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INTERVIEWERS' INFORMATION GATHERING STRATEGIES IN THE EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW

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INTERVIEWERS' INFORMATION GATHERING STRATEGIES IN THE EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW

by

THERESE M. MACAN

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTERS OF ARTS

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May, 1986
Interviewers' Information Gathering Strategies in the Employment Interview
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Abstract

The employment interview is one situation in which interviewers can use social interaction to test hypotheses about others. In the first study, 51 MBA and business students served as Interviewers. Half of the interviewers received paper credentials before generating questions to ask applicants. In Study 2, 92 respondents answered the generated questions. Judges' rated the questions and the responses to the questions to determine the extent to which the job profile and the perceived resume qualifications of the applicants would bias the types of questions asked. Consistent with Sackett's (1982) and McDonald & Hakel's (1985) findings, the dominant information seeking strategy appeared to be to ask non-biased questions. However, results indicated that an interviewer's idea of an applicant's suitability for the job based on application materials does affect the kinds of questions interviewers ask, providing partial support for Dipboye's (1985) proposition from the process model of the employment interview. Contrary to Snyder & Swann's (1982) findings, applicants showed no verbal behavioral confirmation of the hypothesis the interviewer was testing through their responses.
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Interviewers' Information Gathering

Strategies in the Employment Interview

The employment interview is one context in which individuals can use social interaction to test hypotheses about other people. In evaluating an applicant for a particular position the following events may occur: an interviewer reviews the applicant's paper credentials, forms an idea of his/her fit to the job, and then proceeds to seek and gather information on which to base the hiring decision. In fact, it is one of the interviewer's key functions to gather as much relevant information about the applicant as possible in a minimum amount of time.

Although the effects of information received about the applicant before and during the interview on interviewer judgment have been studied (Dipboye, Stramler & Fontenelle, 1984; Farr & York, 1975; Springbett, 1958; Tucker & Rowe, 1979), little research has addressed the effects of such information on the gathering and questioning strategies of interviewers. Researchers, however, have noted the importance and implications of the interviewer's information gathering function. For example, as early as 1964, Mayfield stated in a review of empirical findings on the interview that "the question form does influence the given response although it is not known why or in what way" (p. 252).
Additionally, in this information gathering function, interviewers have been regarded as successful to the extent they skillfully ask questions (Fear, 1978), collect information in the interview that cannot be obtained from the application (Daniels & Otis, 1950), and accurately recall this information following the interview (Tucker & Rowe, 1977). Until recently, the interviewer's active role as information seeker has been ignored (Sackett, 1982; McDonald & Hakel, 1985).

Dipboye (1985), in a process model of the interview, advanced a series of propositions about processes hypothesized to occur in the employment interview. One proposition,

"the more favorably that interviewers evaluate an applicant's qualifications for a job before the interview, the more they tend to seek information that reflects favorably on the applicant's job qualifications"

refers to the interviewer's role as information seeker, but has not been tested. Additionally, the model posits that an interviewer's pre-interview impression may not only bias the conduct of the interview but also the self-presentation of the applicant in the interview in a manner that confirms the interviewer's pre-interview impression (1982, p. 585). Because little research has been conducted in interview settings on hypothesis testing, relevant research in the psychological literature investigating the hypothesis
testing processes in social interaction is reviewed. The existing research that has addressed the interviewer's information seeking behavior in the employment interview setting is discussed. The following proposed research program is designed to investigate some unanswered issues arising from this past research and to test propositions of Dipboye's process model. Specifically, this study was conducted to ascertain the information seeking strategies of interviewers in an employment interview and the potential consequences for applicants' responses of using such a strategy.

Social Psychological Research on Confirmatory Biases in Questioning

The bulk of research on the information gathering strategies people use to test hypotheses about one another can be found in the social psychological literature. Snyder and Swann (1978) suggested that once having formed a hypothesis about another's personality trait, one might use various information-gathering strategies in a social interaction to test this hypothesis. This may be done to determine if the target person's actual behavior and responses coincide with those thought to be characteristic of people possessing that trait. For example, suppose an interviewer holds a hypothesis that an applicant is sociable. During the interview, the interviewer might ask
the applicant questions designed to determine whether or not the prospective employee's answers and actual behaviors match those characteristic of a sociable person.

Therefore, given that a person has formed a hypothesis about another, the relevant research question is: How will the individual choose questions which will test the hypothesis? What strategies do individuals use to test hypotheses about others with whom they interact? By using an example of a hypothesis that a person is sociable, Snyder and Swann (1978) proposed three potential strategies for hypothesis-testing: (1) hypothesis-confirming strategy -- search for sociable behavior; (2) hypothesis-disconfirming strategy -- search for shy behavior; (3) equal opportunity strategy -- search equally for both sociable and shy behaviors.

A series of experiments have been conducted to investigate how people gather information for the purpose of testing a hypothesis about another's personality (Snyder, 1981; Snyder & Campbell, 1980; Snyder & Cantor, 1979; Snyder & Swann, 1978; Snyder & White, 1981). Subjects were instructed to choose 12 questions from a list of 26 questions which they would ask of a target person in order to test whether the target person possessed a certain trait. Some subjects were asked to test if the target person was introverted. Others tested the hypothesis that the target
person was extroverted. A third group was asked to test if
the target was more of an introvert or more of an extrovert.

Based on this series of studies, Snyder and Swann
(1978) argued that subjects displayed a cognitive bias in
testing information about others. Specifically, subjects
sought out information that was supportive of their assigned
hypothesis. For instance, subjects given an introverted
hypothesis were more likely to choose questions that were
biased in the direction of introversion such as "What
factors make it really hard for you to open up to people?"
On the other hand, subjects testing the hypothesis that the
target was extroverted were more likely to choose questions
that were biased in an extroverted direction, such as "What
would you do if you wanted to liven things up at a party?"
Subjects asked to test either trait chose primarily
questions categorized as extrovert, presumably, as Snyder &
Swann (1978) explained, because subjects believed extroverts
appear with greater frequency or because subjects found it
easier to visualize extroverted behavior.

Consistently, subjects who participated in these
investigations preferentially searched for evidence that
would tend to confirm their assigned hypotheses. Snyder
(1981) concluded that these findings have held up across a
variety of conditions.

It seemed to matter not at all to these
individuals where their hypotheses
originated, whether substantial incentives for accurate hypothesis testing were offered, or whether the hypothesis explicitly defined disconfirming attributes (p. 289).

Although Snyder and his colleagues repeatedly found a bias towards a confirmatory hypothesis-testing strategy using the same procedures and measures, numerous criticisms of this research have been leveled. Semin and Strack (1980) argued that Snyder and Swann's (1978) results were due to the task manipulation and not to a bias towards a hypothesis-confirming strategy. In Snyder and Swann's research a subject was given a hypothesis and then asked to choose questions to test it. Semin and Strack reasoned that the strategy subjects pursued may have been the result of either the hypothesis these individuals were given or because the questions chosen were the only ones containing information relevant to the given task. Semin and Strack independently manipulated the task and the belief to explore this possible confounding. In the three hypothesis conditions, subjects were led to believe that the person they would meet was either an extrovert, an introvert, or else no information about the person was given. Subjects also received either a profile outlining characteristics of an extrovert or an introvert. The subjects' task was to select nine questions which would aid in determining whether the person matched the profile. The crucial conditions were
ones in which the subjects were given a particular hypothesis (extrovert or introvert) about a target person but their task was to test the opposite profile. Results revealed a significant main effect of the task manipulation. When given an extrovert profile, subjects chose more questions judged as typically asked of extroverts regardless of the hypothesis given about the target person. Likewise, more questions judged as typically asked of introverts were selected by subjects after receiving an introvert profile. Semin and Strack (1978) concluded that subjects did not preferentially seek information with a confirmatory strategy but instead acted within the constraints of the experimental task.

Restricting subjects to select questions from a specified list places another potential limitation on the external validity of Snyder's findings. Additionally, the standard list of questions was designed to represent one of three strategies: confirmatory, disconfirmatory, or equal opportunity. However in actual social interaction individuals seldom are made to choose questions. Instead, people may usually ask any question they please. Trope, Bassok, and Alon (1984) allowed subjects to formulate questions spontaneously to test pre-specified hypotheses (extrovert or introvert). Judges then classified the generated questions. Findings revealed that the percentage
of questions consistent with features of the hypothesized trait were not significantly different from the percentage of questions inconsistent with the hypothesis. The confirmatory strategy of information gathering was not supported when subjects were free to generate their own questions.

Throughout their research, Snyder and colleagues asked subjects to test hypotheses regarding the traits of introversion and extroversion. Sackett (1982) failed to replicate the findings of a confirmatory strategy when other traits were presented to interviewers. Using the same paradigm as Snyder and Swann’s (1978) initial study, Sackett substituted three characteristics—agreeableness, emotional stability, and conscientiousness—for introversion and extroversion. Results were consistent with the confirmatory strategy finding when emotional stability was used but not for the traits of agreeableness and conscientiousness. Sackett (1982) suggested that Snyder and Swann’s findings may simply be limited to the traits of extroversion and introversion. The above mentioned criticisms point to many flaws in Snyder and Swann’s (1978) research and call into question the validity of their findings.

Trope and Bassok (1982) recently examined information gathering strategies from a different perspective. Trope and Bassok proposed that information
seekers use diagnostic strategies to gather evidence on which to test hypotheses. A diagnostic questioning strategy refers to the preference for questions asking about the presence or absence of a feature of a trait. Questions are solicited that discriminate between behavioral evidence illustrating the hypothesized trait and the alternative trait. For example, if the interviewer holds the hypothesis that an applicant is extroverted, questions should be asked tapping the extroverted diagnostic feature "sociable" as well as the introverted diagnostic feature "quiet". Additionally, those questions asking about diagnostic features are preferred regardless of whether the features are probable or improbable given the hypothesized trait. This notion of probability of features given either trait does not hold true for the confirming strategy. In the hypothesis-confirming strategy, the information seeker focuses attention on the hypothesized trait, disregards alternative traits and asks questions concerning features that are only probable given the hypothesized trait.

In a test of these competing predictions, Trope and Bassok (1982) conducted a series of experiments in which the probability of the feature and the diagnosticity of the trait features were orthogonally varied. The subject's specific task was to choose questions about handwriting features in order to test the given hypothesis that a target
person was either intuitive or analytic. Subjects received
descriptions of both the hypothesized and alternative trait.
In order to vary the probability and diagnosticity, subjects
were presented with graphs depicting the fictitious rates of
occurrence of each handwriting feature for intuitive and
analytic persons. Subjects were able to evaluate the
diagnosticity of the handwriting features accurately and
chose questions asking about features that maximally
discriminated between the two traits, intuitive and
analytic. Trope & Bassok's results suggested that subjects
used the diagnosing strategy in hypothesis-testing.

Although it may appear as though the hypothesis
confirmatory and diagnosing strategies of information
gathering are at odds, Trope and Bassok provided evidence
that explained Snyder and Swann's (1978) findings within the
diagnosing strategy framework. Trope and Bassok (1983)
posited that various informational factors unrelated to the
confirmatory strategy may favor hypothesis-consistent
questions. One proposed factor is the boundary between the
hypothesized and the alternative traits. Specifically,
personality traits can be represented on a bipolar dimension
and range from extreme extroversion to extreme introversion,
 extreme independence to extreme dependence, etc. Trope and
Bassok (1983) hypothesized that when the boundary between
the hypothesized and alternative traits is at the midpoint
of the dimension, both hypothesis-consistent and alternative-consistent questions are equally diagnostic. However, as the boundary moves toward the extreme end of the hypothesized trait, hypothesis-consistent questions are found to be more diagnostic, revealing an apparent confirmatory strategy.

Testing this line of reasoning, Trope and Bassok (1983) varied the extremity of the boundary (extreme vs. intermediate) and the hypothesized trait (politeness vs. impoliteness). Subjects were instructed to write five questions they would ask of fellow students to test their hypotheses. These questions were then rated on a 7-point scale, ranging from extreme politeness to extreme impoliteness, by judges blind to the subjects' experimental conditions. Results provided strong support for Trope and Bassok's (1983) predictions. When the boundary of the hypothesis was varied from an extreme to an intermediate point on the trait dimension, results showed that subjects preferred to ask questions consistent with their hypothesis only when the boundary was extreme. That is, subjects testing extreme politeness asked significantly more questions about polite features than subjects testing the extreme impolite hypothesis. In the intermediate hypothesis conditions, subjects did not prefer to ask hypothesis-consistent questions. Specifically, in the intermediate
polite condition, subjects did not ask more questions about politeness than those in the intermediate impolite condition. Throughout all conditions, subjects formulated questions rated as providing maximum diagnosticity.

Trope & Bassok's (1983) second experiment was conducted to extend these findings further, in which again the boundary manipulation was used but both the trait dimension and hypothesis-testing procedure differed. Subjects were instructed to test hypotheses about traits of introversion and extroversion by selecting from a predetermined list of questions. Findings provided convergent evidence for the diagnosing strategy.

Application of Snyder & Swann's Findings to the Interview

Sackett (1982) was the first to apply the social psychological research on confirmatory biases to hypothesis testing in the employment interview. Sackett conducted a series of experiments to investigate the generalizability of results from previous work done on hypothesis-testing in the social psychological realm by Snyder and Swann (1978) to the employment interview. Namely, will interviewers adopt confirmatory strategies when testing hypotheses about others in an interview situation? In a partial replication of Snyder and Swann's (1978) research, Sackett (1982) asked campus recruiters, as opposed to college students, to select 12 questions from Snyder and Swann's standard list of 26
questions which would best enable them to test an applicant's fit to the profile of an introvert or an extrovert. No significant differences were found in the types of questions selected in the two conditions. Results failed to replicate Snyder and Swann's consistent finding of the use of a hypothesis-confirming strategy (i.e., a bias towards selecting questions that confirm one's hypothesis). Instead, college recruiters chose extroverted questions regardless of the specified hypothesis.

In Sackett's (1982) more direct translation of Snyder and Swann's paradigm to the interview context, two scenarios depicting favorable and unfavorable impressions of an applicant were developed. These profiles served to define the hypotheses that either an applicant would or would not prove to be an acceptable candidate for the position. Experienced interviewers were randomly assigned to a 1) favorable hypothesis, 2) unfavorable hypothesis, or 3) no hypothesis condition. After being presented with the appropriate scenario, subjects reviewed a list of 30 questions typically asked in an interview which had been pre-rated into two category types: "negative intent" questions and "positive/neutral intent" questions. Subjects were asked to select 15 questions which they would ask in an interview in order to evaluate the applicant. No evidence was found to support the tendency of subjects to use a
hypothesis-confirming strategy. Across the three conditions, subjects consistently chose "positive/neutral" questions approximately two times more than "negative intent" questions.

In attempts to extend Snyder and Swann's findings to the employment interview, Sackett (1982) repeatedly found results inconsistent with Snyder & Swann's work. Specifically, Sackett's findings showed that interviewers do not preferentially choose questions by means of a confirmatory strategy. Recently, McDonald & Hakel (1985) reinforced this conclusion, finding no confirmatory information seeking strategy in simulated interviews with 170 subjects. After reading a resumé of a hypothetical applicant, subjects were instructed to choose 10 questions from a list of 30 questions typically asked during a selection interview. Similar to Sackett's (1982) procedure, the questions had been pre-rated into "positive/neutral intent" and "negative intent" questions. Subjects selected the 10 questions one at a time, reading the applicant's response before choosing the next question. Responses were manipulated either confirming or disconfirming the initial impression about the applicant's suitability for the position. Each subject evaluated a total of four potential applicants for a manager trainee position. A comparison group was also provided in which subjects chose the 10
questions without receiving applicant responses. Applicant suitability did not influence the types of questions chosen in either the experimental or comparison groups. On the basis of these findings, McDonald & Hakel (1985) suggested that "interviewers do not engage in impression confirming information seeking strategies" (p. 330).

**Issues Examined in Present Research**

From Snyder and Swann to Trope and Bassok, social psychological research on the information gathering strategies in hypothesis testing has provided a wealth of information. Review of the existing research on this topic reveals mixed findings. Snyder's (1981) research pointed to the consistent use of a confirmatory hypothesis testing strategy. Trope and Bassok (1983) advanced a diagnosing strategy of information gathering where individuals select questions that maximally discriminate between features of the hypothesized and alternative traits. When extending these findings to the employment interview, Sackett (1982) and McDonald & Hakel (1985) did not find support for a hypothesis-confirming strategy. Considering Sackett (1982) and McDonald & Hakel (1985) followed many of the same procedures as Snyder and Swann, some of the criticisms previously presented, such as selecting questions from a specified list, can also be brought against their research. As a result, further research "letting subjects generate
their own questions to ask the applicant" (McDonald & Hakel, 1985, p. 332) is necessary. This is one of the goals of the present study. Continuing this research on the hypothesis testing strategies of interviewers in the employment interview setting by Sackett (1982) and McDonald & Hakel (1985), the goals of the present study also include a manipulation of the pre-interview impressions and job specifications. Additionally, the effect of the type of questions asked on the applicant's behavioral confirmation of the interviewer's hypothesis through their responses is examined.

**Overview of Study 1**

The focus of the first part of this research program was to determine the kinds of questions interviewers spontaneously formulate when interviewing an applicant for a position, given a certain job profile and information about the applicant's qualifications. In a typical interview, the interviewer has an idea of the human attributes required for specific jobs. The interviewer also has the applicant's paper credentials which can lead the interviewer to form an impression of the applicant. Do interviewers employ a questioning strategy in gathering information on which to assess applicants' suitability for hire when free to generate questions? If so, what type of strategy is used when asking questions? Do interviewers ask questions of
applicants in a manner so as to confirm their initial
impression? Furthermore, what specific kinds of questions
are asked? What factors may affect question asking?
Specifically, what effect does the type of job profile have
on the types and kinds of questions generated?

There are key differences between the present research
program and past research. For one, unlike studies by
McDonald & Hakel (1985), Sackett (1982), Snyder & Swann
(1978), and a few by Trope & Bassok (1983), subjects were
not forced to select questions from a predetermined list but
instead were free to formulate any question and as many
questions as they deemed necessary to test their hypothesis
about the applicants' qualifications for the job. Secondly,
in past studies (Snyder & Swann, 1978; Sackett, 1982; Trope
& Bassok, 1983), subjects were simply given a hypothesis to
test (e.g., This person may be an extrovert). Similar to
McDonald and Hakel's study, subjects in the current study
were free to generate their own hypothesis about the
applicant from the paper credentials. This provided a
stronger manipulation of the interviewer's pre-interview
hypothesis about the applicant's suitability. Third,
interviewers reviewed three applicants whose qualifications
were manipulated across three levels, high, moderate, and
low. This is in contrast to past research which has
typically looked at only the two extremes, high and low
applicant suitability. Finally, an examination was made of responses to the questions in order to examine the extent of behavioral confirmation resulting from pre-interview impressions.

Consistent with Dipboye's (1985) proposition from the process model of the interview, it is hypothesized that interviewers will display a preference for hypothesis-consistent questions. Specifically,

Hypothesis 1:

when an interviewer believes an applicant is highly qualified for the position before the interview, more questions will be asked about the applicant's high potential features and fewer questions will be asked about low potential features than when an interviewer holds a pre-interview impression that the applicant is moderately qualified for the job. In turn, interviewers holding a moderately qualified pre-interview impression of an applicant will ask more questions about high potential features and fewer questions about low potential features than will interviewers holding a pre-interview impression that the applicant is poorly qualified.

The same hypothesis is extended to three other characteristics of questioning: the difficulty of answering
the questions, perceived bias nature of the questions, and the estimated pre-conception of the interviewer toward the applicant's qualifications.

A critical difference between the situations posed in previous research on confirmatory biases and the typical interview situation is that most interview situations have two hypotheses rather than one. There is the hypothesis as to the ideal candidate conveyed in the job specifications. Second, there is the hypothesis as to whether a specific applicant fits these specifications. The present study provided an orthogonal manipulation of both hypotheses. Research in the employment interview area has not fully begun to tease out the factors which influence the hypothesis the interviewer may hold and consequently the questioning strategy used. A proposed factor examined in this study was the job profile (a list of credentials and traits) used by the interviewer in order to evaluate and determine the applicant's hypothesized fit to the job. In other words, the job profile is used as a standard against which to compare specific evidence. For example, suppose that an interviewer's profile of a high potential salesperson is one who is sociable, persistent, and has sales experience. After reviewing the paper credentials on Bill, the applicant, the interviewer may form an idea or hypothesis about Bill's fit to the ideal. That is, because
of Bill's experience as a shoe salesman, membership in many clubs, and completion of college, the interviewer hypothesizes that Bill may be a successful salesperson. The interviewer then proceeds to ask Bill questions in the interview to test this hypothesis.

It is equally plausible to suppose that at times interviewers may want to simply weed out a few applicants they definitely do not want to hire. This situation may occur when interviewers need to hire more applicants than those who have applied. Most applicants will be accepted, but the clearly unqualified applicants will have to be rejected. In this case, interviewers may use a profile of traits and attributes they do not want the prospective employee to possess as their standard of comparison. What effect does a job profile with credentials and traits depicting a low potential applicant rather than an ideal applicant have on the questions asked? What if interviewers were given credentials and traits of low potential applicants to use as their standard of evaluation? In order to operationalize this manipulation, one group of interviewers received a job profile of a high potential applicant and were asked to determine who fits the profile and thus, whom should we hire? In the other condition, interviewers received a job profile of a low potential applicant with instructions to determine who fits the
profile and thus, whom should we not hire?

Given the lack of past research addressing this question and the exploratory nature of this inquiry, it is difficult to offer any specific hypotheses. However, a possible means of reducing confirmatory biases in questioning is to give persons a disconfirmatory set such as would be the case if interviewers were told to determine who is not qualified. One possibility is that interviewers will be unable to assume a disconfirmatory set and will list different questions to ask across applicants of high, moderate and low potential regardless of job profile. Another possibility is that the job profile will interact with the pre-interview impressions in determining the confirmatory biases. For example, telling subjects to decide on who is not qualified may attenuate the confirmatory biases predicted to occur as a consequence of pre-interview impressions. The first part of the study, therefore, investigates these predictions and issues.

Overview of Study 2

Given that interviewers may use a particular strategy when asking questions, what are the potential implications of employing a questioning strategy in an employment interview? What is the result of asking certain questions on an applicant's responses and the interviewer's subsequent evaluation of the applicant?
Snyder & Swann (1978) suggested that the use of a hypothesis-confirming strategy may possibly bias the search for information. To return to their specific research paradigm, Snyder and Swann (1978) reasoned that most people, at least once, have behaved in an introverted or extroverted manner. Therefore, for example, when asked a question typically asked of extroverts, one most likely can supply an example. In this way, when the information gatherer concentrates on the hypothesized trait, extroversion, and asks more questions of only one end of a trait dimension (e.g., "What factors make it really easy for you to open up to people?") more opportunities are available for persons to provide instances of extroverted behaviors. Consequently, a biased collection of examples of extroverted behaviors may result. In order to demonstrate the opposite trait, introversion, the respondent would have to reject the assumption of the question. For instance, one would have to answer, "Usually it is really hard for me to open up to people and no factors make it easy." Therefore, Snyder & Swann (1978) suggested that the use of a confirmatory hypothesis-testing strategy would inevitably "trap" people into producing erroneous behavioral confirmation of any hypothesis that the information seeker may be testing.

In an experimental investigation, Snyder and Swann (1978) tested this premise. Hypothesis-testers were given
the opportunity to actually interview the persons. After choosing 12 questions from a list, the hypothesis-tester asked each question to a respondent by means of a microphone. Respondents were simply told to answer all questions openly and informatively. All questions and responses were tape-recorded. Judges listened to the responses only and rated each respondent on various attributes associated with introversion and extroversion. Respondents in the extroverted condition were rated as possessing more traits common to extroverts than respondents in the introverted condition. In addition, hypothesis-testers who had tested the hypothesis that the respondents were more like an extrovert believed the persons to be more extroverted than those who tested the hypothesis that the respondents were introverts. Snyder and Swann (1978) concluded that respondents' answers to the hypothesis-testers questions do confirm the hypothesis tested. The types and kinds of questions an interviewer asks may lead a person to respond and be featured in a particular manner. If Snyder and Swann's (1978) findings extend to the employment interview, it would suggest that an interviewer's pre-interview hypothesis may have a considerable influence on the interviewer's final selection judgment.

Study 2 investigated the possible behavioral confirmation of the interviewer's hypothesis about the
applicant's suitability through the applicant's responses to the questions. In this study, the following is hypothesized to occur.

**Hypothesis II:**

Applicants answering questions generated by interviewers with high pre-interview impressions will appear more qualified in their answers than will applicants answering questions of interviewers with moderately favorable pre-interview impressions. In turn, applicants answering the questions of interviewers with moderately favorable pre-interview impressions will appear more qualified than will applicants answering questions of interviewers with poorly qualified pre-interview impressions.

To test the hypothesis, subjects responded to the generated questions and the potential behavioral confirmation of the hypothesis was examined by having judges rate the written interviews on various dimensions.
Study 1

Method

Overview of Experimental Design

The design is a 2 X 3 factorial. Factor A, a between subjects variable, is the specifications of the job given by means of instructions and a job profile (specifications for what traits and qualities constitute a high potential vs. a low potential applicant). Factor B, a within subjects variable, is the applicant qualifications (high, moderate, low) manipulated by an application form and references. A control group did not receive application materials but only read the job profile and instructions.

Subjects

The interviewers were 32 MBA students attending the University of Houston, 10 MBA students attending Rice University, and 9 undergraduates at the University of St. Thomas enrolled in business courses. All 51 interviewers volunteered to participate in a study of "interview decision making". Interviewers were randomly assigned to experimental conditions.

Description of Interviewers

Thirty-three (65%) of the interviewers participating in this study were male and 18 (35%) were female. Interviewers' ages ranged from 21 years to 50 years, with a
median age of 28 years. They represented a wide range of companies from banking to real estate, and insurance to oil companies. Many were holding positions as managers, engineers and accountants. Nineteen (37%) had worked in the position of a salesperson. When interviewers were asked if they had ever been in the role of selecting and evaluating other persons for a sales position, 98% replied no.

However, 59% had evaluated and selected persons for other types of occupations. Forty-five percent of the interviewers had never been trained in interviewing techniques. But, sixty-seven percent had read books or articles on how to conduct an interview.

Experimental Stimulus Materials

An application and two references for each hypothetical applicant were used to provide interviewers with information on which to form their hypotheses about the applicants. In this research, interviewers were not simply given hypotheses to test, such as, "This is a suitable candidate for the job." Instead, interviewers had to draw inferences based on the information and generate their own hypothesis about the applicant's suitability for the job. The paper credentials were manipulated to portray highly qualified, moderately qualified, and poorly qualified applicants by varying G.P.A., academic major, job experience, scholastic honors and recommendations. All applicants were male. The
specific qualifications in each level, high, moderate and low, remained the same. However, six different first and last names of male applicants were represented yielding a total of eighteen paper credentials. Name of applicant and order of presentation of applicant qualifications were counter-balanced.

Procedure

Interviewers were asked to assume the role of a personnel manager in a large organization that manufactures and sells chemicals. A new branch office had just been opened and salespeople were needed to fill the position of sales representative, chemicals.

All subjects received a folder of materials. Half of the subjects received instructions asking them to determine the applicants who fit the profile of a high potential applicant and thus who should be hired (high potential profile condition). The remaining half of the subjects were asked to determine the applicants who fit the profile of the low potential applicant and thus who should not be hired (low potential profile condition). In the high potential profile condition, subjects received a job description outlining the duties of a sales representative, chemicals (Appendix A). Following the job description, a job profile listed credentials and traits commonly possessed by high potential applicants; for example, high academic
achievement, sociable (Appendix B). In the low potential profile condition, interviewers received the same job description but reviewed a job profile listing credentials and traits common to low potential applicants; for example, low academic achievement, non-sociable (Appendix C). The traits were chosen on the basis of past research (Hakel & Dunnette, 1970; Jackson, Peacock & Holden, 1982).

Twenty-six interviewers reviewed three applications reflecting a highly qualified, a moderately qualified and a poorly qualified person for the position. Interviewers receiving applications first reviewed the application and references, and then evaluated the applicant based on the information received from the paper credentials. These ratings were to serve as a check on the manipulation of the applicant's qualifications and also to determine the qualification hypothesis entertained by the interviewer. Each interviewer then listed questions to ask in the interview to determine if the applicant fit the profile of the salesperson job outlined in the instructions (high potential vs. low potential applicant). After generating the questions, the interviewers rated the questions on the following dimensions using a 7-point Likert type scale: perceived difficulty of answering the questions, how confident the questions would allow an evaluation of the applicant, and amount of time they would spend in an actual
face-to-face interview following receipt of responses to questions. 0 minutes to 60+ minutes at 10 minute intervals. Interviewers performed this procedure three times, once for each applicant, for a total of 78 separate "interviews". All interviewers were told that the questions generated would be typed and mailed to the candidates. Lastly, after handing in the completed folder of materials, all interviewers were asked to list as many characteristics of the job profile they could remember and then were debriefed.

Control Group

In a control group, twenty-five interviewers were randomly assigned to the high potential profile or low potential profile conditions, but did not view an application before making ratings and listing questions to determine if an applicant would fit the profile they received. The control group completed the materials in the same session as the other interviewers who received applications. Therefore, in order to make this task of approximately equal duration, interviewers also listed questions to ask applicants applying for the following positions: secretary, supervisor trainee, and receptionist. It was explained in the instructions that this was in line with their duties as personnel manager to select other employees needed in the new branch office.

The reason the control group was included is two-fold.
First, Snyder and his colleagues concluded from their series of experiments that the only condition that could reduce reliance on the use of a confirmatory strategy is the absence of any hypothesis about another's personality traits (Snyder, 1981). Secondly, Daniels and Otis (1950) suggested that the interview is useful in that it allows one to gather information not available from paper credentials. By receiving application information, not only do interviewers have information to probe in the interview, but they should be better able to collect information that can not be gained from merely the application materials. However, a set of findings suggested that reviewing applications before an interview may bias post-interview impressions (Dipboye, 1982; Dipboye, Stramler, & Fontenelle, 1984; Huguenard, Sager, & Ferguson, 1970; Latham, Wexley, & Pursell, 1975; Springbett, 1958; Tucker & Rowe, 1979). The present research examined the effect of an application on the type of strategy and kinds of questions generated. Will question asking be less productive and provide information redundant of that obtainable from application materials?

**Categorization of Questions**

Most questions contain at least two parts. One part specifies the topic or what is being asked about. The other part indicates the type of question being asked (Loftus, 1979). Therefore, two separate categorizations of questions
were conducted addressing two related issues. The main focus investigated a controversy brought forth from past research which asks whether interviewers use a questioning strategy and if so, what kind of strategy is used. To address this issue, subjective category ratings of the questions were made. Unlike past research procedures, interviewers in this study were free to ask any question with no limitation on the quantity of questions generated. Consequently, this research program allowed much information to be extracted from a content analysis of the questions. It was then important and equally feasible to investigate the specific kinds of questions interviewers asked. To determine this, a descriptive rating of the questions was conducted.

**Descriptive Ratings of Questions**

Two female graduate students served as judges. The judges were blind to the hypothesis the interviewer was testing. The judges were told that the interview questions were generated by MBA students for the purpose of determining if the applicant fit the profile of a high potential or low potential salesperson and subsequently whether to hire or not to hire the applicant for the job of Sales Representative - Chemicals. The judges first read the job description and the job profiles for both the high potential and low potential applicants in order to familiarize themselves with the sales position and
corresponding qualifications. The judges also reviewed each application and recommendations and retained them for future reference. The raters then received a randomly ordered list of the questions. In order to ascertain the specific kinds of questions generated by the interviewers, each question was placed in one or more of the following areas:

1. **BIDIRECTIONAL** (questions that give the respondent a choice between two statements or features; "OR" questions)

   Example: Do you prefer to work alone or in a group?

2. **OPEN-ENDED** (questions that present a choice between statements of features without explicitly mentioning them)

   Example: How do you usually spend your Friday nights?

3. **YES-NO QUESTIONS** (questions that can be answered by a yes or no)

   Example: Can I ask you a question?

4. **APPLICATION BLANK QUESTIONS** (questions generated from the application blank material)

   Example: Tell me about your job with Toho motors.

5. **PERSONALITY TRAIT QUESTIONS** (questions generated about those traits listed in the profile and others)

   Example: How persistent are you when someone tells you "No"?
Ratings of Confirmatory Bias in Questions

Two male and two female graduate students served as judges. The judges were blind to the hypothesis the interviewer was testing and to the true purpose of the experiment. The procedure was identical to the previous categorization task. However, in this categorization, the judges did not review applications and recommendations of the applicants. Each judge received a randomly ordered list of the questions formulated by the interviewers. The judges' task was to make a rating placing the question into one of the four following areas:

1. QUESTIONS ABOUT HIGH POTENTIAL FEATURES (questions asked about features believed to be associated with a high potential applicant)

2. QUESTIONS ABOUT LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES (questions asked about features believed to be associated with a low potential applicant)

3. QUESTIONS ABOUT BOTH HIGH AND LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES (questions about features believed to be associated with both a high and low potential applicant)

4. QUESTIONS IN WHICH HIGH AND LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES ARE NOT CLEARLY DEFINED (questions asked in which features associated with high potential and low potential applicants were not clearly defined)

The judges made additional ratings using a 7-point Likert type scale. The judges rated how difficult they thought the question would be for the typical applicant to answer on a
(1) very easy to (7) very difficult scale: to what extent they thought the question was biased in that one's answer would tend to put one in a particular light, (1) definitely biased in a favorable light to (7) definitely biased in an unfavorable light; and if the interviewer conveyed the pre-interview hypothesis through the question by asking the judges to rate how qualified the interviewer thought the applicant was for the position, (1) very unqualified to (7) very qualified on the basis of the question (See Appendix D for Rating Form).
Results

No differences in mean pre-ratings by sex of interviewer were found. Therefore, the analyses were conducted across sexes.

Manipulation Check

The paper credentials were manipulated to portray highly qualified, moderately qualified, and poorly qualified applicants. Five 2 x 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were performed with job profile (high potential vs. low potential conditions) as a between-subjects factor and qualifications (high, moderate, low) as a within-subjects factor. These analyses were conducted to analyze the ratings made by 26 interviewers on the applicants' paper credentials prior to listing questions. The analyses revealed highly significant main effects of qualifications for all five variables: recommendations, $F(2,48)=339.40$, $p<.0001$; job experience, $F(2,48)=234.28$, $p<.0001$; academic record, $F(2,48)=439.54$, $p<.0001$; education/training, $F(2,48)=239.25$, $p<.0001$; and overall qualification rating, $F(2,48)=361.42$, $p<.0001$. These effects did not depend on whether the interviewer was in the high potential profile or low potential profile condition ($F's(2,48)<3.0$, job profile x qualifications).

The mean ratings and standard deviations for the five variables used to assess the qualification manipulation are found in Table 1. The manipulations were successful.
Table 1

Means for Manipulation Checks and Interviewers' Pre-Ratings of Low, Moderate and High Application Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>Low Mean ± S.D.</th>
<th>Moderate Mean ± S.D.</th>
<th>High Mean ± S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>1.77 ± 0.71</td>
<td>4.38 ± 0.58</td>
<td>6.54 ± 0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Experience</td>
<td>1.92 ± 0.74</td>
<td>4.70 ± 0.81</td>
<td>6.23 ± 0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Record</td>
<td>1.76 ± 0.82</td>
<td>4.58 ± 0.58</td>
<td>6.96 ± 0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Training</td>
<td>2.15 ± 1.0</td>
<td>4.81 ± 0.64</td>
<td>6.38 ± 0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Qualification Rating</td>
<td>1.58 ± 0.81</td>
<td>4.50 ± 0.78</td>
<td>6.62 ± 0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Composite</td>
<td>3.16 ± 0.98</td>
<td>4.79 ± 0.66</td>
<td>6.28 ± 0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected Quality of Responses</td>
<td>3.08 ± 1.09</td>
<td>4.92 ± 0.63</td>
<td>6.58 ± 0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring Decision</td>
<td>1.58 ± 1.03</td>
<td>4.42 ± 0.76</td>
<td>6.35 ± 0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviewers made ratings on a 7-point Likert type scale. Comparison among means were made using Student-Newman-Keuls tests. Means not having common superscripts (a, b, c) significantly differed, p<.05.
As reflected in the means, an applicant with paper credentials manipulated to portray high potentiality received higher ratings on recommendations, job experience, academic record, education and training, and an overall high qualification rating than either an applicant with moderate or low paper credentials. Post-hoc range tests using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure were conducted and found each mean to be significantly different from each other mean, p<.05.

Interviewers' Pre-Rating of Applicants

Additional variables were used to ascertain the interviewer's hypothesis about the applicant's suitability for the sales position. The determination of the interviewer's hypothesis is extremely important. It would be impossible to determine whether an interviewer was using a hypothesis confirming strategy if the hypothesis was not known.

Snyder and Swann stated "when we form an early impression of new acquaintances, we may wish to test hypotheses based upon our expectations about their personal dispositions" (1978, p. 1202). Therefore, based solely on the paper credentials received on the applicants, interviewers also rated the applicant on features not explicitly mentioned in the application. These included:
expected exhibition of eight traits typical of high potential salespeople, expected quality of applicants' responses, and a hiring decision. Because of the high intercorrelation among the traits ($r=.77$), the eight traits were formed into one trait composite. Three $2 \times 3$ repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted. These analyses yielded significant main effects of the qualification manipulation for all three variables: expected traits, $F(2,46)=129.93$, $p<.0001$; expected quality of responses, $F(2,48)=152.25$, $p<.0001$; hiring decision, $F(2,48)=244.95$, $p<.0001$. No main effect of job profile or interaction between qualifications and job profile were found.

Included in Table 1 are the mean ratings on the three variables assessing the interviewers' expected traits and behaviors of applicants. An identical pattern displayed by the manipulation check mean ratings resulted for these mean ratings. After reviewing paper credentials portraying a highly qualified person, interviewers evaluated that person as possessing more traits typical of a high potential salesperson, expected the applicant to be better in answering the questions and would be more likely to hire the applicant given only the application information than applications and references reviewed depicting moderately qualified and poorly qualified applicants. These ratings served as an additional determinant of the hypothesis.
entertained by the interviewer. Student-Newman-Keuls range tests found each mean significantly differed from each other mean for all three variables. \((p<0.05)\).

**Descriptive Ratings of Questions**

**Number of questions generated**

A total of 391 questions were generated by the 26 interviewers reviewing three applications each. For the high potential profile condition, 173 questions were formulated and 218 questions resulted for the low potential profile condition. A 2 x 3 repeated measures ANOVA was performed with the number of questions as the dependent variable. No significant main effects or interaction were found. In the control group, a total of 328 questions were generated by the 25 interviewers for only one applicant each. For those interviewers reviewing a high potential profile, 174 questions were listed and 154 questions were formulated by interviewers reviewing a low potential profile. Dunnett tests revealed that significantly more questions were asked by the control group subjects \((p<0.01)\), then subjects in the high, moderate or poor qualification levels (see Table 2). In all, 719 questions were generated. The mean number of questions for each qualification level indicated that on the average, interviewers generated from 4 to 6 questions per interview. However, when not receiving
any information about the applicant, interviewers generated, on the average, 13 questions per interview.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Profile</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Potential Profile</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(X=3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Potential Profile</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(X=6.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(X=4.92)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kinds of questions generated**

The kinds of questions generated were rated by judges (inter-rater reliability, X=.90) as belonging to one of three descriptive categories. The majority of questions were open-ended (84%). The other questions were classified as either yes/no questions (15%) or bidirectional questions (1%). Each question was further defined as asking about the application material (38%) or about personality traits (11%)
or tapped other unique information (51%). Examples of questions are included in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example of Questions by Descriptive Categories</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bidirectional**

Do you prefer to work alone or with others?

Would you rather work individually or be part of an overall team?

**Open-Ended**

What are your long-term goals?

What can you bring to this company?

**Yes/No**

Do you think you can handle stress?

Did you take chemistry in college?

**Application**

Describe what kind of sales work you have done in the past.

What specifically do you sell at Tellert, Inc.?

**Personality**

How well do you rate your ability to get along with people?

Do you like talking with people?
The percentage of questions falling into each descriptive question type per interview was computed. Separate 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were performed for each descriptive category. No significant main effects or interaction emerged. One type of question was not asked more frequently than another across qualification levels and job profile conditions. Overall, the questions asked most often in each condition were open-ended.

Tests of Hypotheses

The main focus of this study was to determine if interviewers used a questioning strategy when generating questions to ask specific applicants. Questions rated by the four judges as asking about high potential features were coded as +1, questions rated as asking about low potential features were coded as -1, and questions rated as asking about both high and low potential features or in which the features were not clearly defined were coded as 0 for the purpose of analysis. Examples of questions are found in Table 4.

Question-Type Score

The four judges' ratings (with an inter-rater reliability, \( r = .57 \)) on the type of question were averaged into one score for each question. Given that different
Table 4
Examples of Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions Coded</th>
<th>High Potential Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1</td>
<td>Why are you qualified for this job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are your best traits?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What specific experience do you have that you consider most valuable for your success on this job?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions Coded</th>
<th>Low Potential Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>What are your weakest character traits?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why do you want to work in a field so far removed from your major?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In what areas do you need improvement?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions coded</th>
<th>About Both Types of Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>or Features not clearly defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are your hobbies and recreational interests?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are your career goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is your idea of the perfect job?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers of questions were generated for each interview, the question ratings within an interview were averaged resulting in one question-type score per interview. To test whether interviewers used a questioning strategy when free to
formulate their own questions, a 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVA was performed with this interview question-type score as the dependent variable. Mean interview question-type scores are found in Table 5. A significant main effect was found for the qualification manipulation, \( F(2,48)=6.07, p<.005 \). Planned comparisons found that the questions asked by low qualification condition interviewers tended to be concerned more with low potential features (\( M= -0.08 \)) than were the questions asked by moderate application condition interviewers (\( M=0.110 \), \( F(1,48)=6.12, p<.02 \), or the questions asked by high application condition interviewers (\( M=0.152 \), \( F(1,48)=11.29, p<.002 \). No difference between the high and moderate levels of applicant qualifications was found. \( F(1,48)=0.78, p=.38 \).

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>MODERATE</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>NONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dependent Variable</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Interview Question-Type Score</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned comparisons were conducted among low, moderate, and high qualification levels. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, \( p<.05 \). Means not having common superscripts (a,c) significantly differed, \( p<.01 \).
Interviewers not viewing application materials before listing questions (control group) employed a questioning strategy similar to interviewers asking questions of applicants with moderate and high qualifications. The mean interview question-type score for the control group is included in Table 5. Because the mean question-type score for the control group significantly differed by job profile, $F(1, 24) = 8.69$, $p < .007$, separate Dunnett tests by qualification level and job profile were performed. Dunnett tests (Winer, 1971) found no mean difference between the types of questions in the control group and the questions in the moderate and high qualification levels ($p > .05$). However, Dunnett tests did reveal that the questions in the low application group were more likely to be aimed at low potential features than the questions generated by the control group ($p < .05$).

**Number of Questions about High and Low Potential Features**

An alternative method of analysis was performed to examine further the types of questions generated. This analysis provided a more direct approach of assessing whether interviewers adopted a confirmatory questioning strategy. In this analysis, the number of questions listed about high potential features and the number of questions listed about low potential features per interview were
calculated. To determine the number of questions falling into each question type, the following cut-offs were used: If the average rating for the question across the four judges was equal to or greater than 0.5, the question was counted as asking about high potential features. If the average rating was equal to or less than -0.5, the question was then counted as asking about low potential features. In 78 interviews, 391 questions were generated. After applying these inclusion rules, 50 interviews remained in which a high potential or low potential question or both were listed. More specifically, a total of 63 (16%) questions were asked about high potential features and 31 (8%) about low potential features.

A 2 X 3 repeated measures MANOVA was performed with the number of questions about high potential features and the number of questions about low potential features as dependent variables. A significant multivariate main effect for application qualifications was found, (Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.8$, Rao's $F(4.94) = 2.77$, $p < .03$). No other effects were statistically significant.

To examine the multivariate main effect of qualifications, two 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were performed separately with the number of questions about high potential features and the number of questions about low
potential features as dependent variables. No main effects or interaction were found for the number of questions about high potential features. For the number of low potential features, a significant main effect for qualifications emerged ($F(2,48)=5.75, p<.006$). Planned comparisons found differences between the mean number of questions about low potential features in the moderate and low qualification levels, $F(1,48)=5.76, p<.05$, and in the high and low levels, $F(1,48)=10.71, p<.002$. No difference was found between the high and moderate levels of qualifications, $F(1,48)=0.76, p=.39$. Examination of the means in Table 6 indicates that significantly more questions about low potential features were asked of poorly qualified applicants than of moderately or highly qualified applicants. Figure 1 displays the number of questions listed according to qualification level.

For the control group, 25 interviews with a total of 328 questions resulted. After calculating the number of questions about high potential and low potential features, 16 interviews remained. Thirty-four (10%) questions were asked about high potential features and five (1%) were asked about low potential features.
Table 6
Mean Number of Questions Rated as High Potential, Low Potential and Neutral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>MODERATE</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>NONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Number of Questions About High Potential Features</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a,b</td>
<td>a,b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Number of Questions About Low Potential Features</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b,c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Number of Questions Rated as Neutral</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>11.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned comparisons were conducted among the low, moderate, and high qualification levels. Comparisons among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, p<.05. Means not having a common superscript (c) significantly differed, p<.01.
Figure 1. Mean Number of questions asked about high potential features, low potential features, and neutral questions by application qualification conditions.
Dunnett tests revealed that significantly more questions about high potential features (p<.05) and significantly fewer questions about low potential features (p<.01) were asked of an applicant of which the interviewer had no previous information than an applicant for which the interviewer had reviewed application materials displaying poor qualifications for the job (see Figure 1). No mean differences between the control group and the moderate and high qualification levels were found in the number of questions about both high potential and low potential features (see Table 6).

**Questions Rated as Neutral**

Included in Table 6 are the mean number of questions rated as neutral (i.e., questions asking about both high potential and low potential features or the features were not clearly defined in the question). The majority of questions, over 580 of the 719, were rated as a neutral type question. A 2 x 3 repeated measures ANOVA found no significant main effects or interaction. Across qualification levels, interviewers listed 3 to 5 neutral type questions. Dunnett tests revealed that significantly more neutral questions were listed by interviewers in the control group than by interviewers listing questions after reviewing applications on high, moderate, or low qualified
applicants. In sum, the two procedures, using either a mean question-type interview score or the number of questions as dependent variables, provided overlapping information about the questioning strategy employed by interviewers.

Three Other Characteristics of Questioning

Difficulty of Questions

The four judges additionally rated each question on how difficult the questions would be for the typical applicant to answer, (1) very easy to (7) very difficult. The average interrater correlations for the four judges was quite high ($r=.85$). A 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant interaction for the judges' rating of difficulty, $F(2,48)=3.26, p<.05$. A simple main effects follow-up analysis found a significant mean difference on the difficulty rating between job profile conditions for poorly qualified applicants only, ($p<.03$). The mean ratings are found in Table 7.

As shown in Figure 2, when viewing a poorly qualified applicant, those interviewers receiving a low potential profile asked more difficult questions than those asked by interviewers evaluating the same applicant against a high potential profile. Dunnett tests found that the difficulty level of questions asked by control group subjects and both moderate and high application groups did not significantly
differ. Control group questions were rated as significantly less difficult to answer, however, than questions asked in the low application condition, but only, in the low profile condition (p<.05).

Table 7
Judges' Rating on Question Difficulty by Job Profile and Application Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judges' Ratings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH POTENTIAL PROFILE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficultly of Answering Question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW POTENTIAL PROFILE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, p<.05.
Figure 2. Judges' mean rating of the extent of difficulty in answering the question across application qualifications and job profile conditions.
Biased Nature of the Questions

The second dimension rated by the judges (inter-rater reliability, r=.47) was the biased nature of the question. That is, the judges rated the extent they thought the question was biased in the sense that one's answer would tend to put one in a favorable or unfavorable light. No main effects or interaction were found for this rating. As shown by the means in Table 8, judges rated the questions as tending towards a bias in an unfavorable direction across application conditions. Dunnett tests found that questions generated by interviewers in the control group were rated by judges as not biased in an unfavorable or favorable direction when compared to questions formulated by interviewers in each of the three application groups (p<.01).

Table 8
Judges' Rating on the Biased Nature of Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judges' Ratings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased Nature of Question</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Question</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having a common superscript (a,c) significantly differed, p<.01.
**Evaluation of Interviewer's Pre-conception**

The third rating was designed to investigate whether the hypothesis the interviewer was testing could be ascertained from the question. The judges completed the following statement by making a rating (inter-rater reliability, \( r = .69 \)) on a 7-point Likert type scale. (1) very unqualified to (7) very qualified:

The interviewer asked this question because the interviewer thought the applicant was ____________ for this position.

A 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVA showed a significant main effect of qualifications, \( F(2,48) = 4.93, p < .01 \). Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc tests found mean differences between the high and low qualification levels and the moderate and low qualification levels (\( p < .05 \)). No difference was found for the high and moderate levels of applicant qualifications. The mean ratings are found in Table 9. Judges rated interviewers' questions asked of candidates hypothesized to be moderately or highly qualified for the sales position as conveying the interviewers' belief that the applicant was more qualified than interviewers whose questions were asked of candidates hypothesized to be poorly qualified for the job. Judges' ratings of the questions in the control group were similar to the ratings of questions asked of applicants with moderate and high qualifications.
Dunnett tests revealed that the control group did not differ from either the moderate or high application conditions, \(p > .05\). However, judges estimated on the basis of questions that the interviewer evaluated the applicant more favorably in the control group than did interviewers in the low qualifications condition, \(p < .05\).

**Table 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judges' Rating on Interviewer's Hypothesis of Applicant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges' Ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewers' Hypothesis from Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts \(a, b\) significantly differed, \(p < .05\).

**Role of Application Materials in Questioning Strategy**

The types of questions interviewers asked suggested that the pre-interview information (i.e., application materials) played a large role in the question asking strategy. When a subject reviewed an application from an applicant with poor credentials, the interviewer had more information about, and thus more opportunities to ask
questions pertaining to low potential features than did an interviewer who reviewed an application describing an applicant with moderate qualifications or high qualifications for the position. Conversely, the opportunity for questions about high potential features would be enhanced when an interviewer received application materials from a highly qualified applicant.

**Mean Question-Type Score**

To examine this possibility, a mean question-type score was computed per interview separately for application and non-application type questions. A 2 (job profile) x 2 (application vs. non-application question type) x 3 (application qualifications) repeated measures ANOVA was performed with the mean question-type score as the dependent variable. Factor A, job profile, is a between subjects variable and Factors B and C are both within subjects variables. A significant application qualifications by application/non-application question type interaction emerged, $F(2,91)=5.09$, $p<.02$.

Two 2 x 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were then performed on each mean question-type score for application vs. non-application question types separately. Mean interview question-type scores by application/nonapplication question type are found in Table 10. No significant main effects or interaction were found for questions asking about
Table 10

Mean Question-Type
by application/non-application type questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question-Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Question-Type</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Question-Type</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions about high potential features were coded as +1. Questions about low potential features were coded as -1. Neutral questions were coded as 0. Comparisons among the application condition means were made using the paired comparison t-test. Comparison among the no application (none) group and the application conditions were made within application/non-application type conditions using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,c) significantly differed, $p<.01$.

information not contained in the application materials.

However, a significant main effect of qualifications was found for questions asking about information contained in the application materials, $F(2,28)=4.00, p<.03$. Paired comparison t-tests among the application qualification means revealed that each mean significantly differed from the application mean for the poorly qualified applicant condition, $(p<.01)$. 
In the control group, no application materials were available for interviewers to draw information from and to ask specific questions pertaining to items on the forms. Without this background information, interviewers found it necessary to ask application-type questions. In fact, 43% of the questions asked by interviewers in the control group concerned information obtainable from the application materials but of a more broad content level when compared to the specific application questions generated by interviewers who had received application materials (e.g., What is your G.P.A.? versus Why is your G.P.A. so low?).

The mean question-type scores by application/non-application type questions for the control group are included in Table 10. The mean score significantly differed by job profile, $F(1,47)=4.09, p<.05$. Therefore, separate Dunnett tests by qualification, job profile and application/non-application question type were performed. Dunnett tests found no mean difference between the types of questions in the control group and questions in the moderate and high qualification levels. However, in the low application group more questions were asked about low potential features when compared to the control group.

**Difficulty of Questions**

A $2 \times 2 \times 3$ repeated measures ANOVA was performed on the judges' rating of how difficult the question would be.
for the applicant to answer. A significant main effect of application qualifications emerged for this variable, $F(2, 44) = 4.59$, $p < .02$. As indicated by the mean ratings found in Table 11, interviewers asked more difficult questions when evaluating a poorly qualified applicant than when evaluating a moderately qualified applicant. No interaction between application/non-application question type and qualifications was found. Dunnett tests showed that control group subjects asked questions rated as less difficult to answer than questions asked in the low application condition, ($p < .01$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judges' Ratings</th>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty of Answering</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, $p < .05$. Means not having common superscripts (a,c) significantly differed, $p < .01$.

**Biased Nature of the Questions**

A 2 X 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVA found no main effects or interaction for the rating of the biased nature
of the questions. The mean ratings are found in Table 12. Dunnett tests indicated that questions generated by interviewers in the control group were rated by judges as not biased in an unfavorable or favorable direction when compared to the questions formulated by interviewers in each of the three application groups. (p<.01).

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judges' Rating on the Biased Nature of Question</th>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judges' Ratings</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased Nature of Question</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,c) significantly differed, p<.01.

Evaluation of Interviewer's Pre-conception

A 2 x 2 x 3 repeated measures ANOVA showed a significant qualification by application-type question interaction, $F(2,44)=6.73$, p<.005.

Two 2 x 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were then performed on this variable for application vs. non-application type questions separately. The mean ratings by application/non-
application question type are found in Table 13. Significant main effects of qualifications were found for both questions asking about information contained in the application materials, $F(2,28)=11.13$, $p<.003$, and information not contained in the application materials, $F(2,39)=3.60$, $p<.04$. Paired comparison t-tests among the application qualification means found that the low qualification application-type question mean significantly differed from each of the other means, ($p<.05$). Additionally, in the non-application condition, the high group significantly differed from the low qualification and the moderate application-type question conditions. Dunnett tests were performed within application/nonapplication conditions. These tests revealed that judges' ratings of the questions in the control group were similar to questions asked of moderately and highly qualified applicants. However, on the basis of questions judges believed that interviewers in the control group condition thought the applicant to be more qualified than did interviewers in the low qualification condition, ($p<.05$).
Table 13
Judges' Rating on Interviewer's Hypothesis of Applicant by application/non-application type questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judges' Ratings</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewers' Hypothesis from Question</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b,c</td>
<td>b,c,d</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewers' Hypothesis from Question</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b,c</td>
<td>b,c,d</td>
<td>b,d</td>
<td>b,d</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among the application condition means were made using the paired comparison t-test. Comparison among the no application (none) group and the application conditions were made within application/non-application type conditions using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, p<.05. Means not having common superscript (c,d) significantly differed, p<.05.

Additional Results

Interviewers' Ratings After Listing Questions

Interviewers' Perceived Difficulty of the Questions

A significant difference by sex of the interviewer was found for the difficulty of answering the question rating only, (p<.01). Separate analyses by sex of interviewer found no main effects or interaction for ratings made by female interviewers. A significant Qualifications x Job Profile interaction emerged for the male interviewers'
rating of difficulty, \((F(2,30)=5.93, p<.007)\). Simple main effects found significant mean differences of the difficulty rating between job profile conditions for poorly qualified applicants only, \((p<.008)\). An examination of Figure 3 indicates that male interviewers rated their questions about an applicant with low qualifications as significantly more difficult to answer when receiving a job profile outlining low potentiality than when receiving a high potential profile. Female interviewers across qualification levels rated the questions as moderately difficult to answer.

Table 14 displays the mean difficulty ratings by qualifications and job profile for male interviewers. Dunnett tests found a significant difference between the interviewers' ratings of difficulty in the control group and the low qualification level in the low potential profile condition only, \((p<.01)\). Interviewers asking questions of a poorly qualified applicant in the low profile condition rated their own questions as significantly more difficult to answer than did the interviewers in the control group. No other effects were significant. As shown by examining the means in Table 14, the questions were overall rated as moderately difficult to answer.
Table 14

Interviewer's Perceived Difficulty of Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer's Ratings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH POTENTIAL PROFILE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Difficulty of Answering Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW POTENTIAL PROFILE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure separately by job profile. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,c) significantly differed, p<.01.
Figure 3. Interviewers' mean rating of the extent of difficulty in answering the question across application qualification and job profile conditions.
Interviewers' Confidence of Evaluation of Applicant
Given the Questions Asked

A 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVA revealed no significant main effects or interaction for the confidence rating. Interviewers were moderately confident across levels that their questions would allow an evaluation of the applicant (see Table 15). In addition, Dunnett tests found that interviewers in the control group were just as moderately confident as interviewers receiving applications that the question they asked would give them information on which to base their evaluation.

Table 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewers' Confidence of Evaluation of Applicant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewers' Ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence Questions Asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions Asked 4.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will Allow Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, p<.05.

Interviewers' Estimated Time of Interview

An analysis of interviewers' estimate of the time they
would spend in the actual face-to-face interview revealed a significant main effect of qualifications, $F(2.47)=9.95$, $p<.0002$. A Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc test showed no mean difference between the high and moderate qualifications but found mean differences between the low qualification level and each of the two other levels, ($p<.05$).

Interviewers estimated spending, on the average, 31 minutes with moderately or highly qualified applicants, but only 20 minutes with candidates hypothesized to be poorly qualified. Dunnett tests revealed that interviewers estimated that they would spend a significantly longer amount of time with an applicant in the control group than an applicant with low qualifications for the job, ($p<.05$). As the means indicate in Table 16, the control group was similar to the moderate and high qualification levels on this variable.

Table 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewers' Estimated Time of Interview</th>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewers' Ratings</td>
<td>LOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Time of Interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, $p<.05$. 


**Study 2**

**Method**

**Subjects**

A total of 104 college students served as subjects in this part of the experiment. Sixty-eight subjects attended Rice University and 36 attended the University of Houston. All subjects were enrolled in psychology courses and volunteered to participate in exchange for extra course credit. Subjects were randomly assigned to conditions. Twelve respondents' data were discarded because the twelve sets of interview questions were represented twice in the total pool of 103 interviews. Therefore, the data of 92 respondents were used in the analyses.

**Description of Interviewees**

Fifty-seven (55%) of the subjects responding to the interviewers' questions were male and 47 (45%) were female. Applicants' ages ranged from 16 to 52 years, with a median age of 19 years. Fifty-nine were not employed at the time of data collection but were students only. Those remaining were holding jobs with predominantly service-oriented companies such as banks, restaurants, retail stores, and grocery stores. Many were holding positions as sales clerks, computer programmers, assistant managers, and supervisors. Fifty-seven (55%) had worked in the position of a salesperson. Of those who had worked as a salesperson,
approximately 75% had served in this position two years or less. When all interviewees were asked if they had ever had interviewee training (skills, techniques), 83% replied no. However, 46% had read books or articles on interviewing.

Procedure

Subjects were asked to play the role of an applicant seeking a Sales Representative, Chemical position with a large organization. The subjects were informed that the organization's policy is to mail questions to applicants prior to the interview so as to gather information about the applicant before the interview and thus accelerate the employment process. Each subject first read the job description. Given the set of questions generated by an interviewer for a specific applicant, the subjects were asked to play the role of an applicant and respond to the questions as if they were interested in the job and actually interviewing for the position. Subjects were encouraged to answer all questions factually, informatively and honestly. Because some interviewers received application materials on a specific applicant, 69 (10%) of the questions were application specific. In these cases, subjects received questions in which the essence of the question was retained but the specific reference made to the application was omitted. For example, one question read, "What did you do at Allied?" and was rephrased to read, "What did you do in
your past job?"

After responding to the questions, all subjects made ratings on a 7-point Likert type scale for the following dimensions: perceived qualifications for this position in terms of job experience, academic record, education and training, and overall; traits they thought they would portray in an actual face-to-face interview; quality of answers to questions; difficulty of responding to questions; biased nature of questions; perceived evaluation of qualifications by interviewer; evaluation of job; and acceptance of job offer (See Appendix E for Form). Lastly, all subjects completed a formal application blank identical to the one reviewed by the interviewers in Study one.

Rating of Respondents

Two male and two female graduate students different from those in Study one served as judges. Judges were blind to the experimental conditions and to the true purpose of the study. In this rating task, judges read the entire written interview, each question followed by the applicant's response. The judges were informed that all applicants had applied for the position of Sales Representative - Chemicals. The organization's policy is to mail questions to the applicants, ask the applicant to respond and mail the completed set of questions and answers to the organization. This procedure was adopted by the organization in order to
gather as much information about the applicant before the interview and speed up the selection process. To be familiar with the position the applicants were interviewing for and the job specifications, the judges read the job description and the job profiles for both the high and low potential applicant. It was also explained that all of the applicants' responses were hand-written. However, to provide ease in reading the responses, all responses were type-written exactly as the applicant had responded. The judges' task was to read the written interviews, the questions and responses, and then make a rating placing the written interview in one of the following areas:

1. Interview about High Potential Features
2. Interview about Low Potential Features
3. Interview about both High and Low Potential Features
4. Interview Didn't Address High or Low Potential Features

Additionally, the judges made ratings in the following areas on 7-point Likert type scales based on the written interviews: how well the applicant answered the interviewer's questions, an evaluation of the applicant's qualifications for the job, traits possessed by the applicant, and if a decision had to be made at this moment, would you hire the applicant. In addition, judges made
ratings on two dimensions also asked of judges in Study one who only received the interviewer's questions. These two dimensions were: the extent to which the judges' thought the questions were biased and the judges' rating as to the interviewer's pre-conception about the applicant's qualifications. (See Appendix F for Rating Form.)

Results

Interviews rated by the four judges as about high potential features were coded as +1. Interviews rated as about low potential features were coded as -1. Interviews rated as about both high and low potential features or in which the interview didn't address high or low potential features were coded as 0 for the purpose of analysis.

Test of Hypothesis 2

Interview-Type Score

The four judges' ratings (with an inter-rater reliability, \( r = .41 \)) on the type of interview were averaged into one interview score for each interview. To test whether applicants' responses to the interviewers questions provided a behavioral confirmation of the interviewer's qualification hypothesis about the applicant, a 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVA was performed with this interview score as the dependent variable. Mean interview scores are
found in Table 17. No significant main effects or interaction emerged.

Table 17
Mean Interview Score by Job Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPLICATION QUALIFICATIONS</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>LOW</th>
<th>MODERATE</th>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>NONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIGH POTENTIAL PROFILE</td>
<td></td>
<td>a,b</td>
<td>a,c</td>
<td>a,c</td>
<td>b,c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Interview Score</td>
<td></td>
<td>LOW POTENTIAL PROFILE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, $p<.05$. Means not having common superscripts (a,c) significantly differed, $p<.01$.

In the control group, the rated interviews significantly differed by job profile, $F(1,23)=5.83$, $p<.03$. Separate Dunnett tests by qualification level and job profile condition of interviewer found no mean differences between ratings for interviews in which the questions were generated by interviewers in the control group and each qualification level in the low potential
profile condition. However, in the high potential profile condition, the control group interviews significantly differed from the interviews in which the questions were formulated by interviewers in the high qualification level ($p<.05$), the moderate qualification level, ($p<.05$), and the low qualification level, ($p<.01$). Examination of the mean ratings in Table 17 shows that in the high potential profile condition, the control group interviews were rated as more about high potential features than the interviews in which subjects responded to questions generated by interviewers who reviewed application materials about a high, moderate or low qualified applicant.

Additional Judges' Ratings

Judges additionally rated each interview on various dimensions. The mean rating for each of the variables is found in Table 18. Separate 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were performed on each rating. The only significant finding was a main effect of qualifications for the judges' rating (inter-rater reliability, $r=.48$) of the biased nature of the questions. Post-hoc tests, Student-Newman-Keuls, found that the moderate and low qualification conditions did significantly differ on the biased nature of the question rating ($p<.05$). When judges read both the questions and responses, the questions from the moderate qualification
condition were rated as more biased in a favorable direction than questions from the poorly qualified applicant condition.

Table 18

Additional Mean Ratings by Judges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Questions</th>
<th>Interviewers' Application Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Judges' Ratings</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased Nature of Questions</td>
<td>a, b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Responses</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Respondent's</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Composite</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring Decision</td>
<td>4.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewers' Qualification</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparisons among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a, b) significantly differed, p<.05.

Dunnett tests revealed no difference between the control group and either the high or moderate application
conditions. However, the mean ratings of questions in the low qualification level and control group significantly differed ($p < .05$). The questions from the low qualification condition were more biased towards the unfavorable direction than questions from the control group condition.

In the control group interviews, Dunnett tests found that the judges' ratings on the other variables did not significantly differ from each of the qualification levels except for the judges' rating of how qualified the interviewers thought the applicant was for the job (see Table 10). After reading both the questions and responses, judges' ratings indicated that interviewers generating questions in the control condition thought the applicant was significantly more qualified than applicants in the high qualification group ($p < .05$) and the low qualification group ($p < .05$). Dunnett tests found no mean difference between the control group and the moderate qualification level on this rating.

No main effects or interactions were found for the other interview ratings made by the four judges. These included: perceived quality of responses, evaluation of respondent's qualifications, evaluation of respondent's trait characteristics and judges' hiring recommendation on the basis of information received (see Table 10). The inter-rater reliability for the ratings ranged from .65 to
Respondents' Ratings

After responding to the generated questions, the respondents made ratings on various dimensions. Separate 2 X 3 repeated measures ANOVAs were performed on each rating made by the respondents. No significant main effects or interactions were found for the respondents' self-ratings of their qualifications for the position. Examination of the means in Table 19 indicates that respondents rated themselves as moderately qualified with regard to job experience, academic record, education/training, and overall for the job of salesperson across conditions.

Ancillary questionnaire items revealed that respondents thought the questions were relatively easy to answer. Respondents were also moderately confident that the questions would allow the interviewer to evaluate them, and that the interviewer's evaluation of them on the basis of their responses would be moderately favorable.

However, respondents thought the questions were biased as indicated by the significant main effect of qualifications for the respondents' rating of the biased nature of the questions, $F(1,40)=3.87$, $p<.03$. Post-hoc range tests using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure revealed that respondents thought that their answer to questions generated by interviewers in the high
qualification level would tend to put them more in an unfavorable light than their answers to questions generated by interviewers in the moderate condition. Dunnett tests found the ratings by respondents whose questions were generated by interviewers in the control group were not significantly different from ratings made by respondents answering questions generated in each of the application qualification conditions. Included in Table 19 are the mean ratings for the control group (None) respondents.
Table 19
Respondents' Mean Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Questions</th>
<th>Interviews' Application Group</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents' Ratings</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Experience</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Record</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>5.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Training</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>4.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Qualified Rating</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>4.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Difficulty of Answering Questions</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biased Nature of Questions</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence of Evaluation</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Based on Question &amp; Answers</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Job</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparisons among low, moderate, and high qualification means were made using the Student-Newman-Keuls procedure. Comparison among the no application group (none) and the application conditions were made using Dunnett tests. Means not having common superscripts (a,b) significantly differed, p<.05.
Significant main effects of the job profile emerged for three respondent ratings: trait composite, $F(1,40)=5.84$, $p<.03$; perceived quality of responses, $F(1,40)=6.00$, $p<.03$; and job acceptance decision, $F(1,40)=5.24$, $p<.03$. Examination of Table 20 indicates that respondents answering questions generated by interviewers in the low potential profile condition thought they possessed fewer traits ascribed to a successful salesperson, thought they had answered the interviewers questions less well and were less likely to accept the job than respondents answering questions formulated by interviewers in the high potential profile condition.

Table 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Mean Ratings by Job Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOB PROFILE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents' Ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Quality of Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Job Offer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Composite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Questions are one method interviewers use in an interview to search for information about an applicant's suitability for a job. The purpose of study one was to examine the questioning strategy of interviewers in an employment interview. Consistent with the findings of Sackett (1982) and McDonald & Hakel (1985), little evidence was found for the strong hypothesis-confirming strategies found in Snyder's research. However, an interviewer's idea of an applicant's suitability for the job based on pre-interview information did affect the kinds of questions interviewers asked. Interviewers who were given paper credentials that depicted the applicant to be highly unqualified for the job asked more questions about the poor application than did interviewers who had been given paper credentials that depicted the applicant as moderately or highly qualified for the job.

This set of results provided partial support for Dipboye's (1985) proposition as stated in Hypothesis 1. However, contrary to this hypothesis -- which also postulated that more questions about high potential features would be asked of an applicant who was believed to be highly qualified compared to a moderately qualified applicant -- no differences between the types of questions in the highly favorable and moderately favorable applicant qualifications
conditions were found. Three other characteristics of questioning: difficulty of answering the question, the biased nature of the question and the interviewer's pre-conception of the applicant conveyed through the question were examined.

Also as stated in the first hypothesis, partial support for two other characteristics of questioning was found. On the basis of the questions only, judges' ratings revealed that interviewers conveyed their pre-conception of applicants through the questions they asked. Interviewers asking questions of low qualified applicants were rated by judges as having a more unqualified pre-conception of the applicant as compared to the pre-conceptions of interviewers in the highly favorable, moderately favorable and control group conditions. Contrary to the hypotheses, however, no differences were found for the high, moderate and control conditions. Further analysis showed this similar pattern of results for both questions asking about non-application information and also for questions seeking specific information about the application materials.

Responses to another variable, the difficulty of answering the interviewer's questions, showed that judges thought the questions asked of low qualified applicants in the low potential profile condition were more difficult to answer than those asked of the same applicant in the high
potential profile condition. The judges' ratings coincided with the male interviewers' rating on this variable. Male interviewers in the low potential profile condition also thought their questions asked of a poorly qualified applicant would be more difficult to answer.

One possible explanation for this finding is that in the low profile condition the interviewer was asked to decide who should not be hired. Therefore, the interviewer would want to be certain that the poorly qualified applicant was in fact unqualified for the job, and asked difficult questions to test the low qualification hypothesis. However, in the high potential profile conditions, interviewers may have thought the low potential applicant was clearly unqualified when compared to the fit of the other two applicants (moderately qualified and highly qualified). The interviewer perhaps had already decided on the applicant to hire and that there was no use in asking any difficult questions of this applicant.

This effect of the job profile received was unexpected and perhaps not very robust. When the application question-type variable was included in the analysis, no interaction was found. Instead, a main effect of application qualifications emerged with questions asked of poorly qualified applicants rated as more difficult to answer than questions asked of a moderately qualified applicant.
Respondents answering the questions, however, thought the questions were moderately difficult to answer overall.

No support was found for the hypothesis about the judges' rating on the biased nature of the question. Judges across application qualification conditions who had received only the generated questions thought the questions were not different in terms of bias; that is, in the sense that one's answer to the question would tend to portray one in a particularly good or bad manner. Respondents though thought the questions were biased in that their answers to questions asked in the high and low qualification conditions would tend to put them in a more unfavorable light than their answers to questions generated by interviewers in the moderately qualified applicant condition. The reason for the biased rating of the low potential questions in an unfavorable direction is obvious. Not so apparent is the biased rating of questions asking about high potential features in the same unfavorable direction. One potential reason for this finding is that most respondents in this study thought they were moderately qualified for this position (see Table 19). When answering a question asking about high potential features, the respondent may have been unable to provide information supporting the assumption of the question. Instead, the respondent had to reply in a relatively negative fashion to the question and thus may
have felt the questions asking about high potential features would highlight unfavorable qualities because the applicants only thought of themselves as moderately qualified. In turn, judges reading both the questions and responses thought the questions were biased. These judges indicated that questions asked of a moderately qualified applicant were more biased in a favorable direction than questions asked of a low qualified applicant.

Despite the partial support for hypothesis I, no evidence was found for the strong confirmatory biases reported by Snyder & Swann (1978). An examination of Table 6 shows that interviewers asked predominantly neutral questions in all of experimental and control conditions. Moreover, although interviewers did list more questions about low potential features after reviewing paper credentials of a poorly qualified applicant, relatively few low potential questions (an average of only 0.73) per interview were asked.

Considering that very few questions posed by interviewers asked about high potential or low potential features, the questioning strategy interviewers used in this research study could not be clearly classified as confirmatory, disconfirmatory, or equal opportunity in the sense that Snyder (1981) used these terms. These results suggest that Snyder and Swann's (1978) findings may be
limited to the experimental procedures in which the subjects are forced to choose specific questions and the specific traits of introversion and extroversion. When allowed to generate their own questions, subjects did not show as strong an inclination to use a hypothesis confirmatory strategy. Instead, subjects seemed more prone to ask open-ended questions that asked about either type of feature.

The job profile interviewers received did not significantly affect their questioning strategy. It may have been that interviewers had a strong idea of what an ideal salesperson should be like and used this as the criterion to evaluate applicants even when given a profile of a low potential applicant. Consequently, interviewers may have found it difficult, if not impossible, to think of the features of low potential applicants when interviewing candidates for a job. Some support for this contention came from requesting interviewers to list as many characteristics of the job profile they could remember after listing their questions. Of the 25 interviewers receiving a low potential profile as their basis to compare applicant credentials, only five interviewers listed low potential features. The others listed high potential features or only general statements pertaining to the job description. In the high potential profile condition, 21 of the 26 interviewers listed high potential features.
Once questions have been asked, the applicants' responses became the focus. If applicants respond to interviewers' questions in a certain manner due to the question's possibly biased construction, the interviewer may not have been uncovering a true picture of the applicant. Instead, the interviewer's prior impression of the applicant dominated. At times, the interviewer's prior impression of the applicant may have been accurate, but there is a problem in the cases in which the prior impressions were not accurate.

Although the application qualifications did influence interviewers' questioning strategy, respondents answering the interviewer's questions did not provide a behavioral (verbal) confirmation of the interviewer's pre-interview impressions. Instead, the generated interviews were rated by judges as portraying the applicant as moderately qualified for the job regardless of qualification condition, consistent with the respondents' self-ratings of qualifications for the job. This finding does not support hypothesis II and is clearly at variance with the consistent finding of subjects' behavioral confirmation of the interviewer's hypothesis found by Snyder & Swann (1978). The questions generated in this study seemed not to have "trapped" respondents into answering with information confirming the interviewer's hypothesis.
These findings suggest that interviewers may ask questions about certain features but the intent or assumption of the question can be countered and refuted by the applicant when responding to the questions. These findings further indicate that interviewers may get an accurate account of the applicant's qualifications for the position, in contradiction to Snyder & Swann's (1978) behavioral confirmation notion. However, what interviewers chose to remember from the interview and how they chose to evaluate the information they gathered may point to potential sources of interviewer biases.

One possible explanation why a behavioral confirmation of the interviewer's hypothesis was not found in this study is that the large majority of questions generated by interviewers were open-ended and rated as neutral (i.e., asking about both high potential and low potential features) as shown in Table 6. This questioning strategy gave the respondent considerable freedom in responding and also control over the interview and information received by the interviewer.

The written interviews in which respondents answered questions generated by interviewers in the control group who had received a high potential profile were rated by judges as focusing more on high potential features than interviews in which the interviewers had reviewed application
materials. In addition, judges reading both the questions and responses thought the interviewers' pre-conception of applicants in the control condition to be more qualified than interviewer's pre-interview hypotheses of applicants in the high and low qualification conditions. There are several possible explanations for this outcome. More questions were generated by interviewers in the control group as compared to the application qualification levels. Since judges did not view application material, the control group interviews gave judges more information about the respondent. Additionally, as noted by the mean number of high potential features in Table 6, the control group interviewers generated significantly more questions per interview which were rated as asking about high potential features when compared to the low qualification level. Perhaps this slightly larger number of questions asking about high potential features contributed to this significant difference in judges' ratings of the control group. More research is needed controlling for the amount of information judges receive about the respondents in order to assess this interview rating.

From this two part study, a clearer picture emerges on the information gathering strategies used by interviewers in an employment interview. The dominant information seeking strategy appeared to be to ask non-biased questions. When
free to generate questions, interviewers listed a
preponderance of neutral (i.e., questions not asking only
about high or only about low potential features) and open-
ended questions. Furthermore, the potential behavioral
confirmation of these questions in interviewees' responses
was not found.

This study attempted to progress a step beyond past
research and simulate one phase of the interview process by
having interviewers generate their own questions. The
controlled aspect of this study was necessary in order to
address the issues outlined above. However, there are
several potential limitations to generalizing these
findings. Although the interviewers in this study were MBA
and business students, professional interviewers with
specific experience in selecting salespersons may show more
or less bias. Future research on the topic of interviewer's
questioning strategies should include professional
interviewers as hypothesis-testers. This study only
addressed an interviewer's questioning strategy in terms of
the verbal content. However, confirmatory biases may be
communicated primarily by nonverbal and paralinguistic cues.

In testing the potential behavioral confirmation of the
interviewer's hypothesis through the applicant's responses
to the questions, this study is limited in that the subjects
role played the applicant position. In addition, only one
respondent per set of questions was examined, posing potential sampling problems. Multiple respondents and actual applicants should be included in future research.

As a partial replication and extension of previous research (Sackett, 1982; McDonald & Hake1, 1985), this study more closely approximates the interview process. Therefore, it may be more generalizable to actual face-to-face interviews than past studies. Ultimately though, future research needs to examine whether an interviewer's information gathering strategy found in this study will generalize to actual face-to-face interviews.
References


and primacy-recency effects in recruitment decisions. Personnel Psychology, 28, 233-238.


Snyder, M. & Cantor, N. (1979). Testing hypotheses
about other people: The use of historical knowledge. 


Experimental and Social Psychology, 19, 560-576.


Appenldix A

Job Description:

SALES REPRESENTATIVE, CHEMICALS

Sells industrial and agricultural chemicals to business and industrial establishments. Compiles lists of prospective customers for use as sales leads based on information from newspapers, business directories, and other sources. Travels through assigned territory to call on regular and prospective customers, to solicit orders, or talks to customers on sales floor by phone. Displays or demonstrates product, using samples or catalog, and emphasizes salable features. Prepares reports of business transactions and keeps expense accounts.

A brief training period (two months) is required in which all employees are familiarized with the various aspects of the industry and necessary sales techniques.
Appendix B

JOB PROFILE: HIGH POTENTIAL

The HIGH POTENTIAL APPLICANT should meet the following credentials:

1. High Academic achievement
2. Relevant job experiences
3. Good references
4. Academic program relevant to sales

Additionally, the HIGH POTENTIAL APPLICANT tends to possess the following traits:

1. Sociable
2. Ambitious
3. Does Not Give Up Easily
4. Independent
5. Assertive
6. Organized
7. Self-confident
8. Initiative
Appendix C

JOB PROFILE: LOW POTENTIAL

The LOW POTENTIAL APPLICANT should meet the following credentials:

1. Low Academic achievement
2. Irrelevant job experiences
3. Poor references
4. Academic program irrelevant to sales

Additionally, the LOW POTENTIAL APPLICANT tends to possess the following traits:

1. Non-Sociable
2. Unambitious
3. Does Give Up Easily
4. Dependent
5. Unassertive
6. Disorganized
7. Lacks Self-confidence
8. Lacks Initiative
Appendix D

Rating Form Used For Subjective Ratings of Questions
RATING FORM

CATEGORIES:
Mark an X in front of the category to which you think this question belongs.

1. QUESTIONS ABOUT HIGH POTENTIAL FEATURES

2. QUESTIONS ABOUT LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES

3. QUESTIONS ABOUT BOTH HIGH AND LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES

4. QUESTIONS IN WHICH HIGH AND LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES ARE NOT CLEARLY DEFINED

1. How difficult do you think the question would be for the typical interviewee to answer?

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Easy</td>
<td>Very Easy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modestly Difficult</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. To what extent do you think the question is biased in the sense that one's answer would tend to put one in a favorable or unfavorable light?

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Biased in a FAVORABLE light</td>
<td>Not Biased in a Favorable or Unfavorable light</td>
<td>Definitely Biased in a UNFAVORABLE light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The interviewer asked this question because the interviewer thought the applicant was __________ for this position.

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very UNQUALIFIED</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Very QUALIFIED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Respondents' Rating Form
CHOOSE THE ALTERNATIVE THAT BEST EXPRESSES YOUR FEELINGS OR INCLINATIONS.

1. How qualified do you think you are for this position in terms of your job experience?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Very Unqualified Average Very Qualified

2. How qualified do you think you are for this position in terms of your academic record?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Very Unqualified Average Very Qualified

3. How qualified do you think you are for this position in terms of your education and training?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Very Unqualified Average Very Qualified

4. Overall, how qualified do you think you are for this position?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Very Unqualified Average Very Qualified

5. In answering the questions that you were given, how do you think you would appear in a face-to-face interview. Rate how you think you would come across in the interview on each of the following traits:

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   Very Poor Average Very Good

   _____ Sociable       _____ Assertive
   _____ Ambitious      _____ Organized
   _____ Does Not Give Up Easily _____ Self-confident
   _____ Independent    _____ Shows Initiative
6. How good of a job do you think you did in answering the interviewer's questions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. If you had to make your decision now, would you take this job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Would NOT</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Definitely Would</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. How difficult do you think the questions are to answer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Easy</td>
<td>Moderately Difficult</td>
<td>Very Difficult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. To what extent, do you think the questions are biased in the sense that one's answers would tend to put one in an unfavorable light?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. How confident are you that the questions will allow the interviewer to evaluate you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOT Very Confident</td>
<td>Moderately Confident</td>
<td>Very Confident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. How favorably do you think the interviewer will evaluate your job qualifications on the basis of the questions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Very Favorable</td>
<td>Moderately Favorable</td>
<td>Very Favorable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. How favorably do you think the interviewer will evaluate your job qualifications on the basis of your answers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Very Favorable</td>
<td>Moderately Favorable</td>
<td>Very Favorable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. How favorably would you evaluate this job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Very Favorable</td>
<td>Moderately Favorable</td>
<td>Very Favorable</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F

Rating Form Used to Rate Questions and Responses
RATING FORM

Mark an X in front of the category which you think
best represents the interview you just read.

_______ 1. INTERVIEW ABOUT HIGH POTENTIAL FEATURES
ONLY

_______ 2. INTERVIEW ABOUT LOW POTENTIAL FEATURES
ONLY

_______ 3. INTERVIEW ABOUT BOTH HIGH AND LOW
POTENTIAL FEATURES

_______ 4. INTERVIEW DIDN'T ADDRESS HIGH OR LOW
POTENTIAL FEATURES

1. How good a job did the applicant do in answering the
interviewer's questions?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Very Poor Average Very Good

2. On the basis of all the information you have seen, how
would you evaluate this applicant's qualifications for the
job for which he has applied?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Very Poor Average Very Good

3. If you were the interviewer and had to make your
decision now, would you hire this person?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7
Definitely Uncertain Definitely
Would NOT Hire Would Hire
4. To what extent do you think the questions are biased in the sense that one's answer would tend to put one in a favorable or unfavorable light?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely Biased in a FAVORABLE light</td>
<td>Not Biased in Favorable or Unfavorable light</td>
<td>Definitely Biased in a UNFAVORABLE light</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. The interviewer asked these questions because the interviewer thought the applicant was _________________ for this position.

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<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very UNQUALIFIED</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Very QUALIFIED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. On the basis of the information you have seen and your impressions, rate the applicant on each of the following traits. Use the scale below and write the corresponding number in the space next to the trait.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ Sociable  _____ Assertive
_____ Ambitious  _____ Organized
_____ Does Not Give Up Easily  _____ Self-confident
_____ Independent  _____ Shows Initiative