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## Appearance and mode of perception in a simulated interview

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APPEARANCE AND MODE OF PERCEPTION IN A SIMULATED INTERVIEW

A Thesis

Presented to the  
Department of Psychology  
and the  
Faculty of the Graduate College  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by  
Stephen Edward Markowitz

July, 1970

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Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College  
of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for degree Master of  
Arts.

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## ABSTRACT

This study dealt with the effects of appearance and mode of perception upon the interviewing process. Research to date has stressed the predictive validity of the interview and ignored the dynamics of the on-going process. The present study was a microanalytic investigation of some of the factors influencing the interviewer.

The investigator used 180 male and female subjects. The Ss were assigned to Visual Auditory, Auditory, Reading, Visual Auditory Reading, Auditory Reading, or Visual Reading Groups. In addition, each group saw one of two different interviews. There was a total of 12 groups.

The findings indicated that appearance and mode of perception do affect the: (1) accuracy of essential information retained; (2) number of nonessential facts retained; (3) accuracy of nonessential facts retained; and (4) number of opinions formed. The data further indicated that mode of perception influenced the decision to hire, while appearance did not. Neither mode of perception nor appearance had any influence on the number of essential facts retained.

The author suggests further research into the relationships among the six dependent variables studied. Research is also suggested into the influence of age upon the process.

One of the most important recommendations deriving from the study is the advisability of using a transcript of the interview when considering the applicant.



## INTRODUCTION

The interview is a widely used personnel technique about which relatively little is known. Mayfield (1964) proposes two reasons for the present lack of knowledge in spite of all the research. First, he feels that there is a lack of any uniform control from one study to the next. Secondly, "how to interview" guidelines are taken for fact, and yet these guidelines are too often merely hypotheses which have never been validated. Ulrich and Trumbo (1965) are in general agreement with Mayfield. They urge greater standardization and an emphasis upon model-building in an attempt to understand the process of interpersonal communications.

It should be noted that there are researchers who recommend that the interview as a means of obtaining information should be regarded as obsolete and attention be given to other means of selection (Eysenck, 1953; Lundberg, 1941; and Sarbin, 1944). This consideration, however, makes little sense. The interview is the only point in the selection process which allows for a compilation of all data, much of which can be obtained in no other way. It would seem then that the interview is a step in the selection process to be refined rather than disregarded.

What then is an interview? It must be defined in terms of its purpose and content. The following definition adequately covers both criteria: The interview is a situation

in which a source transmits bits of information in a symbolized form to a receiver who uncodes the information and makes decisions based on the data obtained in the process. This is the investigator's definition. By substituting interviewer and interviewee for receiver and source respectively, one can see that this definition merely stresses the point that the interview must be evaluated in terms of the efficiency with which the interviewer deals with the information received.

There is a dimension of the whole interview problem which has received scant attention. To date, most interview research has been directed at the degree of validity of the interview. Very little attention has been given to the variables affecting validity. The interview process has been treated as an intervening variable while functional relationships have been sought. Ulrich and Trumbo (1965) have questioned the functional utility of the face-to-face interview. They cite evidence for validity as being tentative rather than conclusive. Wright (1969) stresses that interview research must include both micro- and macroanalysis. Microanalysis refers to studying the actual process going on during the interview and macroanalysis refers to the outcome of the interview, i.e., reliability, validity, etc.

The AMA Research Study 47, The Employment Interview (1961) has shed further light on the problem of poor communication from study to study. In view of the fact that researchers

come from different fields, the study finds that "...Research psychologists have condemned it (the interview) as lacking in validity, while personnel specialists have been quick to point out that the interview is outstandingly effective, (p.8)." In light of the multidisciplinary approach, it would seem imperative that Mayfield's suggestions for uniform controls be effected.

Interviewing should be looked upon as an assessment technique in much the same way one looks upon standardized psychological tests. While it is true that the ultimate goal of interview research is to establish the predictive validity of the interview, the tool itself must be first examined. Mayfield and Carlson (1966) state that studying the interview as a process would aid in understanding why numerous studies produce such diverse results while purporting to examine the same phenomenon. Carlson and Mayfield (1967) initiated just such an approach in a later study. In an investigation of 600 managers, they found that negative information received greater weight in the decision-making process than positive information. It is this type of interview research which will hopefully shed light on the actual process occurring during the interview.

In order to reach sounder conclusions about the interview and what actually takes place during it, it is necessary to begin with the exchange of information between interviewer and interviewee. Attention should be paid to verbal, social,

and emotional components of the interview exchange. Some work in this area has been conducted by Matarozzo and Wiens (1967) and Allen, Wiens, and Saslow (1965). These authors' findings suggest that the activity of an interviewer is an important factor in verbalization rates of interviewees.

The recognition that information is transmitted in a symbolized form makes the interview more difficult to understand. An interviewee does not merely present actual traits and background to the interviewer. Instead, he responds to symbolized stimuli (questions) with symbolized responses (answers). Not only are the answers mere representations of facts, but they also include both verbal and nonverbal information which lead to the formation of opinions. Hence the term "information" as a variable, is really only a rubric which groups together both verbal and nonverbal, factual and nonfactual bits of information. We must also consider the degree to which these four variables interact during the interview, i.e., the type and amount of information.

It is necessary to inquire into the effectiveness of the interview in separating fact from opinion. As mentioned above, it has been found that negative information makes more of an impression than positive information. Carlson and Mayfield (1967) found that photographs which were considered "unfavorable" were more likely to elicit the same responses from various judges than were photographs which were considered "favorable."

Webster (1964) and his colleagues at McGill University have examined in depth some questions relevant in this area. There were seven major findings:

- (1) Interviewers develop stereotypes and tend to match applicants against these early stereotypes;
- (2) Interviewer biases form early in the interview and are followed by favorable or unfavorable conclusions;
- (3) Negative information has the greatest influence on the interviewer;
- (4) Interviewers try to find information to prove or disprove their assumptions; when found they turn their attention elsewhere;
- (5) Empathy enters the interviewing process and is peculiar to the individual interviewer;
- (6) An interviewer's decision is a function of how information is received; in bits or as a whole;
- (7) Experienced interviewers agree on rankings of applicants but differ in their cut-offs for acceptability;

In general the Webster findings seem to indicate that characteristics such as physical appearance, type of dress, and voice quality affect the interviewer's decision. These findings seem to negate any claims that interviewers can reliably separate information which is important for the job in question (essential information), and information which is not important for the job in question (nonessential information). No implication is being made that interviewers do not have the skill to make critical decisions, but rather that criteria are hazy. However, even if there were purely

objective criteria, differences in person perception would cause differences in opinion.

Many personnel workers would argue that experience enables the interviewer to efficiently separate essential from nonessential interview information. This is probably fallacious in light of the research cited above, and also given an understanding of the concept "set." When an interviewer begins perceiving (receiving information from) an interviewee, he needs some guidelines for acceptance of the various types of information available. This is one explanation for the finding that stereotypes are formed early in the interviewing relationship. Hence we have interviewers forming expectations or a "set" about what they believe they are going to find.

Springbett (1954) found that the interviewer attains "set" early in the interview. Although not suggested, it is probable that physical appearance stands out more prominently than any other type of information early in a face-to-face interview situation. Further support for this hypothesis can be found in a study by Asch (1946), in which Ss forming an early opinion of a person were strongly influenced in their final evaluation of that person by their earlier opinion.

Once an early opinion or hypothesis is formed, it will tend to be supported by further perceptions. Support for this idea comes from Bruner's (1957) concept of "gating." Bruner suggests that when early modes for perceiving are

selected, one tends to narrow the types of information one will accept in an attempt to validate early hypotheses.

Further work on the "gating" hypothesis tends to confirm the idea that the individual selectively narrows down or "gates" the type of stimuli he will perceive after a preliminary hypothesis is formed (Blake and Ramsey, 1951, Ch.5; Anderson, 1961; and Crowell, 1961).

All of the above seems to suggest that the early hypothesizing or biasing of interviewers is a natural function of the exchange of information between interviewee and interviewer. As stated above, early hypothesizing must center around observable characteristics and these are often the least essential to the job for which the applicant is applying. Even these nonessential characteristics can be broken down further into negative and positive characteristics. Springbett (1954) and Mayfield and Carlson (1966) have discovered that the negative information has a stronger bearing on the outcome of the interview decision.

It seems likely then that the nonessential information (not really related to on-the-job performance) can greatly influence and perhaps even determine the outcome of the hiring process. If such a state does exist, the interview falls short as a selection device by virtue of the poor validity of the information receiving process.

An argument that may be raised against this point implies that there is no such thing as nonessential information.

Anything that can affect the interviewer can also affect the prospective employee's co-workers and hence interfere with his on-the-job performance. It may be said, in rebuttal, that the interviewee does emit certain stimuli such as appearance, accent, and other social impressions, which call forth from the interviewer responses which have nothing to do with evaluating the applicant as a potential employee. In effect, the interviewer is picking up information which serves to interfere with valid decisions. These nonessential bits of information help to form the interviewer's total picture of the applicant and usually are passed along to his supervisors. This in turn tends to initiate a form of self-fulfilling prophecy. When a foreman is told that a new worker will be a good worker as long as he is closely watched, then that employee will most likely be treated in that manner, whether such treatment is warranted or not.

There is one exception to this defense, and this occurs when social skills or appearance are a direct requisite of the position (customer relations, etc.). In such a case, social impressions are essential types of information.

This study represents a departure from the general form of interview research in that questions which pertain to the processing of information in the interview are being addressed, rather than questions directly concerned with the validity of the interview. This is in keeping with the suggestions outlined above by Webster et. al., and Mayfield and Carlson.



There have been a few other studies which dealt with the process of making a decision--aside from it's validity--but the number of such studies is still small. The most outstanding studies are the McGill Studies directed by E.C. Webster (1964). This approach seems to hold the most hope for building up a solid foundation on which to then run validity studies of the interview. The work done under Webster's guidance by Anderson (1961), Crowell (1961), Rowe (1960), Springbett (1954), and Sydiaha (1958), has stressed the interview information exchange and not how poorly or successfully that interview fared as a predictor of success.

### Statement of the Problem

It was mentioned above that essential and nonessential information is transmitted in the interview. The problem then is to determine just how the two influence the interviewer with regard to the quality of his receiving information and the type of decision he makes.

Since the interviewer perceives through many different modalities, the first major problem is the effect upon the information exchange of different modes of perception. For example, one interviewer may greatly rely on visual information while another stresses vocal information. Neither may be aware of his particular bias. It can easily be seen that interviewer differences in this area may go a long way towards defeating the purpose of using interviews as a standardized selection procedure.

There is a subsidiary problem in this first factor. Will the reliance on different methods of gathering information have any significant effect on: (1) the amount of factual information retained; (2) the accuracy of factual information retained; and (3) the number of opinions formed. These aspects of information processing can play havoc with a valid hiring decision. The interviewer may be acting on facts he remembers which are facts only for him (he may be erroneous in terms of recall), or he may be mixing opinions with facts.

A second major problem involves the combination of

verbal and nonverbal information that the interviewee supplies. If two people give the same answers (with regard to abilities, experience, etc.), will that information have different impact and value as a function of their appearances, social skills, etc? Following from this, one must ask what the best method is for getting the most important information from the interview while curtailing the effect of extraneous variables.

The third major problem concerns the ultimate decision of the interviewer. Which type of information has more influence on the decision to hire or not hire--essential or nonessential information, fact or opinion? In addition, is it possible that identical decisions are reached by interviewers for different reasons?

The question regarding mode of perception was stimulated by a study by Maier and Thurber (1968) in which various means of attending to an interview were manipulated. The researchers used different combinations of hearing the interview, seeing the interview, or reading a transcript of the interview. Their study was concerned with the perceived honesty or dishonesty of an interviewee as a function of the mode of perception utilized by the interviewer. The present study will go beyond this and attempt to ascertain how the different modes of perception, in combination with different social appearances affect the interviewer. While the Maier and Thurber study dealt only with perceived honesty, we will

be interested in seeing how the hiring decision, recall of facts, formation of opinions, and impact of essential and nonessential information are affected by mode of perception and appearance.

## Hypotheses

The reception of information from any source can be implemented through various sense modalities. While the number of combinations is quite large, the present study was limited to six types. They were: Visual Auditory (VA), Auditory (A), Reading a Transcript (R), Visual Auditory Read (VAR), and Visual Read (VR). Visual and Read differed in that Visual referred to seeing the applicant while Read referred to reading a transcript of the interview.

One of the two main factors of the research is the type of nonessential information that the interviewee emits. In one case the interviewee was very "wholesome" i.e. he was clean, poised, well-dressed, used standard grammar, etc. This interview was called the "B1 Interview." The second interview was with an individual who had all of the antithetical qualities of interviewee #1. This interview was called the "B2 Interview."

The null hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

### Mode of Perception

1. The number of essential facts retained will not differ as a function of the mode of perception;
2. The number of nonessential facts retained will not differ as a function of the mode of perception;
3. The number of opinions formed will not differ as a function of the mode of perception;
4. The accuracy of essential facts recalled will not differ as a function of the mode of perception;

5. The accuracy of nonessential facts retained will not differ as a function of the mode of perception;
6. The number of decisions to hire will not differ as a function of the mode of perception;

#### Appearance

7. The number of essential facts retained will not differ as a function of appearance;
8. The number of nonessential facts retained will not differ as a function of appearance;
9. The number of opinions formed will not differ as a function of appearance;
10. The accuracy of essential facts retained will not differ as a function of appearance;
11. The accuracy of nonessential facts retained will not differ as a function of appearance;
12. The number of decisions to hire will not differ as a function of appearance;

The dependent variables are: (1) number of essential facts retained; (2) number of nonessential facts retained; (3) accuracy of essential facts retained; (4) accuracy of nonessential facts retained; (5) number of opinions formed; and (6) decision to hire.

The independent variables are mode of perception and appearance.

## METHOD

### Subjects

The Ss were selected from the population of Psychology 101 students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Both male and female students were used. More than 75% of the population ranged in age from 18 to 22 years of age. A random numbers table was used to assign the Ss to groups. The disposition of numbers was such that no group had more than nine members of the same sex, with 15 Ss in each group. The resulting groups were 12 in number.

A pilot study ( $N = 20$ ) was conducted using the same format as the current study. A Fisher Exact Probability Test and the Median Test indicated that no sex differences were in evidence ( $p > .40$ ).

### Apparatus and Materials

A Sony Video-Tape apparatus using Memorex Precision Tape ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch), was used for recording and showing the interviews to the Ss.

An actor from the Speech and Drama Department of the University played the part of the two interviewees, while a graduate student from the Psychology Department played the interviewer in both films.

The two interviews came from scripts which were identical for each interview in terms of the information supplied by the interviewee. The scripts differed from one another with regard to pronunciation, standard grammar or deviation from it, and speed of speech. The scripts also

differed in appearance and mannerisms. In the "B1 Interview" the applicant is seen as having standard grammar, good posture, and poised, calm, behavioral mannerisms. The "B2 Interview" is the one in which the applicant has all the antithetical qualities of B1.

Instructions were read to the Ss from a printed instruction sheet (Appendix A).

A recall test (Appendix B) and an opinion questionnaire (Appendix C) were also used. Both were constructed by the investigator. A random selection of 25 recall tests showed them to have a split-half (odd-even) reliability of .92. Questioning of Ss after the study indicated that face validity was also present. The recall test was so constructed that it measured the total number of facts the S tried to recall (number of facts retained), and the number of facts retained which were actually correct (accuracy of facts retained).

The opinion questionnaire was so constructed that the S was not forced to make a selection of any opinion listed.

Transcripts of the interview (Appendix D) were created by the investigator. Only one S out of the entire sample felt that the transcript was artificial.

A job description (Appendix E) was used so that Ss would know the objective qualifications the applicant should have. The description was designed so that it mentioned many qualities which the applicant would indicate he possessed



during the interview.

### Procedure

Ss were randomly assigned to one of 12 groups, as shown in Table I. Each S, regardless of group, received the same instructions and a job description of the position for which the applicant was applying.

In order to hold variables such as physical characteristics, actual voice quality, etc., constant, the same actor played both the B1 and B2 interviewees. No S saw the actor in both roles, or was even aware that there was another form of the interview. Table II illustrates the design used.

Table I

Distribution of Interview Variables Among Modes of Perception

	B1	B2
Visual Auditory (VA)	B1	B2
Auditory (A)	B1	B2
Read Transcript (R)	B1	B2
Visual Auditory Read (VAR)	B1	B2
Auditory Read (AR)	B1	B2
Visual Read (VR)	B1	B2

Table II

Experimental Design for Research with Five Levels of  
A and Two Levels of B

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A4	A5	A6
B1	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
B2	n	n	n	n	n	n	n

Note.-n=15

A1=VA; A2=A; A3=R; A4=VAR; A5=AR; A6=VR;

The VA (A1) Group saw the film and heard the interview. The A (A2) Group only heard the interview. The R (A3) Group only read the interview transcript. The VAR (A4) Group heard and saw the film and read a transcript of the interview. The AR (A5) Group heard the interview and read a transcript. The VR (A6) Group saw the interview and read a transcript.

Each S was instructed that he would be playing the role of a personnel director. He was then told what his contact with the applicant would be, i.e., that he would be seeing and hearing the interview, or hearing the interview, etc. Ss were then instructed that following the interview they would be given a data survey (which was actually the recall test). Following this instruction, Ss were told they would also be expected to make a decision about whether or not to hire the individual. Ss were not told that they would be

given an opinion questionnaire since that might have induced a set for opinion formation.

Immediately after the instructions were concluded, each S was given a copy of the job description and allowed ten minutes to read it. They were allowed to keep the job descriptions with them during the course of the interview. Following the ten minute reading period, the Ss were subjected to the interview at the conclusion of which they were given the opinion questionnaire and the recall test in that order.

On the opinion questionnaire the Ss were instructed to indicate an opinion only if they believed they had one. There were no forced choices and Ss were allowed to answer "No Opinion."

The recall test followed the opinion questionnaire for a very definite reason. When two tests are presented consecutively, there is bound to be some transfer from the first to the second test. This would be the case whether the recall test preceded the opinion questionnaire or vice-versa. However, the present order was chosen because it was felt that opinions should be elicited unfettered by recall of particular facts. An S may have used one type of data to form his opinions, while the recall test may stress other data. This could facilitate forming opinions in a manner that S would not ordinarily use.

## RESULTS

The results are presented according to the order of the dependent variables for both mode of perception and appearance.

### Results for Hypotheses 1 & 7

An analysis of variance indicated that there were no significant differences for the number of essential facts retained as a function of either mode of perception or appearance. Table III shows means and standard deviations for this variable. Table IV is the summary table for the analysis of variance.

Table III

Means and Standard Deviations for the 12 Experimental Groups on Essential Facts Retained

Group	Mean	SD
A1	18.17	3.59
A2	18.15	2.12
A3	18.63	.96
A4	18.71	3.95
A5	18.83	1.56
A6	18.33	1.28
B1	18.52	3.74
B2	18.43	3.06

Table IV  
Analysis of Variance Summary for Number of Essential  
Facts Retained

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
Total	179	-	-	-
A	5	2.65	1.24	ns
B	1	.75	.35	ns
AB	5	3.82	1.79	ns
Error	168	2.13		

Results for Hypotheses 2 & 8

Analysis of variance on this variable showed there to be a significant difference in the number of nonessential facts retained as a function of both mode of perception ( $p < .001$ ), and appearance ( $p < .001$ ). Table V shows means and standard deviations for this variable. Table VI shows a summary table for the analysis of variance.

A nonsignificant interaction effect was found for these variables.

Newman-Keuls analysis of the six levels of A indicated a number of significant differences ( $p < .05$ ). Results indicated that: (1) A Group was significantly lower than VA, R, VAR, AR, and VR; (2) AR Group was significantly lower than VA, VAR, and AR; and (3) R Group was significantly lower than VA, VAR, and VR.

Table V

Means and Standard Deviations for the 12 Experimental Groups on Nonessential Facts Retained

Group	Mean	SD
A1	16.93	2.92
A2	10.76	2.58
A3	14.29	3.36
A4	17.83	2.42
A5	13.53	2.35
A6	16.53	.94
B1	14.34	5.53
B2	15.62	3.23

Table VI

Analysis of Variance Summary for Number of Nonessential Facts Retained

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
Total	179	-	-	-
A	5	208.06	20.27	<.001
B	1	73.46	7.15	<.001
AB	5	2.49	.24	ns
Error	168	10.26		

### Results for Hypotheses 3 & 9

Significant differences were found for the number of opinions formed as a function of both mode of perception ( $p < .001$ ), and appearance ( $p < .001$ ). A significant interaction effect ( $p < .001$ ) was also found, and an analysis for simple main effects was computed. Table VII shows means and

standard deviation for this variable, and Table VIII is an analysis of variance summary. Table IX is a summary analysis of simple main effects.

Newman-Keuls analysis of the six levels of A found the following significant differences ( $p < .05$ ): (1) A was significantly lower than Groups VA, R, VAR, and VR; and (2) AR was significantly lower than VAR.

Least Significance Difference method was used to investigate effects of the different levels of A within each level of B. Within B1 it was found that there are significant differences between the number of opinions formed when in the A Group as opposed to all other groups, ( $p < .001$ ). The A Group was significantly lower.

Within B2 the following significant differences were found: VAR Group formed a higher number of opinions than those in the A Group ( $p < .05$ ), AR ( $p < .02$ ), R ( $p < .05$ ), and VR ( $p < .05$ ); and (2) AV formed a higher number of opinions than those in the AR ( $p < .02$ ) and VR ( $p < .05$ ) Groups.

Table VII

Means and Standard Deviations for the 12 Experimental Groups on Number of Opinions formed

Group	Mean	SD
A1	20.06	2.16
A2	17.67	3.43
A3	19.20	1.66
A4	20.56	3.33
A5	18.93	2.45
A6	19.23	2.36
B1	18.72	5.15
B2	19.83	5.07

Table VIII

Analysis of Variance Summary for the Number of  
Opinions Formed

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
Total	179	-	-	-
A	5	30.83	6.71	<.001
B	1	93.86	20.43	<.001
AB	5	77.37	16.84	<.001
Error	168	4.59		

Table IX

Analysis of Variance Summary of Simple Main Effects  
of Number of Opinions Formed

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
B for A1	1	22.54	4.91	<.001
B for A2	1	90.13	19.63	<.001
B for A3	1	1.20	.26	ns
B for A4	1	5.64	1.23	ns
B for A5	1	.14	.03	ns
B for A6	1	.04	.01	ns
A for B1	5	154.86	33.74	<.001
A for B2	5	59.43	12.94	<.001

Note.-M.S. for error = 4.59  
d.f. for error = 168



### Results for Hypotheses 4 & 10

Significant differences were found for the accuracy of essential facts retained as a function of both mode of perception ( $p < .001$ ) and appearance ( $p < .001$ ). A significant interaction effect was also found ( $p < .001$ ), and an analysis for simple main effects was computed.

A Newman-Keuls analysis of the six levels of A indicated the following significant difference ( $p < .05$ ). VAR, AR, and VR, were more accurate than AV. Results also indicated that R, VAR, AR, and VR were significantly more accurate ( $p < .05$ ) than A.

Least Significance Difference method was used to examine the effect of different levels of A within each Level of B. The following differences were found: Within B1, VAR was significantly more accurate than A ( $p < .001$ ), AR ( $p < .001$ ), and AV ( $p < .05$ ). Also, AR and R were significantly more accurate than AV ( $p < .05$ ).

Within B2, AR and VR were more accurate than AV ( $p < .001$ ). VAR was more accurate than AV ( $p < .02$ ). R was more accurate than AV ( $p < .02$ ). It was also found that AR was more accurate than A ( $p < .01$ ), and VR was more accurate than A ( $p < .001$ ). Finally, AR was more accurate than R ( $p < .05$ ), and VAR ( $p < .02$ ).

Table X shows means and standard deviations for this variable. Table XI is an analysis of variance summary table. Table XII is a summary analysis of simple main effects.

Table X

Means and Standard Deviations for the 12 Experimental Groups on Accuracy of Essential Facts Retained

Group	Mean	SD
A1	67.63	13.42
A2	70.23	9.23
A3	74.76	10.09
A4	76.63	12.26
A5	76.80	11.09
A6	76.29	6.46
B1	75.92	3.21
B2	71.53	1.49

Table XI

Analysis of Variance Summary for Accuracy of Essential Facts Retained

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
Total	179	-	-	-
A	5	449.57	6.90	<.001
B	1	866.80	13.30	<.001
AB	5	1729.89	26.55	<.001
Error	168	65.15		

Table XIII

Analysis of Variance Summary of Simple Main Effects of  
Accuracy of Essential Facts Retained

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
B for A1	1	456.30	7.000	.01
B for A2	1	100.83	1.54	ns
B for A3	1	187.49	2.87	ns
B for A4	1	929.63	14.26	.01
B for A5	1	83.33	1.27	ns
B for A6	1	32.03	.49	ns
A for B1	5	1169.35	17.94	.001
A for B2	5	2001.13	30.71	.001

Note.-M.S. for error = 65.15  
df for error = 168

#### Results for Hypotheses 5 & 11

Significant differences were found for the accuracy of nonessential facts retained as a function of both mode of perception ( $p < .001$ ) and appearance ( $p < .001$ ). An interaction effect was also found significant ( $p < .001$ ). An analysis for simple main effects was computed.

A Newman-Keuls analysis of the six levels of A indicated the following significant differences ( $p < .05$ ): VR, VAR, A, and AV were more accurate than R. Results also indicated that VR, A, and AV were more accurate than AR.

Least Significance Difference method was used to determine differences within each level of B as a function of A.

Within B1 it was found that VR was significantly more accurate than AV ( $p < .001$ ), A ( $p < .02$ ), R ( $p < .02$ ), VAR ( $p < .01$ ), and AR ( $p < .001$ ).

Within B2 the following significant differences were found: (1) AV, A, VAR, and VR were more accurate than R ( $p < .001$ ); (2) AR was more accurate than R ( $p < .05$ ); and A and AV were more accurate than AR ( $p < .01$ ).

Table XIII shows means and standard deviations for this variable. Table XIV shows the analysis of variance summary for this variable. Table XV is a summary analysis of simple main effects.

Table XIII

Means and Standard Deviations for the 12 Experimental Groups on Accuracy of Nonessential Facts Retained

Group	Mean	SD
A1	60.43	19.67
A2	60.10	19.96
A3	44.89	20.30
A4	56.53	14.38
A5	47.73	10.60
A6	64.03	12.16
B1	50.44	21.70
B2	60.79	17.57

Table XIV

Analysis of Variance Summary for Accuracy of Non-essential Facts Retained

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
Total	179	-	-	-
A	5	1767.96	7.24	<.001
B	1	4826.26	19.78	<.001
AB	5	1861.27	7.62	<.001
Error	168	243.97		

Table XV

Analysis of Variance Summary of Simple Main Effects of Accuracy of Nonessential Facts Retained

Source	d.f.	M.S.	F	p
B for A1	1	6720.04	27.54	<.001
B for A2	1	2375.30	9.74	<.005
B for A3	1	1216.03	4.98	<.05
B for A4	1	3413.34	13.99	<.001
B for A5	1	403.34	1.65	ns
B for A6	1	17.64	.07	ns
A for B1	5	4405.95	18.06	<.001
A for B2	5	13674.13	56.04	<.001

Note.-M.S. for error = 243.97  
d.f. for error = 168

### Results for Hypotheses 6 & 12

A Chi Square was performed on the number of decisions to hire, for mode of perception and appearance. A significant effect was found as a function of mode of perception ( $\chi^2 = 12.14$ ,  $df = 5$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but none was found for the effect of appearance ( $\chi^2 = .72$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

Individual comparisons using the Fisher Exact Probability Test disclosed the following significant differences, all of which were significant at  $p < .05$ : (1) under B1, R made more hire decisions than AV; (2) under B2, VAR made more hire decisions than AV; AR made more hire decisions than AV; VR made more hire decisions than AV; and AR made more hire decisions than A; and (3) across B1-B2, results showed a greater number of hire decisions for AR under B2 than AR under B1.

A comparison of the pooled totals of VAR, AR, and VR, against VA, A, and R indicated a significant Chi Square  $\chi^2 = 5.16$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

### Miscellaneous Results

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed between the number of nonessential facts retained and the number of opinions formed. The resulting coefficient was .027 and no significance could be attributed to this relationship.

## DISCUSSION

There are two general observations which are obvious after a precursory look at the data: (1) The general appearance and behavior of the interviewee influence the quantity and quality of information the interviewer obtains from the interview; and (2) The mode of perception utilized by the interviewer does have a significant effect on his performance. This would seem to be the case whether or not the interviewer consciously stresses some particular mode of perception.

### Effects of Appearance

One of the two independent variables in this study was the manner in which the interviewee presented himself. This included how standard his grammar was, general appearance, rate of speech, eye contact, dress, etc.; considered non-essential facts by the investigator. These were considered nonessential because the requirements for successful on-the-job performance as specified in the written job description were not related to the factors we are calling appearance.

### Number of Nonessential Facts Retained

It can be concluded that appearance which is negative, i.e., non-standard grammar, appearance, posture, etc., results in the recall of more nonessential facts by the interviewer. The interviewer is more likely to remember questions about dress, hair, etc., if they are negative. The same types of nonessential facts are not recalled in quite the same quan-

tity if they are positive. This is in keeping with the finding of Mayfield and Carlson (1967), that negative factors have a greater impact on interviewers than do positive factors.

#### Accuracy of Nonessential Facts Retained

In addition to recalling more nonessential facts when dealing with a negative appearance, it appeared that the interviewer was more accurate in the recall of those facts. An interviewer who recalled 20 nonessential facts from a negative interview was more likely to be right about a greater percentage of those facts than was an interviewer who recalled 20 facts from a positive interview.

There was an interaction effect here. Appearance caused significant differences within the VA, A, R, and VAR Groups, but not within the AR, and VR Groups. It appeared that reading, when combined with one of the other modalities, tended to suppress the effect of appearance.

#### Number of Essential Facts Retained

There was no difference in the number of essential facts retained as a function of appearance. It should be pointed out that the recall test allowed for recall of a certain number of essential and nonessential facts (20 of each), and all Ss tended to answer all of the essential questions, even though some were admitted guesses. The questions on essential facts were more specific than those on the nonessential facts. It appeared that with a given set of specific questions,



most individuals will try to answer them all, going beyond their information if necessary. This nonsignificant finding then holds important ramifications for interviewer decisions. In thinking back about an interviewee, the interviewer generally has certain questions he must answer. It may be then that the interviewer will answer those questions with supposition if the facts are not immediately at hand.

#### Accuracy of Essential Facts Retained

While there was no significant difference in the number of essential facts recalled, there was a significant difference in the accuracy with which essential facts were recalled. Those dealing with a negative appearance tended to recall essential facts less accurately than those dealing with a positive appearance. This confirmed the idea that a negative appearance was misleading in that it focused interviewer attention upon irrelevancies, hence making the interviewer less accurate about essential facts.

There was a significant interaction within the VA and VAR Groups, but no significant interaction within the A, R, AR, and VR Groups. Again we find that reading seemed to suppress the effect of appearance. In this case, the combination of seeing and hearing the person seemed most susceptible to influence by appearance.

#### Number of Opinions Formed

With regard to the number of opinions formed during the interview, appearance seemed to play an important role.

Those who dealt with the negative appearance formed a significantly higher number of opinions. This might have been a function of paying more attention to irrelevancies by the Ss. However, this is purely supposition since the correlation between irrelevancies was not high enough to be significant.

The fact remains that those dealing with the negative appearance formed more opinions. This investigator submits that opinions--even when called professional intuition--are unvalidated bits of information which are accepted as facts and are reacted to, hence lowering the quality of the final decision.

There was a significant interaction. Significant differences were found within the VA and A Groups, but not within the R, VAR, AR, and VR Groups. We can assume that the common factor of reading suppressed the influence of appearance. Again, actual visual or auditory contact with the interviewee seemed most influenced by appearance when reading did not accompany.

#### The Hiring Decision

The appearance of the interviewee had no significant effect upon the hiring decision. Those who saw the negative appearance made the decision to hire (which is the correct one in this case) as often as those who saw the positive appearance. This points to an interesting phenomenon. There were many interviewers in this study ( $N = 180$ ), and

their responses seemed to be definitely affected by the independent variables. While the purpose of the interview is to gather information upon which to base a decision, the final outcome--the crux of the interviewing problem--seemed to be independent of the types and amount of information gathered.

Many of the hire decisions came from people who differed as to their accuracy, number of opinions formed, facts recalled, etc. Although some would argue that this indicates the independent variables were not important (since 56% of the Ss made the correct decision), this investigator does not agree.

This phenomenon seems to be an indication that the decision is often one of poor quality and seems to be of a chance nature. It would seem that much more research is necessary so that components going into making the decision can be thoroughly understood. The purposes of this study were in no way negated by the contradictory finding about the hiring decision. As was pointed out earlier, this study was mainly concerned with the factors influencing the decision and not the decision itself.

### Effects of Mode of Perception

The variable mode of perception is a much more difficult one to analyze since there was a great deal of interaction among its six levels. There were significant differences as a function of mode of perception except in the case of essential facts retained.

#### Number of Nonessential Facts Retained

Many significant differences occurred between modes of perception with regard to number of nonessential facts retained; a very predictable result. Many nonessential facts were detectable only if one saw or heard the interview, i.e., some facts were verbal and others were visual. It is reasonable to expect then that the greater the number of modes of perception used in dealing with the interview, the greater the number of nonessential facts retained, since more are encountered. The results tended to follow this pattern.

Those in the VA, VAR, AR, VR, and R Groups retained more than those in the A Group. Those in the VAR, VA, and VR Groups also retained more than those in the AR and R Groups. Since most of the nonessential questions dealt with the visual aspects of appearance, this was a predictable outcome.

It is interesting to note that the R Group which logically should have been lowest in this category was not. Again this may be interpreted as another example that people have a willingness to go beyond the data rather than admit they

do not know the answer.

#### Accuracy of Nonessential Facts Retained

A significant difference was found in the accuracy of facts retained as a function of mode of perception. Groups VR, AR, VAR, and R were more accurate than Group VA. The findings also indicated that VR, AR, and VAR were more accurate than A. The most important factor in recall of nonessential information was the seeing factor. It seems reasonable that since we are prone to rely on our visual sense, we are more adept at using it with respect to factors that influence person perception. Unfortunately, it is this kind of factor which is often least associated with on-the-job performance.

Reading seems to have the most suppressing influence on the accuracy of nonessential recall. It should be remembered that reading also played an important part in accuracy of essential facts retained. It would seem that reading should be emphasized and visual contact limited. Perhaps an assistant could conduct the interview, and the personnel director could use a transcript of the interview for analysis.

Investigation into the B1 and B2 interviews further supports this notion. With B1, reading, except in combination with seeing, cut down on accuracy of nonessential information. Within B2, reading by itself, or in combination with hearing, cut down on accuracy of nonessential information.

### Number of Essential Facts Retained

The number of essential facts retained did not differ as a function of mode of perception. This was in keeping with our earlier finding that people will respond to specific questions whether they are in possession of the necessary information or not.

### Accuracy of Essential Facts Retained

The accuracy of essential facts retained differed as a function of mode of perception. Those in the VR, AR, VAR, and R Groups were more accurate than those in the VA Group. In addition, those in the VR, AR, and VAR Groups were more accurate than those in Group A. Reading seemed to be the common factor here. We may surmise that the reading of the transcript allowed for a greater concentration upon relevant facts, since many irrelevancies were eliminated when the interview was neither seen nor heard, but merely read (the R Group). In the case of those who also heard and/or saw the interview, the reading of the transcript seemed to act as a suppressor on the earlier irrelevant information.

Within B1 the differences were also attributable to reading, and within B2 the same pattern evolved. Reading by itself or in combination with one of the other modes increased accuracy of essential facts retained.

### Number of Opinions Formed

The number of opinions formed significantly differed as a function of the mode of perception. Those in the VR, VAR, R, and VA Groups formed more opinions than those in the A Group. Also, those in the VAR Group formed more opinions than those in the AR Group. Those in the R Group just missed being significantly different from those in the A Group. The critical difference was 4.65 and the observed difference of 4.50 just missed this.

Hearing, or hearing in conjunction with reading accounted for lower number of opinions formed, while seeing in combination with reading and/or hearing accounted for a higher number of opinions formed. Again, it seems that visual contact accounts for the greatest amount of influence by factors which tend to lessen the quality of the information received. Analysis into the levels of B supported this finding. Within B1 the group that heard only, formed the lower number of opinions when compared with all other groups. Within B2, hearing, or hearing in combination with another mode led to the lowest numbers of opinions.

### The Hiring Decision

There was a significant difference in the number of decisions to hire as a function of the mode of perception. While the specific differences could not be located without violating statistical procedure, certain observations can be made. There is a greater tendency to hire in the R, VAR,

AR, and VR Groups. Those in the AV and A Groups show less tendency to hire. Again, reading seemed to be the common factor in the greater number of hiring decisions.

### The Importance of Reading

The author feels that special discussion should be accorded the reading factor since it seems to be one of the most important in the study.

Having a prepared transcript rather than face-to-face contact serves to cut down the number of nonessential factors that can influence the interviewer. Many of the superfluous methods we use in person perception are not at our command when reading.

It would seem then that reading and transcripts are favorable methods of examining an interviewee and should be studied much more rigorously.



### General Discussion

The author acknowledges that the population for this study was a limited one and in no way represents the broad "interviewing spectrum." However, certain generalizations can be made. Individuals put in the position of an interviewer are affected by appearance and mode of perception utilized. It must be accepted that differing modes of perception can and do lead to different kinds of reception of information from the interviewee.

Certain aspects of interviewing should be eliminated or at least modified. The strong reliance on seeing and hearing have been shown--at least for the population in this study--to lead to certain outcomes which are not desirable. Factors such as formation of opinions, concentration on irrelevancies, inaccurate recall, etc., can be limited by the judicious use of transcripts after the interview or by having a second party examine the transcript without ever seeing the applicant.

Mistakes which are inherent in the process of perceiving another person can be modified by channeling the interviewer's attention to objective criteria. This can be done successfully by putting an emphasis upon reading about the interview without seeing it. If face-to-face contact is desired, the interviewer should abstain in his judgements until he is able to see a transcript of the interview. This seems to suppress many of the errors the interviewer is prone to.

### Summary of Conclusions

1. Appearance of interviewee affects accuracy of essential facts retained, number of nonessential facts retained, accuracy of nonessential information, and number of opinions formed.
2. Mode of perception affects accuracy of essential facts retained, number of nonessential facts retained, accuracy of nonessential facts retained, number of opinions formed, and the decision to hire.
3. Negative appearance results in a greater recall of nonessential facts.
4. Negative appearance is influential in the greater accuracy of recall of nonessential facts.
5. Neither mode of perception nor appearance effects the number of essential facts retained.
6. Positive appearance increases accuracy of recall of essential facts.
7. Negative appearance results in a greater number of opinions formed.
8. Further research is needed on these questions: (1) relationships between the variables; (2) study of age as a relevant variable; (3) relationship between accuracy and number of opinions.

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## APPENDIX A

Instructions

In a few minutes you will be dealing with an interview situation. In your case, you will be''' (EXPLAIN) ''' the interview. Please concentrate for you will be asked to go over the data concerning the applicant at the conclusion of the interview.

This man is being considered for a position as an assistant foreman in a large manufacturing plant. I will be interested in knowing what YOU (stress) think about this individual's suitability for the job under consideration.

Following the interview you will be asked questions about the individual on a data survey. The survey will be explained to you after the interview. You may take notes; what kind and how many are entirely up to you. They will not be collected, but you will be allowed to refer to them for a brief period after the interview.

I am now going to hand out sheets which explain in much more detail, exactly what position this man is being appraised for. You will be given ten minutes to read it and you may keep it with you during the interview.

Are there any questions?

## APPENDIX B

## DATA SURVEY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

The following pages contain certain questions dealing with the interview you have just been involved with. For each question you have one of three options.

If you feel that you have forgotten the item in question or did not have enough information, merely put a check in the column labeled "Don't Know."

If you believe that you do know the answer, write it (Yes-No, True-False, etc., or a small explanation) in the column labeled "Answer."

If you do not have the exact information called for, but feel that you want to hazard a guess based on other things you have seen or heard, feel free to do so. Do this by writing your answer in the column labeled "Answer" and circling it.

Please be as truthful as you can be on deciding which of the three options to take. Be certain to use one of the three options on every one of the forty (40) questions!



	<u>Answer</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
1. How long was the training program at Mid-Am?		
2. What jewelry did he have on?		
3. Mr. Smith repeats himself often.		
4. What was the training about?		
5. Kept crossing and uncrossing legs?		
6. What grade completed? (school)		
7. What did he do in the army?		
8. Said "ain't" five times		
9. Likes working with people		
10. Often scratched his head		
11. Speech was not too precise		
12. Is Mr. Smith married?		
13. What is his favorite outdoor work?		
14. How many years in the army?		
15. How many jobs held after army and up to interview?		
16. Speaks more rapidly than the interviewer		
17. How many years averaged per job until now?		
18. Was he wearing anything on his neck?		
19. Spent a great deal of time tapping fingers during interview.		
20. Does he have any experience with paperwork?		
21. He avoids direct answers.		

	<u>Answer</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
22. How long was he at Mid-Am before being promoted to ass't foreman?	<hr/>	<hr/>
23. What's the greatest number of men he has supervised?	<hr/>	<hr/>
24. He spoke louder than the interviewer.	<hr/>	<hr/>
25. Does he like diversity and change?	<hr/>	<hr/>
26. Who showed more activity, Mr. Smith or the interviewer?	<hr/>	<hr/>
27. Mr. Smith frequently slurs his word endings.	<hr/>	<hr/>
28. He has experience with formally rating his subordinates.	<hr/>	<hr/>
29. What kind of shirt did he wear?	<hr/>	<hr/>
30. Is he used to disciplining others and if so why?	<hr/>	<hr/>
31. Major reason for leaving last job?	<hr/>	<hr/>
32. Hair mussed or all in place?	<hr/>	<hr/>
33. Prefer indoor or outdoor work?	<hr/>	<hr/>
34. Concentrates on questions.	<hr/>	<hr/>
35. Does he avoid or maintain eye contact?	<hr/>	<hr/>
36. Feels he needs close supervision.	<hr/>	<hr/>
37. Appears to be from this part of U.S.A.	<hr/>	<hr/>
38. How old is he?	<hr/>	<hr/>
39. Mr. Smith filled out an application blank before the interview.	<hr/>	<hr/>
40. He has an occasional drink with the boss.	<hr/>	<hr/>

## APPENDIX C

OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SEX \_\_\_\_\_

This booklet contains 25 characteristics which may or may not apply to Mr. Smith in your opinion.

For each characteristic you should have a check in one of the four boxes. If you feel he does have the characteristic simply indicate to what degree. If you feel you did not have enough information check the box labeled "No Opinion."

There are empty boxes on the bottom of page 2. If you feel Mr. Smith had some characteristic, good or bad in your opinion, please list it here. Then also check the Low, Avg., or High category.

CHARACTERISTIC	<u>LOW</u>	<u>AVG.</u>	<u>HIGH</u>	<u>NO OPINION</u>
DESIRE TO ACHIEVE				
RESPONSIBILITY				
DEPENDABILITY				
LEADERSHIP ABILITY				
TRAINABILITY				
INTELLIGENCE				
ENDURANCE				
COOPERATION				
INNOVATION				
SKILL				
SINCERITY				
FRIENDLINESS				
AGGRESSIVENESS				
TRUTHFULNESS				
TRUTHFULNESS				
SUBMISSIVENESS				
COMMON SENSE				
ABILITY TO FUNCTION UNDER STRESS				
ABILITY TO TAKE INSTRUCTION				
OBJECTIVITY				
EXHIBITIONISM				
ABILITY TO WITHSTAND FRUSTRATION				
RESTLESSNESS				

CHARACTERISTIC	<u>LOW</u>	<u>AVG.</u>	<u>HIGH</u>	<u>NO OPINION</u>
MASCULINITY				
STATE OF HEALTH				
DO YOU WANT HIM FOR A FRIEND				

I RECOMMEND HIRING MR. SMITH

YES

NO

BRIEFLY EXPLAIN IN ONE PARAGRAPH WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DETERMINING YOUR DECISION

THANK YOU

## APPENDIX D

## Interview Transcripts

Interviewer: (I)

Interviewee: (E)

B1

- I: Good morning Mr. Smith. Come in and have a seat.
- E: Thank you.
- I: I think you realize this is the last step in the hiring process. What I'd like to do is just discuss certain questions with you.
- E: Yes sir.
- I: You've already taken a tour of the plant. Whats your impression of it?
- E: I was favorably impressed. Everyone here seems to be enjoying whatever they're doing.
- I: Well, we try to keep our employees satisfied with the work they have to do.
- E: I think thats probably just as important as just giving more and more money. I know it would be for me.
- I: Mr. Smith, your application says that you completed your junior year of high school. Is that correct?
- E: Correct. At the time my family was pressed for money and I decided that 11 years of schooling ought to be enough to earn me a good salary.
- I: Lets see, that was 1955. That makes you about 33 years old doesn't it?
- E: Thats correct. Not too old I hope.
- I: No, thats a fine age. You're just in the right age bracket.
- I: Tell me about the next few years following high school.
- E: Well, let's see. I worked for a few years till my family got back on its feet again, and then I enlisted in the army. I spent  $2\frac{1}{2}$  out of those three years in Germany.
- I: How were you utilized?
- E: I spent a lot of time in maintenance and I really enjoyed it. It was my first experience with so-called sanitation engineering, and I found out it entailed a lot more than just being a garbageman.
- I: From looking at your record, I'd say the work agreed with you. You went up through the ranks to sergeant before being discharged, isn't that so?
- E: Thats correct. It really wasn't difficult. As I said, I enjoyed the work, and working with a lot of other guys made it that much more enjoyable.
- I: If you liked it that much, why didn't you re-enlist when your hitch was up?
- E: Well my fiancée didn't want to be an army wife and I realized that the army is not the best place to raise a

family, what with being on duty so often and having to neglect children.

I: I can see your point. Well, what happened after the army. You stayed with sanitation work right?

E: No, not at first. Jobs were tight at the time and I soon found out I would have to take what was available.

I: And just what was that.

E: Well, over the next 6 years I worked as a car salesman, a display man--didn't like that too much--and managed a shoe department in a large retail store.

I: That averages out to only two years per job--why?

E: That's correct. But as I said, jobs were scarce and the recession was getting into full gear so I couldn't be choosy. As it turned out, the jobs I held were too quiet and the inactivity grated on me. I kept hoping I could get back into sanitation engineering. Every time I went for a job though, they wanted to know if I had industrial experience. They weren't interested when they found out I didn't.

I: Yet you eventually did get into this line of work. How did it come about?

E: Well, in '64 I went to an employment agency and they got me into a training program in sanitation engineering. It was being conducted by Mid-American Electronics. The program took four months, and when it was over Mid-Am offered me a job as aide to the sanitation foreman.

I: How did things progress after that?

E: Pretty well. I liked the work and the foreman seemed to like me. He was also an ex-G.I. After a year I was made assistant foreman.

I: Just what did that entail?

E: Well, I had 27 janitors working under me in my section. A group of pretty good workers. We all got along pretty well with a few exceptions.

I: Why were there exceptions?

E: Well, there were a few shirkers. Always trying to get someone else to do their job. That always burns me. I try to ignore a guy's faults usually, because I like working with people, but lazy guys just get to me. There weren't many though.

I: While you worked there did you have any experience with formally rating subordinates or disciplining them.

E: I never had to make any ratings in a formal way. As for discipline experience, don't forget I was a sergeant.

I: What were the best aspects of the job as far as you are concerned?

E: I guess the best thing was that my boss gave me a lot of leeway. I'm never too comfortable when one of my bosses is over my shoulder telling me the best way to do the job. Its good if they're there when you need them, but not always in your way.

- I: Anything else?
- E: Well, most of the work was on the inside of the plant. During the winter thats nice. Actually all year it is. The plant had climate control and was always comfortable.
- I: Then you dislike working outdoors?
- E: Oh no. I like indoors, but I work where I have to.
- I: I see. You did quit your job though, and I'd be interested in knowing why.
- E: Thats correct. I guess uh, I'd have to say that uh....  
....it was my immediate supervisor's fault I left the job.
- I: Mind telling me why?
- E: Well uh, things kept going from bad to worse. First he expected me to take over most of the paperwork--even his--since I did so much of it in the army. And he was telling me how to do my job too often. I think he was jealous of the work I was doing, or maybe about his own security. Anyhow, he started telling my men how to do their work differently, and showing them new methods. I had already spent a lot of time showing them one way to do it and it took me a lot of time--not that I mind--I like showing other people how to do something if they really want to learn.
- I: Is there anything else you'd like to say about this matter?
- E: Well.....yes. I guess the most important thing was that he was uh, kind of uh, unethical.
- I: I'd like to know what you mean.
- E: Well you see...we have arrangements whereby whoever has a new idea gets to take it upstairs by himself. This fellow used to get ideas from my men and then take the credit for them. Little things like that showed me he had no scruples and I can't abide by that.
- I: Are you sure you weren't actually begrudging your supervisor the credit he was getting. Was he really taking ideas from your men or could have it been coincidental?
- E: Oh I'm sure it wasn't. It happened too often to be coincidental. Maybe 8 or 10 times during the last 6 months I was there.
- I: I see. Well I know there are men like that. I wonder though. Why didn't you go over his head and present your findings or grievances to the administration?
- E: I don't believe in squealing on anybody. I just figured that this was a good time to leave the job. Before I said something or lost my head and got fired.
- I: Do you often lose your temper on the job?
- E: No sir. I never lose my temper on the job. I wouldn't want to set a bad example for anyone working under me. They see me blowing off steam and wonder why they shouldn't do the same thing.



I: That sounds like a wise practice, although I wonder if it isn't better to let people blow off steam in the presence of whatever is frustrating them.

E: Yes, I guess it might be.

I: Tell me Mr. Smith. While I'm sure there are many things about our position that interest you, what is the foremost?

E: Well to be truthful, I like the gardening work. A man..

I: Excuse me but didn't you say you prefer working indoors?

E: That's correct, but gardening more than makes up for having to be outside. I really love gardening. I have a beautiful garden around my house and I've really got a green thumb when it comes to taking care of it.

I: That's good. You'd be combining work with pleasure. What is it about gardening you enjoy so much?

E: Well, it's kind of difficult to explain. I guess maybe order is the key word. When you've laid a lawn and planted flowers and shrubs, everything is in place. I like knowing that and I like knowing things are in a definite scheme.

I: Does it bother you to see a lawn that's ruined, or dug up or splotchy?

E: It sure does. You hate to find unexpected disturbances after you've laid your plans, or uh....garden.

I: I see. What do you do when these unexpected disturbances crop up?

E: I guess that depends.

I: Depends on what?

E: On a lot of things I guess.

I: Well I guess the exact situation would determine the course of action.

E: That's correct.

I: You've got a pretty good idea of the position by now and I'd like to know just how interested you are.

E: You're correct in saying I'm interested. The work sounds interesting, the salary is good, and it seems like employees here like the conditions.

I: What are your hopes in regard to the job?

E: Well, I'd like to work in this capacity as assistant foreman and hopefully attain a foreman's position. With enough experience, someday I hope to get into management.

I: Well You're certainly ambitious. It's always good to have motivation in an employee.

I: I think we've pretty much covered the important points Mr. Smith. Before we conclude this interview is there anything you'd like me to clarify about the position?

E: Well, I don't know if you'd know or not, but it's about the social atmosphere at the plant. Do the workers have

a pretty close knit group. I mean do they form friendships or does everyone just go his way when the whistle blows?

I: I know for a fact that there's an awful lot of social activity outside the plant that stems from the plant. Leagues, social functions, etc. Most of the workers are pretty friendly with at least their own co-workers off the job.

E: I see. Thank you.

I: Well that includes the interview unless you have some other questions.

E: I don't think so.

I: We'll be in touch with you Mr. Smith. Thank you for coming in.

E: You're welcome.

## B2

I: Good morning Mr. Smith. Come in and have a seat.

E: Yeah, thanks a lot. Thanks.

I: I think you realize this is the last step in the hiring.

E: Yeah sure, dat's fine wit me.

I: You've already taken a tour of the plant. What's your impression of it?

E: I like it real fine. Yeah, its real nice. All da guys look kind a happy.

I: Well, we try to keep our employees happy with the work they have to do.

E: Dat's more important den just more money. I can tell you for sure dat for me, money ain't as important as da kind of work I gotta do.

I: Mr. Smith, your application says that you completed your junior year of high school. Is that correct?

E: Yeah, dat's right. My family was hard up for money at da time so I figgered 11 years of school oughta bring me some good money.

I: Let's see. That was 1955. That makes you 33 year old doesn't it?

E: That's correct. Ain't too old is it?

I: No thats a fine age. You're in the right age bracket.

I: Tell me about the next few years following high school.

E: Lemmee see. I worked a few years til my family had enough money and den I joined up wit ta army. Spent 2½ of da next tree years in Germany.

I: How were you utilized?

E: Huh?

I: Just what did you do in the army?

E: Oh. I spent a lotta time in maintanence and I really got ta like it. I found it ain't just a garbageman.

- I: From looking at your record I'd be inclined to say that the work agreed with you. You went up through the ranks to sergeant before being discharged, isn't that so?
- E: Dat's right. It wasn't hard. Like I been saying, I liked da work and da other guys I was wit were okay.
- I: If you liked it that much, why didn't you re-enlist when your hitch was up?
- E: Well, my girl and I was gettin' married and she didn't want to be no army wife. She kep sayin' that da army was no place to raise kids cause I'd be away so much.
- I: I can see your point. Well what happened after the army? You stayed with sanitation work right?
- E: No, not in da beginning. Jobs was tight and I had ta take whatever I could get.
- I: And just what was that?
- E: Well, over da next six years I worked as a car salesman, a displayman--dat sure ain't for me--and a manager of a shoe department in a big retail store.
- I: That averages out to only two years per job. Why?
- E: Yeah, dat's right. Like I been saying, jobs was tight and da recession was gettin' into full gear so I couldn't be too choosy. Da way it turned out, the jobs I got were too quiet and dat grated on me. I kep' hoping I could get back into sanitation engineering. But every time I went for a job, dey want to know do I have industrial experience. Dey ain't interested when dey find out I don't.
- I: Yet you eventually did get back into this line of work. How did this come about?
- E: Well, in '64 I went to a employment agency and dey got me into dis training program inside. It was a program wit Mid-American electronics and it was about sanitation engineering. Da program took four mont's and when it ended, Mid-Am offered me a position as a aide to the foreman in sanitation.
- I: How did things progress after that?
- E: Okay. I kind a liked da work and da foreman and me got along fine. He was a ex-G.I. too. After bout a year I was made assistant foreman.
- I: Just what did that entail?
- E: Dey gave me 27 guys working under me. Janitors. A group of pretty god guys. Good workers. We all got along fine wit da exception of a few guys.
- I: What was wrong with those workers.
- E: Well, dey was goldbricks ya know? Always trin' to get some-one else ta do da work for dem. Dat always burns me. I try ta ignore a guy's faults usually, cause I like work-in' wit other people and ya gotta expect dey got faults. But lazy guys just get me goat. Dere wasn't many of dem though.
- I: While you worked there did you have any experience with formally rating subordinates, or disciplining them?

- E: I didn't have ta make no ratings, but occasionally my bosses asked me how some new guy was workin' out. As fer discipline, don't forget I was a sergeant in the army.
- I: What were some of the best aspects of the job as far as you were concerned?
- E: Lemmee see. I guess the best thing was dat my boss give me a lot of leeway. I get kinda uncomfortable when someone is always over my shoulder telling me the best way to do something. It's okay if the boss is dere if you need em, but not always in da way.
- I: Anything else?
- E: Well, most of the work was on da inside of da plant. During da winter dats nice. Actually at all times its nice. Times I was really glad the plant had climate control.
- I: Then you dislike working outdoors?
- E: Oh no. I like indoors more, but I work where I have to.
- I: I see; you did quit your job though and I'd be interested in knowing why.
- E: Yeah, I did quit it. I guess uh,.....well uh, I'd have to say it was my immediate supervisors fault I left da job.
- I: Mind telling me why?
- E: Well uh, things kep' going from bad to worse. First he had me takin over most of the paperwork--including his--since I did so much of it in da army. And he was tellin' me how to do my job to often. I think he was jealous of the work I was doin' or maybe worried about his own place. Anyway, he started tellin' my men new ways to do their work and showin' them new ways. I already spent a lot a time showin' them how ta do da job--not dat I mind; like showing people how ta do something if dey really want ta learn.
- I: Is there anything else you'd like to say about this matter?
- E: Well...yeah I guess so. I guess the most important thing was dat he was uh, kind of uh, unethical.
- I: How do you mean?
- E: Well uh, we dis arrangement where any guy wit a new idea gets ta take it ta da administration himself. This fella used to steal other guys' ideas and takes them up higher ta get da credit. Little things like that showed me he had no ethics. I can't stand people like that.
- I: Are you sure you wern't begrudging your supervisor the credit he was getting for his ideas. What I mean is are you sure he took the ideas from others and that it wasn't just coincidence.
- E: Yeah I'm sure of it. It happened too much to be coincidence. Maybe 8 or 10 times during da last six mont's I was dere.

- I: I see. Well, I know there are men like that. I wonder though, why you didn't just go over his head and take your grievance to the administration?
- E: I don't believe in squealing on someone else. I just figured dat dis was a good time to be leavin' da job. Else I was goin' ta say something and get fired anyway.
- I: Do you often lose your temper on the job?
- E: No sir. I never did. I wouldn't want da other guys ta see me settin' a bad example. Dey see me blowin' off steam and dey get to wonderin' why dey shouldn't do da same thing.
- I: That sounds like a wise practice, although I wonder if it isn't sometimes better to let people blow off steam in the presence of whatever is frustrating them?
- E: Yeah, I guess I never thought of dat.
- I: Tell me Mr. Smith. While I'm sure there are many things about our position that interest you, what is the foremost?
- E: Fact of da matter is dat I like da gardening. And.....
- I: But didn't you say you prefer working indoors?
- E: Yeah, dat's right. But dat answer I'd have to change if gardening was concerned. Dat makes up for having to be outside. I really love workin' in gardens. I got a beautiful garden around da house and I really got a green thumb in dat department.
- I: That's good. You'd be combining work with pleasure.. What is it about gardening you like so much?
- E: Well it ain't easy ta explain. I guess maybe havin' things in order is da real thing. Once you've laid a lawn and planted flowers and shrubs everything is in place. I like knowing that all dose things are exactly where I put them and doin' well, ya know how I mean?
- I: Does it bother you to see a lawn thats ruined or splotchy or dug up?
- E: It sure does. Ya hate ta find unexpected disturbances after you've laid out your plans, or uh...garden.
- I: I see. What do you do when unexpected disturbances crop up.
- E: I guess that depends.
- I: Depends on what?
- E: On a lot of things I guess. Ya know?
- I: Well, I guess the exact situation would determine the course of action.
- E: Dat's right.
- I: You've got a pretty good idea of the position by now. I assume you're interested.
- E: Yeah, I do like dis plant. Da work sounds interesting, da salary is good, and it seems like da other workers like da place.
- I: What are your hopes in regard to the job?

- E: Well, I'd like ta work in dis capacity as assistant foreman and hopefully work into a foreman's position. Wit enough experience, someday I hope to get into management.
- I: Well you're certainly ambitious. It's always good to have motivation in ambitious employees.
- I: I think we've pretty much covered the important points Mr. Smith. Before we conclude, are there any questions you'd like to ask me?
- E: Well, I don't know if you know or what, but it's about da guys who work here. Are dey a close kind a bunch or do dey just separate when da whistle blows?
- I: I know for a fact that theres an awful lot of social activity outside the plant that stems from this place. Leagues, social functions, etc. Most of the workers are pretty friendly with at least their own co-workers.
- E: I see. Thanks.
- I: Well, that concludes the interview unless you have some other questions.
- E: I don't think so.
- I: We'll be in touch with you Mr. Smith. Thank you for coming in.
- E: Dat's alright.

## APPENDIX E

## Job Description

JOB TITLE ASSISTANT FOREMANSummary

Works under the supervision of the sanitation foreman; assigns non-routine tasks to departmental personnel; checks the work performance; maintains supplies and equipment used in the department; performs miscellaneous duties.

Job Duties and Responsibilities

1. Assigns non-routine tasks to departmental personnel; receives verbal instructions on non-routine tasks from sanitary foreman; receives verbal requests from supervisors of other departments for special work or to correct unsatisfactory work; discusses non-routine work with supervisor originating request; assigns non-routine work to sanitary staff; and gives instructions on how to perform job assignments.
2. Supervises the work performance of personnel in the department; checks the work quality and progress; determines if routine work sequence and timing have been followed and if work performance meets quality standards; corrects errors which are being made and instructs in proper procedures; answers questions asked by men in the performance of their duties; instructs men in safety practices to follow in unsafe places; checks to see that instructions are followed.
3. Maintains supplies and equipment used in the department; requisitions cleaning supplies and equipment from storeroom; receives notice from men when equipment is in need of repairs.
4. Performs miscellaneous duties; recommends disciplinary action of deleterious workers; prepares employee time sheets listing duties performed and hours worked; attends monthly safety meetings.
5. Performs other duties as assigned.

## Requirements for Assistant Foreman

### 1. Essential knowledge and training

Must be able to read write and speak English in order to communicate with others and to write requisitions. Must be able to perform simple arithmetical problems such as addition and subtraction. Equivalent to eight years of formal schooling.

### 2. Work experience

One and one-half months of sanitary experience is needed to learn the proper use of cleaning materials (types and amounts) and equipment used in sanitary work, and basic gardening and seeding. Two weeks experience on the job is required to learn plant layout and procedures for securing supplies and equipment. Total: two months.

### 3. Character of supervision received

Follows routine standard practices for most job duties. Receives special assignments from supervisor and consults him for advice on non-routine tasks. Work is checked by supervisor four times a day, mainly by questioning. Routine schedule determines progress of his work. May receive verbal requests for non-routine tasks from other departments.

### 4. Character of supervision given

Subordinates follow routine work schedule. Assigns non-routine tasks to subordinates and gives specific instructions on how to perform various tasks.



Additional Information Regarding Position

1. Supervises a total of 35 subordinates.
2. Is occasionally responsible for cleaning electrical equipment.
3. Expected to treat knowledge of subordinates income confidentially. Also to keep confident any matters of a personal nature entrusted to him by his subordinates.
4. Is responsible for harmonious relations among those below him.
5. Expected to be on the move physically all day long.
6. Works outside regardless of conditions.