when talking to an employer and to avoid exhibiting nervous mannerisms.

During the lecture, the experimenter discussed the importance of making a positive impression on the employer when preparing a job application. The subjects were told to eliminate information about problems which were not relevant or which did not aid the
employer in forming an accurate impression of the individual. The subjects were taught to stress their abilities rather than their disabilities. They were told to leave the question on imprisonment blank, and they were prepared by the experimenter to explain this area in the interview.

The experimenter then assisted them in other problem areas such as poor work history, drug abuse, etc., and the best ways to answer these questions in the job interview. The subjects were told that they should be able to explain all the answers that they would write on job applications. The experimenter stressed the importance of describing work skills in the interview. They were told to answer open or ambiguous questions with a statement about the ability to learn, personal qualities, hobbies and related work experience.

Subjects earned points at the job-finding club for participating in the job-seeking training activities which are described below. Points earned at the meeting were totaled each week and would go toward the following week's lottery. The winner of the lottery won a gift certificate.

All subjects filled out practice application forms during the first meeting and received feedback from the experimenter on how well they answered questions about the problem areas of prison record or poor work history. Subjects earned 20 points for completing the application and correcting errors after receiving feedback.
In addition, the subjects earned points by completing a practice job interview during each meeting with the experimenter. In the practice job interview, the experimenter asked the subjects questions that were typical of most job interviews (Appendix 1). In order to receive full points, the subject had to answer all ten questions asked by the experimenter. During the first meeting, all subjects needed only to respond to the questions in order to receive 20 points for completion. In order to receive full points during the second and third meetings, the subjects were required to prepare new answers for responses that the observer felt were inappropriate.

At the end of each meeting, the subjects could earn points by telephoning employers. They received points if they correctly requested information concerning job openings. If the employer was hiring, the subject was required to get information on the location of the business, and the proper time to apply for the position.

Finally, the subjects received points for completing a resume. This homework assignment was given in three sections: personal data and educational experience, work experience and references, revision of the previous two assignments. The subjects earned 20 points for each section completed.

Baseline

The job-seeking behavior of both groups was examined during
a baseline period of either one or two weeks. During this period, there were no contingencies for the amount of job-seeking behavior by the subjects. However, they were required by the rules of the Resident Home Program to report once a week in person to the experimenter. Between their report days, they were to telephone the experimenter in order to update their job-seeking data sheets (Appendix 2). There were no contingencies for calling the experimenter between reports.

Behavioral Contracts

Following the baseline period, a contingency management program was implemented for the job-seeking behaviors of each individual. Each subject was asked to sign a weekly contract (Appendix 3), which outlined what would constitute an appropriate increase in job-seeking behavior for the following week.

In this contract the subject agreed to increase the number of job-seeking behaviors each week. The experimenter determined the increase for the first week by adding 20% to the point total for job-seeking behavior during baseline (Table 1). An additional 20% increase was required for each week that a subject remained unemployed. For those subjects who demonstrated only a minimal amount of job-seeking during baseline (an average of two employment contracts or less per week), the experimenter used the mean
of all subjects' job-seeking behavior during baseline to determine the criterion for these non-performing subjects.

Points were contingent on the number of job-seeking behaviors. Table 1 represents the points value of each of the job-seeking behaviors. Applications to employers or attempted applications in which the subject went to the place of business were worth 20 points. The phone calls to employers, job tips from the newspaper, friends or relatives were worth five points apiece.

Each week the experimenter set the minimum point criterion of job-seeking points necessary for the subjects to earn a weekend pass. In order that a minimal amount of job-seeking be accomplished during the week, the points earned for participation in the job-finding club could not be used to meet criterion for the weekend pass.

The pass allowed the subjects to leave their half-way houses for one night and go to an approved residence of a relative and return the following day. The minimum point criterion of job-seeking behavior was stated in the contract along with the date of the one night pass.

In the contract a bonus clause was added for exceptional performance. If the subject reported job-seeking behavior at specified times, the experimenter would write a recommendation letter when the subject was employed requesting that the subject be allowed to live in an approved residence. The experimenter wrote
TABLE 1

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<td>An application to an employer required that the subject go to the place of business and request an application. Criterion for receiving points included having the name of the person contacted, address, phone number and the correct information concerning acceptance of applications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A job tip concerning information about employers that were hiring required the subject to find a job lead in the newspaper, from a friend or relative. Criterion for receiving points included the subject reporting the information to the experimenter. The newspaper ad was necessary for points or the name and phone number of the person who gave the job tip.</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>A phone call to an employer consisted of the subject requesting employment information from businesses. Criterion for receiving points included reporting the name, address, phone number and hiring status of the employer. If the subject had already applied he could receive points for calling back the employer to inquire about his application.</td>
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recommendation letters as a normal practice for those clients that had demonstrated exceptional performance in the Resident Home Program.

Finally, sanctions were specified in the contract. If any self report of job-seeking behavior was determined to be false, then the client lost all points for that week. The contract was signed by the experimenter and subject with a copy of the agreement for both parties.

Lottery

The total amount of points earned by each subject per week determined the number of lottery tickets received. The number of points earned by each subject for job-seeking was added to the points earned for participation in the job-finding club. Each 20 points was worth one lottery ticket.

A weekly drawing was held at the job-finding club. The winner of the drawing received a $10 gift certificate to their choice of a restaurant or retail store.

Experimental Design

The experiment was conducted using a variation of a multiple baseline design (Baer, et al., 1968). Group 1 underwent baseline conditions for two weeks, followed by the negotiation of individual
behavior contracts and the implementation of the contract contingencies. The two groups did not have simultaneous baselines as Group 2 underwent baseline conditions approximately eight weeks after Group 1. The baselines incorporated staggered starting times as Group 2 underwent the contract condition after one week of baseline. The contract condition lasted until each subject became employed or unsuccessfully terminated from the Job-Finding Club.
RESULTS

Figures 1-4 show a cumulative recording of the number of job related applications, phone calls, tips and call backs initiated by each subject in Group 1. These records of the number of applications, phone calls and job tips are located on the top graph of Figures 1-4. The bottom graph of Figures 1-4 show a cumulative recording of the number of points earned each week by the subjects for their applications and phone calls to employers. The cumulative record was reset to zero every seven days, except in the second week of baseline which includes eight days.

As shown in Figure 1, Subject 1 initiated an average of five employer contacts per week during the two weeks of baseline. Implementation of the behavioral contract produced no effect upon points earned for job-seeking during the first week and little effect during the third week. During the second, fourth and fifth weeks, the subject met the point criteria as established by the behavioral contract and demonstrated a continued increase in applications and phone calls to employers. Subject 1 was employed at the beginning of the sixth week.

Subject 2 applied to one employer during the baseline condition. He obtained employment on the first day of the intervention.
Figure 1. Subject 1 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight lines show criteria of points necessary for each week.
Figure 2. Subject 3 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight lines show criteria of points necessary for each week.

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Figure 3. Subject 4 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight lines show criteria of points necessary for each week.
Figure 4. Subject 5 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight line shows criteria of points necessary for each week.
phase and was terminated from the program, and, therefore, his data have been excluded.

As shown in Figure 2, Subject 3 averaged seven employment contacts per week during baseline. The behavioral contract produced no effect upon the number of applications during the first week of intervention, though the number of phone calls to employers increased to six. During the second week the number of applications increased to nine while the number of phone calls decreased to four. Subject 3 failed to meet the criterion of the contract in the first week of intervention. At the beginning of the intervention phase the subject obtained a part-time job and this event is noted on the graph by the letter (a). During the second week of the contract the subject exceeded the number of points necessary to meet criterion for the week. At the end of the second week the job became full-time and the subject terminated from the program.

As shown in Figure 3, Subject 4 averaged five employment contacts per week during baseline. The number of applications increased to seven during the first week of the contract and the number of phone calls decreased to four. During the week he was under the contract condition, Subject 4 surpassed the criterion for job-seeking points by increasing his frequency of employer contacts. During the second week, Subject 4 got a job and terminated from the job-seeking program.
Subject 5 maintained a low rate of applications and phone calls to employers during baseline as shown in Figure 4. During the first week of intervention, the subject increased the number of applications to six and he surpassed the criterion for job-seeking points. During the second week, the subject found employment and was terminated from the job-seeking program.

Figures 5-7 show a cumulative recording of the number of job related applications, phone calls, tips and call backs initiated by each subject in Group 2. These records of the number of applications, phone calls and job tips are located on the top graph of Figures 5-7. The bottom graph of Figures 5-7 show a cumulative recording of the number of points earned each week by the subjects for applications and phone calls to employers.

As shown in Figure 5, Subject 6 made seven employer contacts during the one week of baseline. During the first week of the contract condition, the subject increased the number of applications to five and made one phone call to an employer. The bottom graph illustrates that the subject met the criterion for job-seeking points during the one week he remained in the program. The subject was offered employment on the last day of the first week and terminated from the job-seeking program.

Subject 7 made no applications or phone calls to employers during the initial one week of baseline as shown in Figure 6. During
Figure 5. Subject 6 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight line shows criteria of points necessary for each week.
Figure 6. Subject 7 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight line shows criteria of points necessary for each week.
Figure 7. Subject 8 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention (top graph). Dotted line on bottom graph shows mean number of points during baseline. Straight lines show criteria of points necessary for each week.
the first week of intervention, she made three applications and three phone calls. The trend continued the following week when the subject made five applications and five phone calls to employers. The bottom graph illustrates that Subject 7 met the criterion for job-seeking points in the two weeks that she remained in the program. The subject was hired on the last day of the second week and was terminated from the job-seeking program.

As shown in Figure 7, Subject 8 made no attempts to contact employers during the initial week of baseline. During the first week the contract was in effect, the subject made five applications and called three employers by phone. The trend continued the following week when the subject made three applications and four phone inquiries concerning employment. The bottom graph illustrates that the subject met the criterion for job-seeking points in the two weeks that he remained in the program. This subject was the only person to terminate from the job-seeking program without having a job. He was terminated in the beginning of the third week for disciplinary reasons and could not complete the program.

Subject 9 made three applications and one phone call to an employer during the one week of baseline. He obtained employment on the last day of the baseline condition and was terminated from the program, and, therefore, his data have been excluded.

Figure 8 shows a cumulative recording of the mean number
Figure 8. Group 1 and 2 job-seeking behavior before and after intervention.
of job related applications, phone calls, tips and call backs initiated by the subjects in Groups 1 and 2.

As shown in Figure 8, Group 1 averaged four applications during the first week of baseline and two applications in the second week. The downward trend for applications during baseline was reversed in the first week of intervention as the average number of applications increased to four. The number of phone calls also increased to approximately three during the first week of the contract condition. At the end of the first week, two subjects terminated from the program and this is noted on the graph by the letter (a). The two remaining subjects averaged seven applications and four phone inquiries in the second week of the contract condition. Another subject successfully terminated at the end of the second week and this is noted on the graph by the letter (b). During the third week, the remaining subject increased her phone calls to eight while decreasing the number of applications to one. In the fourth and fifth week, the remaining subject increased the number of applications to seven and ten respectively.

Group 2 averaged two employment contacts during the one week of baseline. The number of applications increased to an average of four during the first week of the behavioral contract, and the number of phone calls increased to two. At the end of the first week, one subject successfully terminated from the program and
this is noted on the graph by the letter (c). The two remaining
subjects averaged four applications and approximately four phone
calls during the second week of intervention. At the end of the
second week, one subject found work and the second subject was
terminated for disciplinary reasons.

The mean starting salary for both groups was $2.65 per
hour and the range was from $2.50 per hour to $3.25 per hour. The
speed of finding a job was greater for the six subjects that entered
the intervention phase in the present experiment over non-counseled
subjects who had been in the Resident Home Program during the
nine months previous to the Job-Finding Club. The median time for
the six subjects who entered the intervention phase was 23.5 days to
find work. In the previous nine months twenty-six non-counseled
subjects took 33.5 days (median time) to find work. The present
subjects found work an average of 10 days earlier than the previous
non-counseled subjects.
DISCUSSION

Analysis of the data revealed that behavioral contracting can be an effective tool for increasing the frequency of job-seeking behaviors. Seven subjects demonstrated an increase in job-seeking behaviors when the independent variable (behavioral contracting and a job-finding club) was introduced. Of the six subjects who remained in the job-seeking program, the average number of days required to obtain employment was 10 days lower than a comparable group of non-counseled subjects. The number of days to find work for the non-counseled subjects was measured during the nine months preceding the job-finding club. The job club subjects required 23.5 days (median time) to find a job, as compared to the group of non-counseled subjects who started work in 33.5 days (median time). The median, rather than the mean, was necessary since some subjects from the experiment and the non-counseled group did not obtain work and no specific time could be assigned to them. The figure for the non-counseled subjects does not include subjects who were already employed when transferred to the Resident Home Program.

The subjects in the present experiment found jobs that paid an average of 2.65 per hour, ranging from 2.50 per hour to 3.25
per hour. Five of these positions were full-time. The starting salaries of the subjects were above the minimum wage which was 2.30 per hour.

Subjects that participated in the job-finding club found jobs that include maintenance work, dishwashing, factory labor and intake work at a job counseling program.

In 11 weeks out of 14, subjects in both groups met the point criterion as established in the behavioral contract. Therefore, it appears that the behavioral contract is effective in the acceleration of job-seeking behaviors. In contrast with the overall success of the procedure, two of the experimental subjects failed to meet the point criterion during the first week of the intervention phase. One of these same subjects failed to meet criterion in the third week of the contract. Subject 1 who met criterion in three out of five weeks was pressured by her parents to take care of her two children and this prevented her from looking for work. In her case the matter was resolved by explaining the necessity of finding work to her parents and arranging for a babysitter for her children. During the first week of intervention, Subject 3 began a part-time job that may have contributed to his failure to meet point criterion for the week. In conclusion, these competing circumstances indicate that a comprehensive job counseling program should address itself to the special needs of the population.
These results are similar to those of an earlier study by Azrin, et al. (1975), which found that unemployed subjects found jobs more rapidly when part of a job club than when job hunting entirely on their own. The present study extended the earlier work by demonstrating the effectiveness of a job counseling program with a population of community-based inmates. In addition, the present job-seeking program incorporated a behavioral contracting procedure that has proven valuable in structuring the subjects' job-seeking effort. Finally, the use of a multiple baseline design allowed the experimenter to measure individual job-seeking behavior over time and provide a baseline against which changes can be evaluated. The staggered starting times of intervention allowed the experimenter to show that the number of days required to find work was related to the contract for job-seeking and not just a function of time.

The lottery used in the job-seeking club was effective in maintaining attendance and participation in the activities of the job-finding club. The seven subjects attended all of the meetings, participated in filling out the practice job applications, cooperated in calling employers for information, and joined in completing job interviews with the experimenter. The subjects received the maximum number of points allowed for their participation in the job-finding club. However, it does not appear that the use of the lottery increased the frequency of resume writing which was assigned as
homework.

After approximately three months, three of the four experimental subjects in Group 1 are with their original employer. One subject in Group 1 was terminated from the Resident Home Program after three months of work for disciplinary reasons unrelated to the job. After approximately two months, the three successful experimental subjects in Group 2 are all working, although one subject has changed employers due to a lay-off.

For research purposes, the present study required that the experimenter invest a moderate amount of time in order to obtain the job-seeking behavior information and to monitor the data for accuracy. The cost of the program was moderate, about $35 per subject, including the experimenter's time, printed materials and rewards. In contrast, the amount of money saved as a result of the program more than paid for the cost of the job-finding club. The savings in the program included rent that was paid by the State of Michigan to the half-way houses and weekly spending money that was distributed to the inmates who were unemployed. The amount saved by the program came to approximately $95 per subject, thus, documenting a favorable cost/benefit ratio. The program may also be responsible for other benefits that are difficult to measure. Johnson (1964) correlated employment with reduced crime rates. In addition, a similar program could prove to be a tremendous
savings in welfare, food stamps, and unemployment compensation to the government.

The results of this study suggest several areas for future research. First, it would be useful to indentify the most efficient job-seeking behaviors. Studies using the practice job interview, teaching of resume writing or instruction of job-seeking alone would suggest how broad a job counseling program was necessary for similar results. Second, it would be important to isolate the effects of behavioral contracting from the job-finding club effects on the frequency of job-seeking behavior. A similar program could be designed using far less job counseling time by eliminating the job-finding club. Third, a similar program could prove to be useful as an addition to programming in schools that teach vocational skills. Adapting the present program to another population would only require the addition of special problem related components, but the format of the job-finding club could remain the same.

In summary, the three objectives of this study were met. Subjects that went to the job-finding club and contracted for job-seeking behavior demonstrated an increase in the frequency of these behaviors. In addition, the subjects in the program were successful in finding work earlier than non-counseled subjects from the nine months previous to the present program. Finally, the job-finding club and behavioral contract proved to be an effective and
economical method of increasing job-seeking behaviors among inmates in the community.
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONS IN THE JOB INTERVIEW

1. Why do you want to work here?
2. What previous experience do you have?
3. Why did you leave your last job?
4. What are your strengths?
5. What are your weaknesses?
6. What do you do in your spare time?
7. Do you have transportation?
8. Name some job related skills that you have.
9. Why should I hire a parolee?
10. Can I contact your previous employer?
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APPENDIX 3

CONTRACT

Effective Dates: From __________ to __________

We, the undersigned parties, agree to perform the following behaviors:

If ___________________________ Then ___________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

If ___________________________ Then ___________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

If ___________________________ Then ___________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Bonuses: If job-seeking efforts are reported regularly (twice weekly), and at specified times, then the Resident Home Agent will write a recommendation letter that the client be allowed to live in an approved residence. *Note--rule violations may result in a loss of this privilege.

Sanctions: If any self report of a job application is found to be false, then the client will lose all points for that week, nullifying the contract.

Renegotiation Date: ____________

Signed _______________________

Signed _______________________

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