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SELF ADMINISTERED JOB PREVIEW EXERCISE

By

Leonard W. Paauwe

A THESIS
Submitted to
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

SELF ADMINISTERED JOB PREVIEW EXERCISE

By

Leonard William Paauwe

New employees usually have unrealistic job role expectations and need accurate information to adjust personal expectations with organizational needs. The length of time for adjustment or socialization depends on information gathering. To provide new employees with accurate information and help them adjust expectations a Self Administered Job Preview Exercise (SAJPE) was developed and used to supplement standard orientations. The SAJPE was able to alter, but not basically change, expectation held by new employees. The altered expectations were in nearly all cases a result of additional, not conflicting, information. New employees were eager for information regarding their jobs but incorporated that information without basically changing expectations. The SAJPE did present new employees with information at a critical time and allow for alignment of personal expectations with those represented in the model.

If you plan for a year, plant wheat
If you plan for a decade, plant trees
But if you plan for a lifetime,
train and educate the farmers.

Kuan Tzu 300 A.D.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To the Extension agents who contributed their time and efforts to this study, I hope those following will benefit from your efforts.

For all those times when I confused my priorities; I most especially I want to acknowledge the loving sacrifice of Lila Coulter, my wife and more.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

New employees join an organization with expectations and unique needs they anticipate the organization will fulfill. Concurrently the organization holds expectations for the new employee. The formation of expectations on the employees part is based on personal needs and aspirations, and frequently does not mesh with the reality of the job situation. Unmet expectations by either party can lead to job dissatisfaction, unsatisfactory performance and detrimental working relations.

Perspective employees use information gathered about the organization to anticipate the degree to which they may expect their needs to be met. For both the employee and the employer the gathering of information is a critical event. Yet commonly decisions are based on subjective measures and preconceptions by both parties.

Information gathering by the individual begins when first learning about a job opening and continues through the interview and orientation process and onto the job. After joining an organization, learning or information gathering changes focus from general organizational expectations toward learning behavioral expectations of co-workers and supervisors. This socialization process continues until the new employee has gathered and incorporated enough information to meet expectations by both the employer and colleagues to be accepted as a member of the organization. The length of socialization is dependent upon the rate and the accuracy of information gathering and reconciliation of mutual expectations.

For the new employee the difficulty has four components:

- (1) uncertainty of job roles and responsibilities;
- (2) the degree of realism in their expectations;
regarding their roles and responsibilities;
- (3) assessing skills needed to effectively perform their
roles and responsibilities;
- (4) how to make effective use of available learning
resources.

Need for Study

The Cooperative Extension Service (CES) is a three way partnership between Federal, State and County organizations. The CES's role is defined by the

Smith Lever Act:---"to aid in diffusing
among the people of the United States
useful and practical information on
subjects relating to agriculture, and
to encourage the application of same."

The mission of the CES is carried out through County Extension Agents (CEA). The role of the CEA is administrated by the CES, but each agent is functionally responsible to the community he/she serves. Their role is to help the community define and achieve community goals. Since 1914 the mandate of the CES hasn't change but its methods have. Changes in technology, society and the explosion of knowledge have resulted in a tremendous challenge for Extension agents. In 1978 the American Institute for Research (AIR), in a research report for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) identified 14 major duties which comprise an Extension agents job (Brumback, Hahn & Edwards, 1978).

How can a new Extension agent be better prepared for the complexity of an Extension agents role job? For new employee's hired by Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service (MSU CES) the first opportunity to learn the role of an Extension agent is

usually "on the job," when joining the county Extension staff. Often the first exposure is an overwhelming experience.

Compounding the magnitude of the job are the unclear expectations regarding performance and behavior. This uncertainty causes stress at a time when the desire to learn is peaked. The socialization period can be shortened and the stress reduced if pertinent information is more easily available.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are provide to clarify terms used in this study.

Socialization. The process of moving into an organization from the outside and the subsequent changes which occur in the individual as a result of the organization.

Orientation. A planned introduction to an organization. In this context, it is designed to be the beginning if the socialization process.

Realistic Job Preview. Part of the orientation process based on objective and accurate information regarding the job roles and responsibilities.

Unrealistic Expectations. Expectations on the employees part which are not reflected by the reality of the job role. Used here does not imply unreasonable expectations of the job on the employees part.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Socialization in Organizations

Socialization is the process of moving into the organization from the outside and the subsequent changes that occur in the individual as a result of becoming part of the organization. Socialization is characterized by several events but acquiring an appropriate work role definition is perhaps the crux of the socialization process. Key issues in role definition are expectations, (accurate knowledge of what is expected), appropriate skill level and motivation. The pivotal element in role definition is expectations. Yet inflated expectations are common among new employees entering an organization. One reason for inflated expectations is the difficulty new employees have in gathering information. Recent studies indicate the amount of information held by outsiders of an organization seems to be low and new employees do not get accurate information regarding organizations (Wanous, 1977, 1978, 1980a, 1980b). A successful socialization results in a new employee making a

commitment to the organization. Often new employees decide in the first thirty to sixty days whether to make a commitment or not (Bureau of National Affairs, [BNA], 1985). Yet unmet expectations can lead to disillusionment and dissatisfaction, which are negative factors in making a job commitment. Accurate and timely information can help new employees match their expectation to organizational ones. The more information given the new employee regarding their organizational role and expectations, the more likely that these roles will be accepted. Accurate and timely information are also factors of the success spiral syndrome. That is, early career successes tend to lead to additional successes (Feldman, 1980, Smith, McCracken & Suandi, 1983). The anxiety of being a new comer to an organization is also attributed to a delay in learning.

Realistic expectations can enhance job commitment by preventing dissatisfaction due to disillusionment from occurring (Wanous, 1973, 1977, 1980a). Realistic orientation has been effective creating realistic expectations. Realistic orientations using realistic job previews have been effective in decreasing learning time and increasing productivity.

Effective Realistic Job Previews work to:

- Create expectations consistent with the content of the job preview
- Lower expectations and reduce entry shock
- Increase commitment
- Enhance job survival rates (Wanous, 1973, 1977)

Realistic job previews can take several forms. Written and work sample Realistic Job Previews have been effective in reducing turnover while oral and audio/visual were not (Wanous, 1980b)

Realistic orientation enhances coping mechanisms and reduces role ambiguity, most likely by sharpening the directional component. Groups of new employees who were "realistically" socialized attained competence levels faster than those experiencing normal socialization (Feldman, 1980, Wanous, 1978). Experience with one enhanced orientation reduced turnover by 69% and shortened learning time by one month (BNA, 1985).

The findings of a recent study indicated that initial decline in levels of commitment among 4-H agents in Ohio and the subsequent disillusionment was due to unrealistic expectations. The researchers suggested that a more realistic orientation could have mitigated

the effects of unrealistic expectations (Smith, et al., 1983).

Summary

Commitment to an organization is developed through the socialization process. A key to successful socialization of new employees is a clear and accurate role definition. Successful role definition is the matching of expectations of the new employee to organizational expectations. Realistic job previews have proved effective in matching expectations of the new employee to the organizational expectations reflected in the realistic job preview. The results have been higher commitment, lowered turnover, shortened learning time and increased productivity.

Adult Learning

Adult self-directed learning is an American tradition stemming from the necessity of relying on one's self and neighbor, and a willingness to act without orders from above. In the United States the value on individualism and self learning form the foundation of adult education. The practitioners of Androgogy recognize most adults: (1) view themselves as mature,

independent person, capable of self-direction; (2) form identities from what they know or do. They also recognize an adults approach to learning reflects past activities including extent and type of education and circumstances that give rise to current learning needs (Knowles, 1980, Knox, 1977). Adult learners are usually far better then anyone else at pin pointing what they need to learn in order to raise their performance to expected levels. Two factors are important: first, to have an example or model of competency; second, to have clear learning goals (Knox, 1977). If one thing stands out about adult learning it is that a self diagnosed need for learning produces much greater motivation to learn than does an externally diagnosed need (Knowles, 1980).

Part of the self administered realistic orientation process proposed in this study focuses on self perception. A clarification of the self perception process helps adult employees look objectively at a relatively small sample of behaviors that are important in contributing to their job success. Based on this information they can determine where they want to invest energy in improving their performance, in light of the models of desired behaviors. The self perception process is a way of helping individuals make more

sensitive judgments about which of many possible directions they might take in their continuing self development.

Self perception is not an easy process. One reason is because adults have a strong impulse to show their strength and ability. So the notion of engaging in a self-diagnostic process for the purpose of revealing one's need for additional learning is threatening for the new employee. Thus it is crucial that the learning environment be non-threatening and supportive. The learning climate should be one in which adults feel respected and supported, and have expression without fear of ridicule or punishment (Knowles, 1980).

Individual concerns about the use of self assessment information frequently causes hesitation in identifying and stating needed areas for self improvement. This hesitation makes confidentiality essential. Self-appraisal has the benefit of providing for confidentiality, therefore encouraging more honest responses. Honest responses increase the likelihood of initiating a staff development program which meets individual needs rather than dealing with symptoms of the needs. Self assessment is especially conducive to professional groups (Miller & Verduin, 1979).

Summary

Adult education is the major function of the CES. More recently it has begun to recognize the increasing role staff need to play in their own development. This is in part due to the rapid change in technological information. As the the authors of the Ohio Cooperative Extension Services Staff Development Plan note: "The basic philosophy for the CES from its inception has been one of helping people to help themselves. This philosophy implies that fully functioning people are free and responsible and are capable of self-improvement." If Extension staff accept this as a valid educational concept then it applies to themselves as well.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF STUDY

Objective of Study

The objective of this study is to help new employees become aware of possible differences between their expectations of the position and the realities of the position.

Assumptions

1. A self administered realistic written preview of an Extension agents job can provide information that can help new employees adjust their expectations, thus reducing stress and shortening socialization time.
2. New staff have needs for information about the organization and are capable of deciding how well those needs are being met.
3. The procedure described is for use by Agricultural and Extension Education Staff at Michigan State University as part of the current orientation.

Limitations

The five limitation to this study include:

1. Time
2. Cost
3. Composite expectations
4. Sample size
5. No follow up

A Self Administered Job Preview Exercise (SAJPE) (Appendix A) was developed to fit within two major constraints: amount of time to administer the exercise and the lack of a budget to develop a program. Therefore it was designed to be used in conjunction with the current orientation used by AEE. To fit in the exercise could take no more than an hour to complete. Limited resources necessitated a simple paper and pencil instrument.

The source of information for the SAJPE represents the collective perception of many Extension agents. Some individual experiences may be unique and generalizing the findings of this study should be done cautiously. The ten subjects participating in this study represent approximately a quarter of the new staff typically hired

by MSU CES each year. The small sample size, the nature of the treatment and no follow up on this group, make it difficult to project long term responses to the SAJPE.

Sample

Participants in the study were hired by MSU CES for field agents positions between May 23, and August 27, 1985. The participants had the single stipulation of having no prior Extension experience. Of the fifteen persons hired during the designated time, ten met the criteria for the study. No effort was made to discriminate for sex, race, educational background, age or program area.

Self Administered Job Preview Exercise

The SAJPE was developed from two sources of information developed by American Institute for Research for Cooperative Extension (Brumback et al., 1978), and the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service Staff Development Survey (Cooper & Paauwe, 1984).

Although the National survey by Brumback et al. (1978) is a composite of many Extension agents perspectives, there are certain aspects of an Extension agents role that are applicable to all Extension agent roles.

The SAJPE was developed to meet the stated objectives of this study: to help new employees become aware of possible differences between their expectations of the position and the realities of the position. To do this new employees were asked through the SAJPE to compare their expectations against objective information regarding an Extension agents role.

Procedure

For the standard orientation individual new employees are scheduled for a one hour visit with an Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE) staff member. For the study period new employees fitting criteria for the study were scheduled for a two hour visit with AEE. The SAJPE was conducted during one hour of that time and standard orientation during the other. Due to the scheduling difficulties of AEE staff there was no control on the order of events which were often determined only

a day or hour prior to a scheduled visit by new staff. After introductions to AEE staff new employees participating in the SAJPE were given a brief description of both parts of the orientation process. In an office set aside for that hour to ensure privacy, new employees were given a verbal introduction to the purpose of the SAJPE. It was explained that the SAJPE was developed by a specialist in staff development in AEE as part of his Masters research. New employees were told that participation in the SAJPE was voluntary and no repercussion followed refusal. No one refused to participate. Following verbal agreement to participate, instruction and a brief overview of the SAJPE were given new employees. It was emphasized that the SAJPE was not a test and that results were as confidential as the new employee wished to keep them. Participants independently completed the model and were free to ask any questions regarding the model as they progressed. Time for completion varied between 30-45 minutes.

Following completion of the exercise, the staff member who gave the instructions discussed the exercise with the new employee. During the discussion which lasted approximately 15 minutes, the AEE staff member asked the participants to respond to questions in the Feedback Information Record (FIR) (appendix B). Questions were

asked sequentially and the responses were recorded by the staff member. If the new employee responded negatively to the initial question a "no" was recorded and the next question was asked. An affirmative response was recorded as "yes" and the new employee was asked to what degree was it so. The responses ranged from "Great Deal", "Significantly", "Somewhat", "Not Significantly" to "Very Little." The new employee was then asked for a specific example for the positive response. This example was recorded along side the degree responses on the FIR. Comments and responses were confirmed by staff with employee to ensure clarity. AEE staff dated and kept the FIR. No effort was made to identify completed FIRs with specific employees. New employees kept the completed SAJPE and sharing the content remained at their discretion AEE staff did not see the responses in the model.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Results and Discussion

Previous research indicate that: (1) new employees usually have unrealistic expectation and need accurate information to adjust personal expectation with organizational designs; (2) the length of time for adjustment and socialization depends on information gathering; and (3) orientation with realistic job previews are effective in shortening the socialization time. Based on these findings a Self Administered Job Preview Exercise (SAJPE) was developed. The SAJPE was designed to help new employees gain insight to their own expectations and match them against the more realistic organizational expectations reflected in the SAJPE.

The SAJPE was piloted on two participants to test procedures. Following successful piloting the SAJPE was administered to nine additional new employees. Following completion of the exercise one of the nine participants reported having worked for Cooperative Extension five years before. The responses of the participant with experience to the FIR were all negative and are not included further in the discussion.

Through the SAJPE the participants had access to critical information at a critical time to enable matching of participants expectations with the organizational expectations. If the SAJPE was successful changes in the new employee expectations would be anticipated. The purpose of the FIR was to measure the effectiveness of the SAJPE by asking participants questions intended to measure changes in personal expectations as a result of the information provided in SAJPE.

Six questions were asked. Questions one and four asked the participants about self perceptions regarding their expectations. Questions two and three asked about differences and/or subsequent changes in expectations of roles. The following discussion will focus on questions one and four jointly and question two and three jointly. Questions five and six asked for new employee responses to that part of the orientation process they had experienced including the SAJPE.

Responses to FIR questions

Question 1: Did the SAJPE alter your expectations regarding your role, responsibilities and or duties?

Four said yes and six responded no. Expectations were altered significantly in one case and somewhat in three cases. Comments: "some areas I wasn't aware off;" "ranking of importance and time were different;" (my expectations) were different from others has reported in the SAJPE."

For the six that reported that it did not alter their expectations, there are two possibilities: (1) Their expectations were consistent with how they interpreted the SAJPE, or (2) The SAJPE as a treatment wasn't powerful enough to markedly alter expectations held by new employees. In individual cases either possibility may apply. Several of the subjects reported close working relationship in previous positions with Extension agents, thus may have formed fairly accurate expectations. All subjects had previous knowledge of Extension and likely formed expectations based on that knowledge. The responses to question one indicate that new employees were able to alter expectations based on the SAJPE. However for the majority expectations were not basically altered but were expanded to include new

information. This is supported by the comment, "some areas I wasn't aware of."

Question 4: Did the SAJPE cause you to think about your job expectations in a way you had not thought before?

Eight said yes and two said no. One reported that SAJPE caused him/her to think about it a great deal, four said significantly and three somewhat. Comments: "This makes me think things are planned out more than I thought;" "very thorough model, makes you think;" "(This experience) allowed (me) to know what others perceive job to be and what to expect as a new agent."

For eight of ten subjects the model was a catalyst for examining their expectations differently than they had previously. The difference referred to in the question might be a result of increased information provided by the SAJPE. However another possibility is that for new employees part one of the SAJPE was the first time they tried to articulate their expectations. Articulation resulted in increased awareness of expectations. In either case an important component of socialization is the alignment of expectations. Identifying personal expectations is a necessary first step. Asking oneself "What did I expect?" can provide a powerful insight for

an individual trying to understand where they fit in a new situation.

Question 2: Did you have job expectations that differ from what the SAJPE suggest the job role might be?

One participant said "yes" and nine said "no". For the positive response the degree of difference was "Somewhat". Comments: Although unable to articulate expectations, what was represented in the SAJPE was different than what this person had envisioned. Nine subjects indicated that their job expectations were not different from what the SAJPE represented.

Question two measured perception of differences between previously held expectations by new employees and organizational expectations as they interpreted them from the SAJPE. Nine of the ten subjects reported no difference in expectations. Two conditions may explain responses. First, the subjects might have had expectation so closely matched with those represented in the SAJPE that there was no meaningful differences. Second, the treatment was not powerful enough to illuminate significant differences. Although the first condition might apply in some cases, responses to question one and three indicate that would be unlikely for nine out of ten subjects. Prior research (Wanous,

1978) indicates some support for the second case. The SAJPE was not powerful enough for new employees to acknowledge differences. The timing of the use of the SAJPE may be a significant factor. The SAJPE was administered after the new employees had made a major commitment to the organization and to their future with it. The suggestion that the job is different than what one had expected could be a threatening revelation that questions the correctness of a major decision. Questioning a major decision would take a much more powerful message than was contained within or received from the SAJPE.

Question 3: Do you feel the SAJPE provided additional insight into your role as an Extension agent?

Nine of ten participants reported additional insight had been provided. Two of the nine reported a great deal of insight was provided, four-significant insight and three somewhat more insight was provided. Comments: "The SAJPE provided an overview of the attitudes and priorities of the field staff;" "(There is) more teamwork with leaders and 4-H members than I thought;" "(I had not thought of) evaluation;" "wider range-more areas than I thought was involved-especially running meetings, writing newsletter;" "motivation aspect,

creativity-things like that I hadn't thought of."

Additional insight on the part of participants suggest that expectations did not match perfectly and that to some degree perception had changed following SAJPE. Participants seem to report that they did not interpret the SAJPE as representing different expectations than they held. But the SAJPE was able to provide information which new employees were able to incorporate and expand their own expectations.

Question 5: What suggestions do you have for improving the SAJPE?

"(The SAJPE is a) good idea and helpful"

"(I) had a hard time thinking about what my duties will be and coming up with what I will be doing"

"(I) need more time, could send (to new employee) home and they could bring it in with them to orientation"

"Good instruction, thought it was helpful, Great Idea, really helped"

"If done prior to orientation with staff it might have been more helpful"

"More details, its nice but I knew all of it already"

"Possibly modify the model to include provisions for other position, program leaders, overall real valuable

model and provided valuable information."

"Very through model, makes you think"

"First part wasn't clear"

"(It's) pretty good the way it is"

It can be generally concluded from the comments that new employees appreciate information that helps them define their role. Also new employee had a great deal of faith in the validity of the information presented in the SAJPE. Thus the SAJPE would appear to be a helpful tool in transmitting information to new employees to help along in the socialization process.

Question 6: What suggestions do you have for the entry procedures you have experienced so far?

"Send map of University"

"More advanced notice of scheduling for orientation"

"(I am) impressed with procedures so far"

The majority of participants had no response to question six. A few conclusions might be made. First it might be reasoned that new employees had few expectations about the orientation process or had little experience for comparison. However participants generally had just begun the entry process and had very little information on which to formulate opinions.

Conclusion

The SAJPE was able to provide additional information thus, alter, but not basically change, expectation held by new employees. In nearly all cases the altered expectations were the result of additional, not conflicting, information. New employees were eager for information regarding their jobs and incorporated that information into their understanding without changing expectations. The SAJPE did present new employees with information at a critical time, perhaps reinforcing understanding while allowing for alignment of personal expectations with those represented in the model. How much time, ambiguity and stress the information saved new employees remains a question. Previous research strongly indicates that information gathering is a critical event for both employee and employer. Successful information gathering results in increased job commitment and more immediate productivity. The responses to the SAJPE support the findings reported in similar research. Although a follow up on the benefits of taking part in the SAJPE is beyond the scope of this study it is possible to assume that the consequences to this SAJPE will not be radically different from what other researchers report of effects of realistic job previews.

Implications

The SAJPE has proven to be an effective device for transmitting accurate and objective information to new employees. Helping new employee learn about their roles and job within Extension is an important task for the organization. Used properly the SAJPE can reduce stress, learning time and help new Extension agents be more productive sooner. The cost of developing and administering the SAJPE is minimal but the returns to the organization in increased job commitment, productivity are potentially substantial. The potential cost/benefit ratio indicates the SAJPE warrants serious consideration.

Recommendations

Further use of the SAJPE should be preceded by several modification to the exercise. Generally the length of the exercise itself should be reduced. The tables in the preview portion should be rearranged to be easier to use and read. A more professional appearance of the exercise might enhance its use to potential new employees.

In addition to those suggestion mentioned the use of the SAJPE in further research could be more effective if the scheduling was more controlled. The FIR would be easier to interpret with question worded more precisely to the point.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SELF ADMINISTERED JOB PREVIEW EXERCISE

APPENDIX A

SELF ADMINISTERED JOB PREVIEW EXERCISE

Welcome to the department of Agricultural And Extension Education (AEE). Now that you have joined the Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service (MSU CES) it is AEE's desire to help you become the best Extension Agent you can be. MSU CES recognizes that it is important to you, and to your success as an Extension agent, to have a clear idea of what MSU CES expectations of you are. Your job satisfaction and success also depend on your expectations being met. But we know that sometimes new employees have unrealistic job expectations. It is often difficult as a new employee to get a clear picture of the organizational expectations, and match them to your own. One way of matching expectations is through a realistic job preview. The Self Administered Job Preview Exercise (SAJPE) was designed to help increase your job satisfaction and ensure your success as County Extension Agent.

The Self Administered Job Preview Exercise has five parts:

1. Expectations: What you expect to do as an agent?
2. Attributes: It is important to recognize your strengths. What attributes do you have that you hope will help you?
3. Realistic Preview: What do experienced Extension agents perceive to be part of the job of an Extension agent?
4. Professional Development: What would you like to learn more about.
5. Feedback: An opportunity to talk about the SAJPE and your response to it.

This voluntary exercise is intended to help facilitate your professional development. It is also part of a research project in staff development. We believe that completing the Self Administered Job Preview Exercise (SAJPE) will help you get started in your new position as an Extension agent. The results are as confidential as you wish. You can chose to share them or not share them with AEE staff or your supervisor.

Part 3: REALISTIC PREVIEW

On the following pages are three tables which contain duties and attributes listed frequently by experienced Extension agents and the results from a survey of MSU CES personnel. The first table is titled Realistic Preview, the second, Attributes and the third, Staff Development Survey, MSU CES 1984. This is an opportunity to match your expectations with perceptions of experienced Extension staff in Michigan and around the country and Michigan. You might notice differences between your responses and theirs. NOTE THAT THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. There are only perceptions and perceptions vary for individuals and organizations. These are only for you to get an insight into the role of an Extension agent from the points of view of experienced Extension people. If you wish, the differences can be discussed during the feedback session. What you learn from clarifying duties and roles can be used by you to get a better picture of yourself in relationship to your job and the expectations that go with it. You will also have a better understanding of what others have experienced.

Part 1: EXPECTATIONS

What duties do you expect to perform as an Extension agent? First list the duties you believe to be part of an Extension agents job. Try to be specific. For example a response written as: assisting clients, is not very specific, you could write how your propose to help clients. You may list more or fewer duties than the spaces provided provided. Second numerically rank your responses for time requirements, difficulty and importance. If you list five duties, the most important would be number one and the least would be number five. Rank each duty for each category separately. The most important may not be the most difficult.

Time Requirements
Difficulty
Importance

I D T

Please finish before going on to next page.

Part 2: PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

List the attributes you have that you expect will help you be a successful Extension agent.

Personal Attributes

Please finish this page before going on to next page.

This is a list of duties that experienced Extension agents perceive to be primary duties for an Extension agent.

TABLE I RATINGS OF MAJOR DUTY AREAS,
DIFFICULTY, IMPORTANCE AND TIME DEMANDS¹

Duties	Difficulty			Importance			Time		
	AG	HE	4-H	AG	HE	4-H	AG	HE	4-H
1. Assess Community Needs	3	2	3	8	6	8	10	12	14
2. Prepare Annual Plan of Work	7	4	4	13	9t	12	14	9	13
3. Prepare Specific Program Plans	5t	7	6	6	2	4	5	2	3
4. Conduct Programs	9t	12	11	3	1	2	3	1	2
5. Respond to Client Requests for Specific Information	14	14	13	1	4	5	1	3	5
6. Respond to Client Request for Technical Assistance	11	9	10	2	9t	9	2	6	9
7. Recruit, Train, and Utilize Lay Leaders	2	3	1	9	7	1	12	7	1
8. Evaluate Program Effectiveness	1	1	2	12	8	7	13	11	7
9. Report Activities, Impact and Accomplishments	4	5	7	14	12	13	9	8	8
10. Develop and Maintain Public Relations	12	10	9	4	3	3	4	4	4
11. Develop and Maintain Staff Relationships	13	11	14	7	11	11	7	10	11
12. Maintain and Increase Professional Competencies	5t	6	5	5	5	6	6	5	6
13. Perform Administrative Functions	9t	13	12	11	14	14	8	14	12
14. Supervise Staff	8	8	8	10	13	10	11	13	10

¹From "Reaching and Teaching People" Brumback, et al., 1978

TABLE II

Attributes

Personal Qualities estimated to be Substantially Related to
County Extension Position²

<u>Attribute</u> ³	<u>Rating</u>			
	<u>Program area</u>	<u>Agr.</u>	<u>HEA</u>	<u>4H</u>
Verbal Comprehension		4.6	4.9	4.5
Word fluency		4.7	4.9	4.3
Oral communication		4.7	4.9	4.4
Convergent thinking		4.3	4.1	4.1
Divergent thinking		4.3	4.1	4.1
Intelligence		4.6	4.6	4.5
Long term memory		4.3	4.4	4.1
Scientific/technical activity		4.3	4.1	4.1
Dealing with people		4.7	4.9	4.3
Social welfare		4.4	4.4	4.2
Influencing people		4.2	4.0	4.0
Directing/controlling/planning		4.6	4.9	4.3
Empathy		4.7	4.9	4.3
Conflicting/ambiguous information		4.7	4.3	4.3
Prestige/esteem from others		4.7	4.5	4.3
Dealing with concepts/information		4.7	4.5	4.4
Problem sensitivity		4.6	4.6	4.5
Time sharing		4.3	4.1	4.1

²From "Reaching and Teaching People," Brumback, et al., 1978

³If an attribute's value is below four, it is not estimated to be a substantial requirement of the position class. Values cannot exceed a level of five.

TABLE 3: Staff Development Survey, MSU CES 1984

The report focuses on three questions from the survey. Question one; Time in CES, two; Position in CES and three; Program Area. For additional insight into MSU CES the following responses gathered in a survey of Extension personnel are reported below.

MAJOR PROGRAM AREA

4-H

Q#	question	% responding important
15	recruiting and working with volunteers--	92.3%
19	motivating self and others-----	92.3
40	provide support, training and guidance--	92.3
41	manage volunteers-----	90.8
28	assess clientele needs-----	89.2
39	recruit volunteers-----	89.2

NRPP

38	use computer to assist instruction-----	78.3
37	use of media to facilitate learning-----	73.9
14	writing articles-----	69.6
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	69.6
23	time management-----	69.6

FLE

19	motivating self and others-----	79.4
10	team building-----	77.8
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	76.2
24	plan annual and long term programs-----	74.6
31	plan program evaluation-----	73.0

AGMK

19	motivating self and others-----	86.5
11	making meetings work-----	79.1
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	77.5
29	determine goals, objectives and priorities-----	76.6
28	assess clientele needs-----	74.8
23	time management-----	73.9

The five highest average responses for "Program Area"

19	motivating self and others-----	84.4
18	developing creativity in self and others-----	79.0
10	team building-----	77.2
28	assessing clientele needs-----	76.4
11	making meetings work-----	76.0

TIME IN CES

Q#	question	% responding important
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0-2 years

19	motivating self and others-----	94.1
11	making meetings work-----	85.3
10	team building-----	82.4
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	82.4
24	plan annual and long term programs-----	82.4

2-3

10	team building-----	83.3
11	making meetings work-----	75.0
12	writing newsletters-----	75.0
19	motivating self and others-----	75.0
20	conflict management-----	75.0
24	plan annual reports-----	75.0
27	involve advisory groups & others-----	75.0
29	determine goals and objectives-----	75.0

32 report program activities,
 impact and accomplishments-----75.0
 39 recruit volunteers-----75.0
 38 use computer to assist instruction-----75.0
 28 assess clientele needs-----75.0

3-5

10 team building-----84.4
 19 motivating self and others-----84.8
 11 making meetings work-----82.6
 18 developing creativity in
 ourselves and others-----82.6
 9 interpersonal (communication)-----78.3
 27 involve advisory groups and others-----78.4

Q# question % responding
 important

5-10

19 motivating self and others-----85.5
 28 assess clientele needs-----82.8
 29 determine goals, objectives
 and priorities-----76.6
 18 developing creativity in
 ourselves and others-----76.6
 11 making meetings work-----75.0
 21 personality styles-understanding
 communications & decision
 making process-----75.0
 23 time management-----75.0

>10

19 motivating self and others-----83.7
 18 developing creativity in
 ourselves and others-----78.8
 10 team building-----77.4
 28 assess clientele needs-----75.9
 11 making meetings work-----71.2

The five highest average responses for "Time in CES"

19	motivating self and others-----	84.0
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	78.8
10	team building-----	77.2
28	assess clientele needs-----	76.8
11	making meetings work-----	75.7

POSITION

Supervisor

28	assess clientele needs-----	100.0
9	interpersonal (communication)-----	85.7
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	85.7
19	motivating self and others-----	85.7
21	personality styles-understanding communications & decision making process-----	85.7
28	assess clientele needs-----	85.7
29	determine goals, objectives and priorities-----	85.6
30	determine target audience (for programming)-----	85.7
37	use media to facilitate learning-----	85.7
48	develop staff management skills-----	85.7

Administrators

18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	100.0
10	team building-----	87.5
13	writing letters (communication)-----	87.5
19	motivating self and others-----	87.5
20	8conflict management-----	87.5
28	assess clientele needs-----	87.5
32	report program activities, impacts and accomplishments-----	87.5

CED's

19	motivating self and others-----	85.9
10	team building-----	82.5
11	making meetings work-----	81.3
20	conflict management-----	79.7
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	76.6

Q#	question	% responding important
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Specialist

19	motivating self and others-----	73.3
37	use media to facilitate learning-----	69.5
12	writing articles-----	68.3
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	68.3
23	time management-----	68.3
29	determine goals, objectives and priorities-----	68.3

Field Staff

19	motivating self and others-----	87.8
18	developing creativity in ourselves and others-----	82.0
28	assess clientele needs-----	80.6
10	team building-----	79.9
11	making meetings work-----	79.1

The five most important areas for Position are;

19	motivating self and others-----	84.0
18	developing creativity in self and others-----	78.9
28	assess clientele needs-----	76.8
10	team building-----	77.3
11	making meetings work-----	75.8

Overall five areas are clearly and consistently
identified by

"Program Area, Time in CES and Position as being Most
important."

19	motivating self and others
18	developing creativity in self and others
28	assess clientele needs
10	team building
11	making meetings work

Part 4: Professional Development

To help you get started on a professional development plan ten activities that MSU CES staff have identified as being critical are listed below. You can expect to be involved in these activities as part of your job. There are additional spaces for activities that you believe are important to you that may not be listed. Given what you have read in the SAJPE check the topics you believe will be the most important in your professional development. Keep the list and use to help you make your professional development choices for Extension School. If there is more than one topic you might want to prioritize them using (+) signs.

Topics	Topics I want to learn more about
Public speaking_____	
Written reports, letter or news articles_____	
Motivating self and others_____	
Creativity, how to foster it_____	
Assessing clientele needs_____	
Team building_____	
Making meetings work_____	
Planning a program_____	
Conducting a program_____	
Evaluating a program_____	

Your willingness, time and patience in completing the exercise is deeply appreciated. Continuing efforts to improve training for MSU CES staff are critical in maintaining high professional standards. Your efforts and contributions are important in efforts to improve staff development programs.

Thank you

Leonard W. Paauwe
Specialist
Agricultural and Extension Education

APPENDIX B
FEEDBACK IMPRESSION RECORD

APPENDIX B

FEEDBACK IMPRESSION REPORT

The following questions are not part of the Self Administered Job Preview Exercise (SAJPE) but they are designed to indicate it's effectiveness. Your input is valuable and is part of our staff development research.

Please indicate your response in appropriate spaces.

1. Did the SAJPE alter your expectations regarding your role, responsibilities and or duties?

YES___ NO___

If yes, to what degree and in what ways are your expectations altered?

___A Great deal

___Significantly

___Somewhat

___Not significantly

___Very little

2. Did you have job expectations that differ from what the SAJPE suggest the job role might be?

YES___ NO___

If yes, to what degree and in what ways are your expectations different?

___A Great deal

___Significantly

___Somewhat

___Not significantly

___Very little

3. Do you feel the SAJPE provided additional insight into your role as an Extension agent?

YES___ NO___

If yes, to what degree and what are the new insights?

___A Great deal

___Significantly

___Somewhat

___Not significantly

___Very little

4. Did the SAJPE cause you to think about your job expectations in a way you had not thought before?

YES___ NO___

If yes, to what degree and what ways?

___A Great deal

___Significantly

___Somewhat

___Not significantly

___Very little

5. What suggestions do you have for improving the SAJPE?

6. What suggestions do you have for the entry procedures you have experienced so far?

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