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Recruiters and Realistic Previews: Perceptions of Importance and Practice

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Vernon D Miller

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RE

RECRUITERS AND REALISTIC PREVIEWS: PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND PRACTICE

By

Colin Richard Baker

A THESIS

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Abstract

RECRUITERS AND REALISTIC PREVIEWS: PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANCE AND PRACTICE

By

Colin Richard Baker

While recent research suggests that realistic previews given to job candidates reduce voluntary turnover and increases their performance and job satisfaction, the extent that recruiters share realistic previews and the nature (e.g., job or organization) of those previews remains unclear. This investigation explores linkages between extant research knowledge and recruiters' reported behaviors. Approximately 100 collegiate recruiters completed an online or mail survey measuring their reports of patterns of sharing realistic information, the source of their job information, the timing of realistic previews, their interview training, and organization's recruiting priorities. Findings suggest that recruiters reported sharing of realistic information based upon their beliefs, sharing more realistic information than recruitment literature suggests, and presenting realistic information generally early in the interview sequence (e.g., information session, on-campus interview), in face-to-face interactions. Limitations of the research and future directions are discussed.

For those who have yet to evaluate my scholarly contribution

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For my fish, who endured high nitrates and some loss of life through the last month of writing

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Introduction

The realistic preview, the sharing of both favorable and unfavorable job information with job candidates (Rynes, 1991; Wanous, 1992), is one of the most popular issues in the recruitment literature. Realistic portrayals of work life are theorized to enable applicants to better evaluate their "fit" to the position/organization (Ilgen & Seely, 1974), lower pre-entry work expectations (Porter & Steers, 1973), increase their ability to cope with new work environments (Breaugh, 1983), and/or stimulate them to withdraw from consideration of the job. In contrast, "traditional" portrayals do not provide a clear picture of work life or overly accentuate positive work elements while omitting less attractive elements, with the result that candidates are unclear or misled about the impending nature of work (Wanous, 1992).

Recent investigations support the overall efficacy of realistic previews. For instance, Phillips' (1998) meta-analysis indicates that verbal realistic job previews (RJPs) are associated with greater reductions in both voluntary ($r = -.15$) and all forms (i.e., including involuntary) ($r = -.25$) of turnover than video and written previews and that verbal RJPs are positively related ($r = .11, .11$, respectively) to job satisfaction and performance. Despite being one of the most analyzed aspects of employment interviewing, a number of questions remain regarding the nature and use of realistic previews (Barber, 1998). With notable exceptions (e.g., Meglino, DeNisi, & Ravlin, 1993), few lab or field research investigations provide details of the content of realistic previews or means of message delivery (Breaugh & Billings, 1988). Researchers

continue to conceptualize realistic previews as scripted, one-way messages when previews are more likely to be conveyed in response to job candidates' inquiries or as a natural "by-product of discourse processes (e.g., question, answer, statements sequences)" (Jablin, 2001, p. 748).

Alarmingly, it is also suggested that relatively few recruiters purposely make a point of sharing realistic previews during the interview (Rynes, 1991). Thus, while methodological issues remain in realistic preview studies, a more pressing issue concerns the perceived importance of realistic messages to recruiters (as message senders) and their organization, if and when recruiters convey realistic previews, and the basis for their previews. The lack of such primary information is surprising given the importance of matching important theories with organizational practices and providing recruits with information salient to their transition into the workplace and confidence in their job selection decisions, both pivotal to their successful assimilation into the organization (Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001).

This study examines recruiters' beliefs and reported practices regarding the giving of realistic previews during the employment interview in order to address this gap between research and practice and to contribute to applicants' organizational assimilation as well as realistic preview research. Accordingly, conceptualizations of RJPs, their message constructions, and how these previews influence candidates' cognitions are first considered. Next, this proposal considers factors shaping recruiters' perspectives on realistic previews and sets forth hypotheses regarding recruiters' perceived importance of RJPs for their organization and its delivery. A method for an investigation of recruiters reported message construction practices and beliefs about the RJP is then presented.

Several assumptions guide the present investigation. The employment interview, featuring face-to-face communication interacts, is the primary medium of interest here for the delivery of realistic messages. Unlike other forms of realistic preview transmission (e.g., video, print), face-to-face interactions allow recruiters to tailor messages to each employee, enabling a more personally relevant and specific preview. Realistic previews presented in employment interview contexts offer applicants the opportunity to ask questions and clarify information (Jablin & McComb, 1984; Jablin, Miller, & Sias, 1999), leading to active information processing and potentially more enduring impressions than when information is passively processed (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Colarelli, 1984). Realistic messages may be presented in a scripted format, perhaps designed to convey information succinctly (Jablin & McComb, 1984) or even persuasively (Breaugh & Billings, 1988; Pit & Ramaseshan, 1995). As already noted, realistic information may be largely divulged in response to job candidates' inquiries or the natural flow of conversation (Jablin, 2001).

While this investigation centers on recruiters' beliefs and reported practices, it must be noted that job candidates' message receptivity to recruiters' messages also contributes to any preview effect. For example, applicants vary in their levels of interest and attentiveness to information from recruiters (Barber, 1998). Applicants' pre-interview impressions, emotional state during the interview, general intelligence, and level of commitment may hinder or enhance their ability to receive, accept, and retain information contained in realistic previews (Adeyemi-Bello & Mulvancy, 1995; Meglino, DeNisi, Youngblood, & Williams, 1988; Stevens, 1998). Applicants may also prioritize information on organizational attributes (e.g., status, location, benefits) over those related

to the nature of work (Barber, 1998), effectively negating organizations' use of realistic previews to lower applicants' job expectations or encourage those not matching the position to withdraw from the selection process. So, although recruiters may indeed provide information sufficient in personal relevance, depth, breadth, specificity, and accuracy (Breaugh & Billings, 1988), it is possible that their message sending efforts may be nullified by receiver characteristics. Despite potential applicant shortcomings, most materials on recruitment (e.g., Barber, 1998; Rynes, 1991; Wanous, 1980, 1992) or assimilation (e.g., Jablin, 2001) uniformly urge organizations to convey or applicants to seek out realistic previews in the interest of applicants making informed decisions and reducing their uncertainty (Breaugh, 1983; Buckley, Fedor, Carraher, Frink, & Marvin, 1997; Phillips, 1998).

Realistic Preview Explanatory Mechanisms

Definitions of realistic previews emphasize providing information to candidates that will be helpful in their determining their fit to the job and organization (Kristof, 1996; Meglino et al., 1988). For example, Wanous (1980) proposes that "Realistic recruitment by organizations provide individuals with all pertinent information without distortion rather than only positive descriptions" (p. 37). Pit and Ramaseshan (1995) note that "realistic job information would contain accurate and complete information about the job, with both the positive and negative elements being shown" (p. 30) while Ganzach, Pazy, Ohayun, and Brainin (2002) define the RJP as "a recruitment procedure in which organizations provide both favorable and unfavorable work information to their candidates" (p. 613). A number of general message characteristics recur in conceptualizations of realistic previews, with accurate, complete, relevant, and positive

and negative attributes commonly named.

A number of explanatory mechanisms are offered in an attempt to explain how realistic previews influence job candidates' adjustment to and attitudes toward work. These explanatory mechanisms (see Table 1) posit that recruiters' messages influence candidates' perception of the job and organization, their fit to the organization, and their preparation for work. In addition, the effect of these messages on candidates' cognitions and attitudes may be immediate or distant (i.e., upon entry in to the organization). The following overview identifies the elements of each perspective and reports representative research.

Table 1

An Overview of Realistic Preview Theories

Explanatory Mechanisms	**Description**
Self-Selection Effect	By being exposed to an RJP recruits are able to evaluate whether there is a match with the organization and if not will self-select out of the entry process.
Employer Concern	The RJP sends a meta-message of organizational honesty and openness fostering mutual feelings of positive affect between newcomers and the organization.
Vaccination Effect	An initial reduction in expectations, due to learning realistic information, will bring newcomers expectations more in line with reality and reduce the possibility of "reality shock".
Improved Ability to Cope Effect	When applicants receive information about negative aspects of the organization they are less disturbed by the undesired characteristics of the job and/or able to develop ways of coping with them.
Personal Commitment Effect	By providing more complete information, RJPs cause applicants to feel a greater commitment to the decision to accept the job

The Self-Selection Effect. The Self-Selection Effect asserts that realistic previews enable candidates to evaluate their match to the job/organization and then remove themselves from the selection process if they perceive the position not to fit their needs (Wanous, 1992). As a consequence of providing realistic previews, organizations have a reduced number of, but better suited candidates from which to choose. Further, those selecting the job, despite learning of positive and negative relevant information regarding the job/organization, are unlikely to voluntarily turnover when exposed to less satisfying job aspects.

According to Wanous (1992) and others (e.g., Vandenberg & Scarpello, 1990), realistic information about the job/organization enables candidates to make a better choice about a position's offerings. The Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (Lofquist & Dawis, 1969) posits that an equivalent match between individual preferences (i.e., needs) for job rewards and perceptions of available rewards results in job satisfaction and subsequent employment stability. A chief difficulty in matching recruits' needs to available rewards rests in their incomplete, subjective inferences. Thus, realistic previews offer sufficient information for recruits to make more educated decisions on the extent to which the position will fulfill their needs. In other words, realistic previews enhance candidates' need-reward matching processes, and need-reward matches should result in higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Wanous, 1992).

To date, research support is mixed as to whether applicants actually self-select themselves out of the recruitment process. Several investigations (Ilgen & Seely, 1974; Premack & Wanous, 1985; Vandenberg & Scarpello, 1990) offer moderate support for the Self-Selection Effect. In contrast, Phillips' (1998) meta-analysis indicates that

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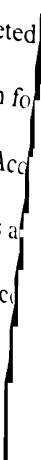

realistic previews and voluntary attrition are significantly related but in the opposite direction than predicted ($r = -.03$, $N = 6450$), suggesting that realistic previews possibly retard voluntarily withdrawal processes. Some investigations fail to find support for the Self-Selection explanatory mechanism (Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981; Hom, Griffeth, Palich, & Bracker, 1999). Others assert that positive and negative information alone is not sufficient to enhance applicants' cognitive matching processes. For instance, Meglino et al. (1993) find that realistic previews received by applicants with work experience similar to the open positions are linked to increased withdrawal from the recruitment process. With the absence of viable alternative job opportunities, applicants may decide to remain in the applicant pool even though they perceive the fit to be less attractive.

Air of Honesty/Commitment. Several scholars propose that realistic previews convey messages of openness and honesty, thereby promoting a perception that the company cares about recruits' well being (Ganzach, Pazy, Ohayun, & Brainin, 2002; Meglino et al, 1993). Ganzach et al. (2002) argue that, as a communication event, realistic previews send a meta-message of care and concern. Receivers interpret the content of messages, but they also interpret the meta-message, its implied relational and symbolic meaning (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967). As such, the act of portraying relevant positive and negative aspects of open positions in realistic terms can be interpreted as organizational expressions of concern that applicants will make "correct" decision for themselves (Popovich & Wanous, 1982).

According to those embracing the Air of Honesty/Commitment perspective, two outcomes are expected. First, organizations sharing realistic previews will appear more attractive compared to those that do not provide realistic previews. Providing realistic

previews suggests an organizational culture of openness, trust, and honesty (Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981), one which applicants would experience if accepting an offer of employment. Second, realistic previews cultivate positive affect towards the organization among applicants. Realistic previews may induce candidates to participate more equally in a social exchange relationship and to feel obliged to increase their commitment toward the organization during pre-entry and thereafter (Ganzach et al., 2002). Further, induced affect toward the organization may overshadow potential deterrents from negative RJP content (Ganzach et al., 2002). Hom et al. (1999) find that RJPs given during orientation are linked with newly hired nurses' perceptions of employer concern and honesty, which in turn lead to organizational commitment.

Vaccination Effect. According to Porter and Steers (1973), new employee turnover is largely related to inflated expectations of what work life would entail. To reduce turnover, candidates are given a preview of what work will be like. As a staffing procedure, realistic previews are intended to lower new workers' expectations about the position to be more in line with what the job really involves. The Vaccination Effect, also known as the Adjustment of Expectations Effect (Meglino & DeNisi, 1988) and Met Expectations Effect (Porter & Steers, 1973), posits that realistic preview messages specify job aspects which prior experiences, advertisements, and recruitment messages tend to inflate. Realistic previews act as a vaccination when job candidates receive a small dose of realism concerning the nature of work life and this does then lowers expectations and prevents "entry shock" (McQuire, 1964). In short, new hires expect less from the job and are less disappointed (as they otherwise would be with a traditional preview) when the job does not fulfill their initial expectations (Meglino & DeNisi,

1988).

Research generally supports the relationship between receiving realistic preview messages and a reduction of initial job expectations (Dean & Wanous, 1984; Krauz & Fox 1981; Wanous 1973, 1975). However, meta-analyses are mixed in their evaluation of the Met Expectations Effect with some reporting support (Phillips, 1998; Premack & Wanous, 1985) and others not (Reilly, Brown, Blood, & Malatesta, 1981). A recent investigation by Buckley et al. (2002) considers an expectation lowering procedure (ELP) in addition to the realistic preview. In this case, an ELP is a procedure that informs job candidates of the tendency to inflate expectations and offers means to modify those feelings. In a study comparing the influence of RJP, ELP, and no preview, Buckley et al. (2002) report no differences between participants receiving a RJP and a control group, but that the ELP resulted in significantly lower expectations compared to the control group.

Improved Ability to Cope Effect. As indicated by its name, this perspective proposes that RJPs reduce turnover by improving newcomers' ability to cope with difficult job elements (Breaugh, 1983; Dugoni & Ilgen, 1983; Ilgen & Seely, 1974). Pre-alerted to problems, these new hires cope more readily with problems because (a) they are less surprised or disturbed by forewarned problems and (b) they may have mentally rehearsed methods for handling such problems (Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981). Since realistic representations of distasteful or somewhat unpleasant work elements can invoke worry or concern in the candidate, realistic previews are also called the "Work of Worry Effect" (Pit & Ramaseshan, 1995). Being forewarned of problems, newcomers will devote effort prior to organizational entry developing specific ways of addressing these situations.

Hom et al. (1999) find support for the relationship between coping strategies and realistic job previews. Specifically, they report that realistic job previews lower initial expectations, which then lead to an increase in both emotion- and problem-focused coping strategies. In contrast, Dugoni and Ilgen (1983) report that those receiving RJPs had more trouble handling the difficult situations addressed in realistic previews. However, these individuals also encounter fewer difficult situations than those not receiving RJPs. Reilly, Brown, Blood, and Malatesta (1981) find no support for an improved ability to cope effect in their own data. Their meta-analysis of three previous studies looking at Improved Ability to Cope effect had similar results.

Personal Commitment Effect. This perspective focuses on the manner by which recruits or new employees link negative job experiences with prior positive and negative job previews from recruiters. Job candidates who have received relevant positive and negative job information and who accept the position over other offers are thought to have made informed, uncoerced decisions, leading to higher commitment to their job choice (Wanous, 1992). In contrast, providing primarily selective, positively biased information is perceived as coercive, due to the inferred inherent dishonesty involved in withholding of information relevant to their job choice (Meglino & DeNisi, 1988; Wanous 1992). Also known as Freedom of Choice Effect (Pitt, & Ramaseshan, 1995) and the Commitment to Choice Effect (Wanous, 1992), job candidates fully informed about their job choice see themselves as solely responsible for remaining in the selection pool and more committed to seeing their decision through (Meglino & DeNisi, 1988; Reilly et al., 1981; Wanous, 1977).

Support for the Personal Commitment Effect is mixed. For instance, several

researchers indicate no support (Colarelli, 1984; Saks & Cronshaw, 1990) or small support (Premack & Wanous, 1985) for this explanatory mechanism. In contrast, Hicks and Klimonski (1987) find that when given a realistic preview and a high degree of choice on whether to be involved in a training workshop, workers were more likely to be committed to their decision on whether to participate in the training. Meglino et al. (1988) reports that exposure to a combination of realistic and enhanced previews had lower turnover among U.S. Army trainees than a control group while exposure to the realistic preview alone was associated with higher turnover. Other investigations are affirmative, but modest in their support. Reilly et al. (1981) do not support the commitment to choice effect in their own work. Yet, they argue that of Self-Selection, Met Expectations, Ability to Cope, and Commitment to Choice, only Commitment to Choice has "any empirical support" (p. 829). In her meta-analysis of 22 studies, Phillips (1998) suggests that a combination of the Personal Commitment effect and Vaccination Effect offer the most plausible explanation for how the RJP works, though the reported mean effect size (r) is .01. Premack and Wanous' (1985) meta-analysis finds that the direction of effects of RJPs "are generally consistent with prior thinking" (p. 713) and indicates that organizational commitment is a positive result of RJPs.

In sum, while empirical support for realistic previews is modest at best (Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Phillips, 1998), the case for conveying realistic previews remains strong on practical grounds. Among the plausible explanations for why realistic previews can or should influence candidates' job choices and adjustment to work, Phillips (1998) suggests that Vaccination or Personal Commitment Effects provide the best insights to date. Realistic previews are linked to reduced turnover but do not necessarily lead to

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increased self-selection or attrition from recruitment process. In particular, verbal previews appear particularly promising with regard to reducing turnover, suggesting that candidates' information processing may have enduring effects (Phillips, 1998).

Realistic Previews in Practice

It is instructive to note, however, that concerns over improving the effectiveness of realistic previews usually focus on possible message characteristics that may moderate RJP effectiveness (e.g., Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Phillips, 1998). For instance, Barber (1998, p. 88) suggests that future investigations into the

> presentation format, timing of the RJP (i.e., whether the realistic information is provided early or late in the recruitment cycle), specific topics addressed, and information sources used (e.g., job incumbent versus human resource staff person) might help identify RJP "best practices," that is, ways to administer RJPs that maximize their effects on turnover.

Similar message characteristics may influence candidates' adjustment to the workplace (Jablin, 2001; Phillips, 1998). While research to date indicates the potential of realistic messages to reduce turnover or improve productivity, the extent to which recruiters actually convey realistic messages in employment interviews is unclear. Moreover, there is little evidence that the rank-and-file recruiter purposely seeks to convey realistic previews or what kinds of information are shared to job candidates (Jablin, 2001; Rynes, 1991).

In one respect, an investigation into what recruiters' report sharing may provide general insights into the dissemination of research knowledge into the workforce. An awareness of general recruiting trends is instructive in terms of identifying interventions

to improve the overall effectiveness of employment interviewing. In another respect, investigations into recruiters' practices may also provide greater insight into the basic conceptualization of realistic previews. In its brief history, research on realistic previews has evolved considerably, in particular with regard to the number of outcome variables examined and the timing and nature of realistic messages (Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Phillips, 1998; Rynes, 1991; Wanous, 1992). An examination of recruiters' reported practices may provide impetus for research in another direction, namely recruiters' perceptions of the importance of sharing realistic previews, what information they share, and when they share previews, if at all.

Perhaps, one of the most elemental, but complicated issues concerns recruiters' beliefs that it is appropriate to share both positive and negative information about the job or organization. For instance, reluctant recruiters may entirely skip or only briefly touch on unpopular elements of a position to highly touted candidates if competing recruiters are thought to promote only positive aspects of their position (Barber, 1998). Other recruiters may be uncomfortable with espousing negative aspects of a position and compensate by softening or minimizing the negative aspects or overly promoting positive aspects of a position. Recruiters may intuitively defer from sharing negative information about the job or organization, as if they know that the most qualified candidates at times are less likely to accept a job when presented with negative information during the recruitment process (Bretz & Judge, 1998). Alternatively, recruiters may acknowledge the importance of a realistic preview, but view the sharing of realistic information as someone else's job, such as human resources specialists or the candidate's potential supervisor. Other recruiters may share select, difficult elements of the position, believing

that candidates who "fit" the position will be challenged by the information and thus more motivated to pursue employment with the organization (Meglino et al., 1993; Philips, 1998).

A second issue pertains to the job position or organization as the primary focus of the preview. The referent, RJP, is commonly used to represent the sharing of realistic information to candidates (e.g., Barber, 1998; Phillips, 1998) when, in fact, applicants may be more likely to receive an organizational preview (Bowen, Ledford, & Nathan, 1991). Recruiters are thought to have an extensive knowledge of the organization, which they could share with job candidates. Yet, recruiters may be unfamiliar with the nature of the position to be filled beyond the general description and be unable to relay important nuances of the position. Recruiters may be particularly unable to provide information about the daily nature in a certain position if they recruit full-time or are interviewing candidates for positions outside their expertise (Miller, Gardner, & Meiners, 2001). Taken together, candidates may be receiving realistic organizational previews (ROPs) instead of job previews.

Third, it is generally acknowledged that there are considerable challenges in conveying pertinent job/organizational information without distortion to job candidates. Aside from Meglino et al. (1993), few investigations establish the validity of the information conveyed to job candidates. Meglino et al. (1993) report the source (e.g., job analysis, interviews with incumbent penitentiary guards) of their information (e.g., job tasks, manner, and risks) and its verification with incumbents. Vandenberg and Scarpello (1990) report asking state employees the extent to which their employer accurately portrayed the job with respect to (a) job responsibilities and demands, (b) career progress

opportunities, and (c) type of work they would perform. Yet, little is known about the extent to which organizations purposefully construct sets of realistic informational materials, designed to inform candidates of job or organizational elements and to be shared during the employment interview, or the source or basis for such material. Recruiters unfamiliar with the nature of work in a certain position may do more harm than good by speculating on what work will be like or conveying general impressions garnered from brief social conversations with colleagues. Realistic previews based on job analyses (e.g., Meglino et al., 1993) appear preferable to those based on anecdotal reports or experiences, but at this time the basis for recruiters' preview and their general use in previews remains unclear.

In addition, it is unclear what preview information should be conveyed to assist candidates in selecting one job offer over another or what preview elements are most helpful in assisting new hires during organizational entry. For some positions, a preview of the nature of the work may be the most valuable in candidates' distinguishing one position over another (Wanous, 1992) or adjusting to the work environment (Hom et al., 1999). In other cases, the nature of supervision or the climate of the organization may be the most helpful information in their decision making or adjustment. While it seems apparent that a uniform realistic preview to be shared across all open positions may not be feasible in many organizations due to the variety of work environments and tasks (Jablin, 2001), advances in matching information needs to decision and adjustment processes seems to be a particularly pertinent point of inquiry.

Fourth, there are numerous challenges related to providing preview information characterized by the attributes of accuracy, specificity, breadth, credibility, and

personally relevant or important, elements advocated by Breaugh and Billings (1988) and others. Yet, organizations' recruitment strategies may dictate providing less realistic information and demonstrating less concern over candidates' fit to the position/organization. In labor markets where there are relatively fewer qualified candidates for the number of available positions, organizations may emphasize recruitment over selection by selling candidates' on the position/organization (Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Wanous, 1992). In fact, it is not surprising to learn that organizations are known to highlight the persuasive aspects of recruitment messages and downplay negative aspects of the job/organization (Barber, 1998; Jablin & McComb, 1984). Organizations may also elect to recruit and/or generally screen candidates in the first (or on-campus interview in the case of college recruits) and to convey realistic information during the "second" or on-site interview (Miller & Buzzanell, 1996) or during entry or training phases (Barber, 1998; Kristof, 1996). Besides, on site interactions with incumbents can provide the most realistic preview of the open position (Colarelli, 1984; Miller & Buzzanell, 1996).

Fifth, of major importance and often overlooked are recruiters' beliefs regarding the recruitment process in general and the usefulness of realistic previews. Rynes, Colbert, and Brown (2002) report a study which examined the consistency between human resource professionals' beliefs and established research on management practices, general employment practices, training and employee development, staffing, and compensation and benefits. They argue that professionals with beliefs consistent with research findings would prove more effective in their jobs. Conversely, firms making hiring personnel and management decisions based on beliefs at odds with established

research would be expected to have poorer performance. More pertinent to this study, Rynes et al. (2002) explores gaps in the dissemination of knowledge from researchers and academics to practitioners. Building upon their premise, recruiters with beliefs consistent with realistic preview research will be more likely to create and use previews in a manner that reduces voluntary turnover, increases member commitment and improve performance. However, while researchers may achieve considerable advances in understanding of the realistic preview's effectiveness, such knowledge is dormant for the most part until acquired and used by practitioners during the interview process. Recruiters are unlikely to share realistic previews if they do not believe in its effectiveness. Currently, what recruiters believe and in turn enact is largely unknown. While researchers should continue investigations into the effectiveness of realistic previews in lab and case-by case settings, it is important to discover the extent to which recruiters across a variety of industries actively share realistic previews with job candidates.

Sixth, in the process of tailoring their messages to applicants based on feedback during the interview (Jablin, 2001), recruiters share different information with outstanding versus average/poor candidates. Although recruiters often follow vignettes regarding information to be shared about the organization or position (Jablin, 2001), recruiters may provide additional or what might be perceived as "special" and "inside" information to candidates perceived to be a good fit to the organization (Jablin & McComb, 1984).

Recruiters may also share more detailed information, hence increasing preview realism, to outstanding candidates in an effort to lure them toward accepting a position

with the organization. Recruiters may differentiate between outstanding and average or poor candidates by altering their emphases. For example recruiters may focus on sharing the positive attributes of the job/organization to better candidates while giving more general information about the job/organization to less attractive candidates in an effort to "fill up" the allotted interview time. In this respect, recruiters may not wish to waste their efforts or inside information on candidates that they know will not be pursued strongly. In contrast, organizational representatives may even provide greater negative information to less qualified candidates in an attempt to decrease these candidates' desire for the job and hasten their self-selection from the candidate pool. In short, there are a variety of possible patterns in the nature and amount of positive and negative information provided to more versus less attractive candidates.

In sum, the realistic preview is generally viewed as valuable to both organizations and their job applicants, even though realistic previews may be purposefully shared in a very small percentage of recruitment interviews (Rynes, 1991). Despite at least two decades of research into the realistic preview, the relatively sparse accumulated knowledge of the practice of conveying realistic previews to candidates, including recruiters' beliefs of the importance of sharing previews, positional or organizational elements of previews, the basis for previews, what elements of the preview are most helpful in applicants job selection process or adjustment to work, and when realistic previews should be shared is surprising. Consequently, this investigation asks,

RQ1 What are recruiters' reported patterns of sharing realistic previews to job candidates?

RQ2 To what degree do recruiters focus on conveying information about the open

position or about the organization?

RQ3 When recruiters convey information about an open position, to what degree is the information based on job analyses, personal experiences, or anecdotal reports?

RQ4 When, if ever, do recruiters report sharing realistic job information during the interview process?

RQ5 What are recruiters' beliefs regarding realistic previews and how are these beliefs associated with established research findings and recruiters' reported sharing of realistic information during interview process?

RQ6 What differences are reported in recruiters' sharing of realistic information with "outstanding" candidates as opposed to "good" job candidates?

Factors Influencing Recruiters' Realistic Information Sharing Behaviors

There are multiple influences determining the information that recruiters share with job candidates during a typical 30 minute campus interview. Certainly, questions that candidates ask and the flow of conversation during the interview determine the situational appropriateness of sharing certain information about the position or organization (Jablin, 2001). Recruiters also develop vignettes for conveying information regarding the organization, the open position, career opportunities, the industry and market trends, and the selection process (Jablin, 1987). Both information conveyed through natural information exchanges and vignettes are shaped in part by the recruiter's role (perceived and assigned) in the selection process. Recruiters at once must seek to ensure candidates' continued interest in the open position/organization, provide information on the job to be filled, obtain information helpful in weeding out of unfit or less attractive candidates, and promote favorable aspects of the position/organization to

preferred candidates (Barber, 1998; Breaugh, 1992).

In enacting these myriad roles, recruiters' ability to convey information regarding the job or organization is likely shaped by the full-time or part-time nature of their recruitment position, their training, and the strategic importance of person-organization versus person-job fit to the organization. In each case, recruiters' job or organizational preview information sharing behaviors are greatly shaped by their organizational assignments and/or the organization's priorities (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Just as organizations' explicit and implicit priorities may shape the profile of desirable candidates (Kristof, 1996; Schneider, 1987), these priorities may direct recruiters to devote greater amounts of time to one topic or another during the interview.

In terms of the full-time or part-time recruitment position, Miller et al. (2001) report from a sample of over a thousand recruiters that approximately 12% reported that they were full-time recruiters while 38% recruited part-time as part of their job responsibilities, 25% volunteered to recruit, and 25% were assigned to recruit. They also report that full-time recruiters held human resource positions exclusively, part-time were associated with either human resources or management, and volunteer and assigned recruiters held management positions. In a related investigation of one organization, Taylor and Bergman (1987) report that approximately half (52%) of their sampled recruiters held personnel positions and the other half held managerial positions.

Full-time recruiters' may be well-suited to share organizational information, but be less able to share information concerning the position. Recruiters who are relatively new to the organization or have exclusive human resource positions (Miller et al., 2001) may be unable to share information about the open position in an authoritative manner

and instead be forced to rely on job descriptions or word-of-mouth to describe the open position. In contrast, those with direct work experience are most capable of sharing information about the dynamics of the job. For instance, Breaugh and Starke (2000) suggest that supervisors and coworkers, who are familiar with the dynamics of work conditions of the open position, are most able to convey relevant job information. Likewise, Harris and Fink (1987) note that those from the same functional area will be most capable of sharing relevant job information to job candidates. Recruiters who volunteer to recruit at their alma mater or other campuses may be particularly knowledgeable of the open position or be motivated to learn the job's characteristics in order to share them with attractive candidates. Alternatively, those assigned to recruit on college campuses may be filling in for others and be less motivated to learn the dynamics of the open position (Miller et al., 2001). In light of the knowledge base afforded to recruiters due to their assignment, this study hypothesizes,

H1: Individuals recruiting full-time are more likely to share realistic organizational previews than those recruiting part-time. Part-time recruiters, including those recruiting part-time, assigned to recruit, and volunteers, are more likely to share realistic job previews than those recruiting on a full-time basis.

The extent of interview training may also influence the nature of recruiters' sharing of realistic information. Recruiters receive training for many purposes, such as to evaluate job candidates uniformly, improve questioning techniques to alter the nature of information gathered from candidates, and avoid problems stemming from the asking of illegal questions (Barber, 1998; Jablin, Miller, & Sias, 1999). Realistic previews are one element commonly named in interview training materials (e.g., Stewart & Cash, 1997) as

important for recruiters to share and applicants to acquire during employment interviews, and corporate recruiters receiving more extensive training are more likely to be exposed to the rationale for and methods of sharing realistic previews.

In a survey of Fortune 500 companies, Rynes and Boudreau (1986) report that 41% of companies offer standardized training programs for recruiters, averaging 13 hours in total and with less than half of those (47%) requiring training before they begin their assignments. From this sample, roughly 11% indicate that they receive training on what they should tell applicants about the organization. In turn, Miller et al. (2001) find that 77% of recruiters participated in company seminars and 62% participated in company workshops specifically focused on interview training. Of interest to this study, recruiters in Miller et al.'s investigation rate reviewing job descriptions as fourth in training usefulness behind learning techniques for asking questions, listening techniques, and review of company procedures on recruiting.

In general, the extent to which interviewer training incorporates materials on realistic previews and the extent to which individuals transfer interview training to the employment interview remain to be fully explored. Yet, interview training can result in recruiters' demonstrating new behaviors (Jablin et al., 1999). For instance, in a cross organizational study conducted in a campus placement setting, Stevens (1998) reports that recruiters trained in questioning techniques ask more open-ended questions, more follow-up questions, and more performance-differentiating questions than untrained recruiters. This investigation also finds that trained recruiters are less likely to discuss non-job related issues than untrained recruiters. As such, recruiters receiving training in interview techniques may be more aware of applicants' information receiving needs

(Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Stewart & Cash, 1997). Research consistently indicates that applicants desire more and specific, job-relevant information than they commonly receive (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Maurer, Howe, & Lee,1992). Further, recruiters experiencing more training may be more likely to share information leading applicants to develop more realistic notions of the job or organization. Thus, this study hypothesizes:

H2: Recruiters with a greater amount of interview training are more likely to convey realistic information during the interview than recruiters with a lesser amount of training.

The importance of applicants' "fit" to an organization's profile and/or priorities is often conceptualized in terms of potential employees' skill set or values (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Kristof, 1996). In practice, organizations consider the nature of the positions to be filled, rates of retention, created job expectations, recruitment costs, and the like (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Organizations seek to improve applicants' fit in many ways, including screening candidates more selectively or training individuals extensively upon their entry into the organization (Kristof, 1996). To improve the fit of applicants to a job or the organization as a whole, organizations are also known to intervene deliberately in their recruitment process to improve the nature of their realistic previews (Meglino et al., 1993; Wanous, 1992).

According to Schneider's (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition model, applicants are attracted to a certain kind of organization or organizational characteristics. A certain number of these applicants are selected by the organization, and a subset of these individuals exit the organization. One result of this cycle is a restriction in range of the values held by members of the organization, which in turn reinforces existing cultural

norms and the profile of applicants deemed to fit open positions. Organizations have relatively strong or weak cultures based on the extent that there is wide spread agreement and internalization of certain assumptions, values, and beliefs.

Organizations with particularly strong cultures are prone to screen candidates and hire candidates based on organizational values rather than the specific aspects of open positions. Recruiters from organizations with strong organization's cultures may be more likely to emphasize information about work life in the organization than about the position, knowing that candidates who do not match well with organizational values are likely to voluntarily exit. It is not that candidates' fit to the position does not matter, but it is perceived as secondary to organizational success. Candidates who then self-select themselves out of the interview process save themselves and the organization considerable time and effort. It should also be noted that at times executives' or department heads' values drive what is considered to deem candidates to be appropriate for the organization. In these cases, recruiters are likely to make fewer efforts in the screening interview seeking to retain and/or increase the interest of candidates' who would be quickly rejected if brought in for an on-site interview.

In contrast, recruiters from organizations with weaker cultures have less impetus for screening candidates based on a certain particular set of assumptions, values, and beliefs. In this case, recruiters are less concerned with relaying significant events or organizational stories than with emphasizing the elements of the position. Their line of questions and follow-up questions to applicants' responses are more likely to be designed screen candidates based on ability to perform specific aspects of the position. In terms of self-selection, these recruiters are also likely to share realistic aspects of open positions in

hopes that candidates, who know the position does not pose a good fit, will withdraw from the selection process. Thus, this study hypothesizes,

H3: Recruiters from organizations more concerned with person-job fit are more likely to share realistic job previews than those whose organizations concerned with person-organization fit.

CHAPTER 2

Methods

Participants

To sample research participants representing a variety of industries and interviewing on college campuses seeking to fill a range of positions, the researcher solicited a subset of recruiters who interviewed job candidates at the Career Services and Placement Center of a large Midwest University during the previous academic year. Two hundred-ninety-seven recruiters were contacted through the mail and asked to complete a survey on their recruiting practices. Included were introductory letters from the Director of Career Services and Placement and the researcher indicating the study's aspirations, that their participation was voluntary, and that their identity would be anonymous. The survey was offered in print and web-page formats. A total of 107 participants responded using the web-based (n = 85 or 78%) and mailed (n = 25 or 22%). Eleven web-based surveys were removed from statistical analysis due to large portions of the surveys being incomplete.

In terms of demographic characteristics, no significant differences were present between recruiters replying on the web or by mail in regard to hours of interview training, experience, position, age, ethnic background, race, sex, size of the organization, and type of organization. Significant differences were present in the extent to which recruiters reported giving realistic organizational previews (ROPs), one item on the utility of realistic previews, and how job information was obtained. Scores for web-response ROPs were significantly different, $t(105) = -2.11$, $p<.05$, with the mail groups, $M = 3.42$,

reporting that they gave realistic organizational previews to a greater extent than their web responding, M = 3.77, counterparts. A higher percentage of web responders (79%) than mail responders (58%) correctly scored the true-false beliefs statement that sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers voluntary turnover (Fishers Exact Test, p = .04). Two differences were observed regarding where recruiters obtained information about jobs for which they were interviewing candidates. Web responders reported using more organizationally prepared job descriptions, M = 3.17, $t(95) = 2.44$, $p<.05$, and more job analyses or assessments, M = 2.58, $t(94) = 2.31$, $p<.05$, than those who returned mail surveys, M = 2.50 and M = 1.96, respectively. A total of 76 significance tests were conducted between these two groups. Since only four significant differences were observed and no pattern was discernable in the responses, these differences were attributable to chance.

The profile of respondents could be described as follows. In terms of general job descriptions, 43.2% (n = 41) of respondents reported they were engineering/technical, 24.2% (n = 23) reported they were human resources personnel, managers accounted for 28.4% (n = 27) of the sample, and 4.2% (n = 4) reported their position as "other". The sample contained more men (69%, n = 62) than women (31%, n = 28). With respondents being overwhelmingly white (89%, n = 79) with few Asian Americans (5%, n = 4), blacks (2%, n = 2), Native Americans (2%, n = 2), Hispanics (1%, n = 1), or other (1%, n = 1).

Instruments

Participants were asked to respond to survey instruments seeking recruiters' reported patterns of sharing realistic previews to job candidates, propensity to share

position or organizational information, sources of information about open positions, and the appropriate timing of sharing realistic preview information. Participants were also asked to respond to inquiries regarding their recruiting assignment, beliefs regarding the sharing of realistic information, amount of interview training, their organization's prioritizing of person-job or person-organization fit, and sharing information with preferred job candidates.

Unless otherwise noted, all scale items were arrayed on a five-point scale, ranging from "to a little extent (1)" to "a very great extent (5)." All multi-item scales were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis techniques (CFA) to establish their dimensionality and to produce unbiased estimates of scale reliability (Hunter, 1980; Hunter & Gerbing, 1982). Following Hunter's suggestion, items were retained if they meet the following criteria: face validity, internal consistency, and external consistency. Results of factor analytic tests are reported in Table 2.

Patterns of Sharing Realistic Information. Reviews of realistic preview research (Barber, 1998; Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Bretz & Judge, 1998; Wanous, 1992) identified two types of previews: realistic and traditional. According to Wanous (1992) and others (e.g., Barber, 1998; Rynes, 1991), realistic previews contain positive and negative information that is relevant to the job or organization. Traditional previews highlighted positive elements and/or avoid focusing on negative aspects of the position. A third preview type, reluctant, was implied in Bretz and Judge (1998) who note that organizational representatives at times are reluctant to share realistic information (as more qualified candidates may leave or their expectations may be unduly lowered) or to provide less attractive information regarding the job/organization primarily only when

Table

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Table 2

Scale Items and Factoral Information

Realistic Preview – Job	Factor 1
give candidates as much pertinent positive and negative information about the job as I can.	0.82
work on making sure candidates have a firm grasp of the tough and less pleasant aspects of the position.	0.76
make sure that I cover the positives and negatives of the position.	0.85
share the attractive as well as the less attractive aspects of the position.	0.86
help candidates gain a realistic grasp of the good and bad parts of the job.	0.87

Realistic Preview – Organization	Factor 1
tell recruits the good and bad parts of the company.	0.68
convey to the candidate the pluses and minuses of working for my organization.	0.77
share information about all relevant aspects of the organization, including the negative.	0.89
help the candidate to understand the positive and negative aspects of the organization.	0.83

Traditional Preview	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Means
abstain from telling recruits about the worst parts of the job	0.70	-0.29	0.07	2.16
discuss only the good things about the job	0.76	-0.36	0.25	2.21
do not bring up the less attractive aspects of the position	0.77	-0.38	0.11	2.29
avoid bringing up any information that would make the position	0.76	-0.20	0.28	2.34
defer from going into specific less attractive aspects of the	0.78	-0.33	0.08	2.36
only discuss the negative parts of the organization when asked	0.64	0.29	-0.32	2.39
give only the positive aspects of the job	0.81	-0.29	0.21	2.45
do not tell recruits the distasteful aspects of the organization	0.65	0.26	-0.54	2.51
downplay the bad aspects of working for my company	0.68	0.22	-0.44	2.52
refrain from telling candidates the negative aspects of the com	0.74	0.15	-0.18	2.62
bring up less attractive aspects of the job only when asked	0.67	-0.02	-0.10	2.67
highlight only the best that the position has to offer	0.74	-0.04	0.25	2.76
highlight only the positive aspects of the organization	0.77	0.09	-0.22	2.77
avoid putting the organization in a bad light	0.35	0.60	-0.03	3.54
characterize the organization in the most favorable manner possible	0.48	0.67	0.10	3.68
focus on "selling" the organization to candidates	0.20	0.50	0.63	3.70
reinforce the positive qualities of the organization	0.21	0.62	0.50	4.22

Table 2 (continued)

Propensity to Share Job vs Organizational Information	Factor 1
I usually spend more time giving candidates information about the nature of the job than about the organization	84
I find myself talking more about the organization and its overall characteristics than about the open position	73
I emphasize the nature of work in the position over the life in the organization	84
I give more information about the organization's culture than the nature of the work itself	71

Recruitment Strategy	Factor 1
A candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities will contribute more to their success in your organization than their values and beliefs	40
Generally, you are interviewing to fill a particular position rather than find someone who is similar to others in the organization	75
It is the goal of recruiters at your organization to find someone that fits the job rather than someone that fits the organizational culture	89
The ability to perform the job well is the most essential aspect of a job candidate	53
A candidate who has the "right" personality attributes for the organization is favored over someone that might do the job somewhat better	43

asked. In an effort to distinguish between recruiters' reporting of job and organizational information, a 30 item scale was developed, composed of five items for each of the following constructs: realistic, traditional, and reluctant job previews; and realistic traditional and reluctant organizational previews.

Confirmatory factor analyses were performed to test the dimensionality of the scales. Results indicated that a five item unidimensional solution was present for realistic job previews, $\chi^2(9, 92) = 4.32$, $p = .88$, Cronbach's alpha $= .91$, and four item unidimensional solution for realistic organizational previews, $\chi^2(5, 92) = 24.95$, $p < .001$, Cronbachs's alpha $= .88$. Sub-scales measuring the extent of sharing traditional and reluctant information pertaining to both the job and organization yielded a poor fit to the

hypothesized independent models and evidenced numerous cross factor loadings. These items were subjected to further analysis. Hunter and Boster (1987) suggested that a unidimensional set of Likert-type items that is ogival in structure rather than linear can appear to have multiple factors. Appropriate testing for ogival functions or a Guttman Simplex requires: (a) the correlation between the items and the absolute value of the mean discrepancy of the items to be negative and substantial; and (b) factor analysis should, depending on the sensitivity of the algorithm, provide factors for the low, moderate and high mean scores. When subjected to these analyses, both criteria were observed in the data for items intended to measure traditional and reluctant previews for the organization and job.

After removing the three items as outliers from this twenty item set (identified by their unusually high sum of standardized residual scores of the correlation between item mean discrepancies and item correlation), the correlation of mean discrepancies and item correlations was $r = -.78$. Subsequent principal component, varimax rotation factor analysis evidenced a three factor solution with items with low item scores loading on one factor, and high item scores loading on two separate factors. Evidence for this Guttman Simplex suggested that recruiters did not discriminate between the extent of sharing traditional and reluctant information regarding the job and organization. Recruiters also appeared to respond to items based on the amount of positive information they give to candidates according to their view of certain realistic preview behaviors as being objectionable. Except in the mean score for one item, mean scores of items loading on the ogive factor reflect decreasing willingness to disclose negative information. For example, recruiters may "sell" the organization to candidates, but still provided positive and

negative information about the job and organization. Other recruiters may sell the organization, share one-sided, positive views of the job and organization. Consequently, traditional and reluctant job and organizational previews were summed and treated as a unidimensional factor.

Propensity to Share Position or Organizational Information. During the campus employment interview, recruiters vary in the degree to which they discuss the open position or organization. According to Breaugh (1992), recruiters provide a greater amount of information about the job or the organization depending upon their goals, their knowledge and first-hand experience with the position, and candidate interest or queries. Five Likert-type items were created to measure the extent to which they share information on one type of information more than the other (e.g., "I usually spend more time giving candidates information about the nature of the job than about the organization). Factor analysis yielded a 4 item unidimensional solution, $\chi^2(7, n = 24) = 5.2$, $p = .39$, cronbach's alpha = .86).

Sources of Job Knowledge. Recruiters draw from a variety of sources to formulate images about a particular open position. Sources of job information are important since they can determine the amount of specific job knowledge available for recruiters to share, enabling a more realistic preview of work life (Hom et al., 1999; Wanous, 1992). Participants were asked the degree to which they rely on information from the following sources: coworkers or colleagues (Breaugh 1992); an organizationally prepared job description (Bainter & Johnson, 1994); job analysis or assessment (Kristof, 1996); their own work experience (Dennis, 1984); and interview training or seminars (Rynes & Boudreau, 1986).

Timing of Realistic Information. To better understand recruiters' use of RJPs, a timeline was devised to measure the periods of time when they or their organization shared realistic job information with candidates. Some recruiters may share realistic previews during the screening interview while others may share realistic information earlier at information sessions, not at all, or rely on human resource specialists to provide realistic previews after organizational entry (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Phillips, 1998). Taylor and Bergmann's (1987) time periods in the recruitment process were adapted and expanded to identify the period of time when they typically spend the most time sharing realistic previews: prior to the campus interview via a web site or video; on campus, prior to the interview in information sessions; during the campus interview; post-campus stage or after the campus interview in correspondence; during the site visit interview; when extended a job offer; when candidates accept the job offer; pre-entry or after applicants accept the offer, but before beginning work; first day of work; after beginning work.

Recruiting Assignment. Taylor and Bergmann (1987) were among the first to report that recruiters varied in their principal organizational roles, with their sample equally divided between full-time (i.e., personnel specialists) and part-time recruiters (i.e., managers). To measure participants' principal recruiting assignment, this study used Miller et al.'s (2001) forced choice item, where participants are asked to report if recruiting is their regular job, part of their regular job, a volunteer "assignment," or if they were asked/told to recruit. To differentiate further their work assignment, participants were asked to provide information on their position during the previous year: engineering/technical; human resources; management; and other.

Beliefs Regarding Realistic Information. To gain a more thorough understanding

of realistic information dissemination during the initial interview, items were created to gain insight into representative's beliefs about the recruitment process. According to Rynes et al. (2002), comparing the beliefs of human resource professionals with academic research findings can be helpful in predicting who will be successful as recruiters. Five True/False items measuring recruiters beliefs/knowledge of interview validity, interviewees attention to negative information, value of intelligence in low skill jobs, screening for values versus intelligence, and conscientiousness versus intelligence as a predictor for performance were adapted from Rynes et al. (2002). Additionally, seven True/False items on sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview (e.g., challenges newcomers, scares away qualified candidates, lowers voluntary withdrawal from the recruitment process, increases new hire performance, increases perceptions of honesty, lowers initial expectations, lowers voluntary turnover) were adapted from Phillip's (1998) meta-analysis to understand the beliefs of recruiters. Finally, to measure recruiter's sense of obligation, one True/False item measuring moral responsibility of giving realistic information was included (e.g., "I tell candidates the negative parts of the job because it is the right thing to do").

Amount of Training. Four aspects of the amount of recruiter interview training were measured, using an assemblage of Miller et al. (2001) and Rynes and Bourdreau (1986). Participants were asked to provide information on: (a) whether or not their organization offers interview training; (b) the amount of hours in interview training in the last twelve months; and (c) the amount of hours in interview training during their career. In addition, participants were asked to provide information on the amount of training in structured interviewing, illegal questions, evaluating job candidates' responses, providing

realistic information about the position, and providing information about the organization (Miller et al., 2001).

Importance of Fit. Based on arguments advanced by Kristof (1996) and Schneider (1987), nine Likert-type items were developed that measure the relative importance of person-job fit and person-organization fit. In general, person-job fit is concerned with candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities and how these may match a particular job (e.g., "The ability to perform the job well is the most essential aspect of a job candidate"). Person-organization fit focuses on the relative match between candidates' values and goals and the organization's values and goals (e.g., "A candidate who has the "right" personality attributes for the organization is favored over someone that might do the job somewhat better"). Factor analysis yielded a unidimensional five-item solution for importance of fit, $\chi^2(9, n = 97)$ 14.46, $p = .10$, Cronbachs Alpha = .73.

Preferred Candidates. Fundamental to understanding when and why realistic information is given to candidates are the set of individual circumstances surrounding each candidate's interview. One reason recruiters may give more or less information to certain candidates over others is the recruiter's evaluation of the candidate. In order to assess differences in the amount of realistic preview information given to candidates based on their perceived qualifications (e.g., excellent versus average), respondents were asked in open-ended question format to generalize across the previous year's recruiting experiences and describe, "In what ways, if any, did you differ in the amount of positive and negative information that you shared about the job and organization to these two types of candidates?"

The coding categories were developed inductively, guided to reflect the richness that the text had to offer. Coding was completed by two trained undergraduate research assistants with acceptable levels of agreement (Cohen's Kappa ranging from .72 to .99). Where discrepancies were observed between the primary coders, the researcher made a final decision.

Participants' responses were coded on two core dimensions: the proportion of positive/negative given to each candidate; and whether the respondent reported that the amount and proportion of information given to candidates depended on applicant's questions. Coded response categories for proportion of positive/negative information given to each candidate were: (a) same amount of positively skewed information to all candidates; (b) same amount of negatively skewed information to all candidates; (c) more positive information to outstanding candidates; (d) more positive information to average candidates; and (e) same proportion of information to all candidates. "Positive information" was defined as messages which placed the organization or job in a good light (i.e., selling the organization). "Negative information" was defined as any information that would put the job or organization in a negative light. "Average candidates" were identified by recruiters as poorer or less attractive than other candidates. A distinction was made between "outstanding" and "average" candidates whereby "Outstanding candidates" were those message recipients identified as favored or superior to other candidates. When respondents referred to all candidates or did not distinguish between outstanding and average candidates, their answers were coded to refer to "all candidates." If the sharing of information was reported to depend on the questions interviewees asked this was coded accordingly.

Background Information. In addition to soliciting information on their age, sex, race, and educational level, participants were asked to provide information regarding their organization, recruiting experience, and perception of the job market for which they were searching for candidates during the past year. Participants identified the type of organization (e.g., agriculture, manufacturing, finance, public utilities) for whom they work and the total number of employees in the organization. The survey also inquired into the total number of years that they recruited on college campuses and how many campuses they visited last year. Recruiters also generalized across the job market in the previous year and rated it as having "more open positions than qualified candidates," "more qualified candidates than open positions," or "about a similar number of open positions to the number of qualified candidates." The survey also asked participants if they are hiring more or less individuals than last year.

Chapter 3

Results

Scale means, standard deviations, and correlations are reported in Table 3. Research Question One inquired into recruiters' reported patterns of sharing realistic previews to job candidates. As indicated in Table 3, recruiters provided realistic job previews to candidates to a fair degree, M = 3.89 / 5.0, with realistic organizational previews being shared to some extent, M = 3.53 / 5.0. Those giving realistic job previews were also more likely to give realistic organizational previews, $r = .64$, $p<.01$. Responses to the traditional preview scale ranged from 18 to 69 with a mean of 46.86, SD = 11.43, with higher scores indicating more "selling" of the job/organization. Recruiters sharing traditional previews were less likely to provide interviewees with realistic job previews, $r = -.31$, $p<.01$, and less likely to give realistic organizational previews, $r = -.31$, $p<.01$, to candidates. Post hoc analysis revealed that overall reported patterns of preview information sharing did not vary by recruiters sex, race, job market conditions, the number of employees hired in the previous year, or number of college campus visits in the prior year.

The second research question examined recruiters' reports of sharing information about the job versus the organization. Responses were gathered from mail survey participants (n = 26) only due to a clerical error on the web survey. Results indicated that recruiters reported a slight tendency to provide more information about the job, M = 3.23, than the organization, but was not significantly different, $t(25) = 1.41$, $p = .17$, $r^2 = .08$ from the neutral point on the scale. The propensity to share job instead of organizational

Table 3

Variable Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1) Realistic Job Previews	3.89	0.78											
2) Realistic Organizational Previews	3.53	0.75	0.62**										
3) Traditional Previews	46.86	11.44	-0.30**	-0.31**									
4) Propensity to share Job versus Org Information	3.23	0.83	0.14	-0.18	-0.18								
5) P-J versus P-O Fit	3.08	0.73	0.00	-0.12	-0.06	0.27							
6) Coworkers/Colleagues	3.40	1.31	0.20	0.12	-0.12	-0.05	0.04						
7) Organizationally prepared job description	2.97	1.22	-0.04	-0.09	0.08	-0.39*	0.04	0.28**					
8) Job analysis/assessment	2.42	1.18	0.01	0.07	-0.04	-0.24	0.06	0.25*	0.46**				
9) Own experience doing the particular job	4.04	1.20	-0.04	0.03	-0.17	0.09	-0.04	-0.11	-0.14	-0.01			
10) Interview training/seminars	2.43	1.36	0.07	0.06	0.00	-0.02	-0.09	0.14	0.27**	0.33**	0.01		
11) Beliefs about recruitment (Rynes 2001)	2.40	1.08	-0.27**	-0.21*	-0.05	-0.11	0.21*	0.01	0.11	0.06	-0.11	-0.04	
12) Beliefs about realistic information (Phillips, 1998)	4.13	1.08	0.11	0.04	0.13	-0.18	-0.13	0.19	0.06	0.00	-0.05	-0.08	-0.06

* indicates correlation is significance at .05 level
** indicates correlation is significance at .01 level

information to candidates was not significantly correlated with reported sharing of RJPs, or with TPs. While analyses were limited by the number of responses, the propensity to share job (as opposed to organizational) information was negatively related, $r = -.39$, $p<.05$, to recruiters' basing their sharing of information about the job on an organizationally prepared job description.

The third research question asked the degree to which information conveyed about an open position was based on job analysis, personal experiences, or anecdotal reports. As reported in Table 3, recruiters reported basing their information most frequently on their own experience doing the particular job, $M = 4.04$, followed by colleagues and coworkers, $M = 3.40$, organizationally prepared job descriptions, $M = 2.97$, interview training and seminars, $M = 2.43$, and job analysis or assessment, $M = 2.42$. Recruiters' sharing of information on the open position based on their own job experience was not significantly related to their use of other information sources. However, those recruiters who use coworkers or colleagues as information sources also relied on organizationally prepared job descriptions, $r = .28$, $p<.01$, and job analyses or assessments, $r = .25$, $p<.01$. Recruiters who relied on organizationally prepared job descriptions also used job analysis or assessments, $r = .46$, $p<.01$, and interview training/seminars, $r = .27$, $p<.01$. Reliance on job analysis and assessments for sources of job information also received information from interview training and seminars, $r = .33$, $p<.01$. Recruiters' use of sources of information in sharing information about the open position was not significantly related to recruiter's reports of giving RJPs, ROPs, or TPs.

Research Question Four investigated recruiters' reports of when their organization shared realistic information during the recruitment and entry process. As evidenced in Table 4, recruiter's organizations varied in terms of when and how often they shared realistic information. Most reported that their organizations provided realistic information during the on-campus interview (76%) while over half shared realistic information during an on-campus interview session or reception (52%) or the site visit stage (56%). Approximately one-fifth (21%) indicate that their organizations share realistic at an information session prior to the first interview, at the on-campus interview, and at the on site interview.

A majority of recruiters reported that their organizations gave both positive and negative information about the job at multiple points in time, with 1% reporting their organization never sharing realistic information, 11% sharing information once, 31% twice, 31% sharing three times, 10% four times, and 20% five or more times. Recruiters who reported their organizations sharing realistic information about the job at four or more events were deemed to be from "determined organizations" and compared to "other" organizations which gave realistic information at three or less times. Recruiters from determined organizations reported sharing RJPs at the on-campus interview, $M = 3.79$, less frequently, $t(91) = -2.27$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .05$, than those from other organizations, $M = 4.20$. Recruiters from determined organizations were also less likely to base information about the jobs for which they were recruiting from coworkers or colleagues, $M = 3.96$, $t(92) = 3.79$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .14$ than recruiters whose organizations gave information at less points in time during the recruitment process, $M = 3.96$. Patterns of sharing realistic organizational or traditional previews, and the importance of job

Table 4

Timing of Realistic Job Previews

Event or time period	Percent Reporting*
Prior to the campus interview (via web site or video or pamphlet)	28
On campus, but prior to the interview (during an information session or reception)	52
Campus interview stage (during the first meeting with an organizational representative)	76
Post-campus stage (company communication to applicant after initial interview)	16
Site Visit Stage (Second interview/ meeting with an organizational member)	56
Job offer stage (when the company extends a job offer)	19
Job offer decision (when candidate accepts an offer)	11
Pre-entry (the company communication to applicant after accepting an offer, but before work begins)	5
First day of work (when the newcomer begins work)	17
Learn as they do work (as the newcomer works they will learn the job attributes)	31
Never (positive and negative aspects of the open position are not consciously shared)	1

* N = 94. Percentages reflect report of the organization's recruiting during a particular time period

versus organizational fit were not related to recruiters associated with determined or other organizations. Tests on background factors were also inconclusive.

Research Question Five inquired into recruiters' beliefs regarding the transmission of realistic information and how these were associated with their realistic information sharing. Correct responses to five true-false items from Rynes, et al. (2001) were treated as ordinal and arranged on a one to five scale (see Table 5). Recruiters' number of correctly answered items were correlated with RJPs, $r = -.27$, $p<.05$, and ROPs, $r = -.20$, $p<.05$, but had no significant relationship with TPs, $r = -.05$. Exploratory analysis revealed that recruiters with four or five correct answers gave fewer ROPs, $M = 3.10/5.00$, $t(93) = 2.44$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .06$, and fewer TPs, $M = 41.87$, $t(92) = 1.80$, $p = .08$, $r^2 = .03$, than those with zero to three correct answers, $M = 3.61$ and $M = 47.60$, respectively. No significant difference in the number of correctly answered questions from Rynes et al. (2002) was observed for RJPs, $t(92) = 1.56$, $p = .12$, $r^2 = .03$.

One item sought to measure recruiters' beliefs about the ethical responsibility of sharing realistic information. Those who responded affirmatively that it was their responsibility to provide realistic previews reported giving more RJPs, $M = 3.99$, $t(92) = 3.66$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .13$, more ROPs, $M = 3.59$, $t(93) = 2.5$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .06$, and less TPs, $M = 45.36$, $t(93) = 3.49$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .11$, than those who did not respond affirmatively, $M = 3.08$, $M = 2.98$, and $M = 58.00$, respectively.

Recruiters' responses to seven true–false statements based on Phillips' (1998) meta- analysis were also treated as an ordinal scale, with responses ranging from one to seven. No significant relationship was observed between their overall score of realistic preview beliefs and reported patterns of RJP, ROP, and TP sharing.

Table 5

Beliefs Regarding Realistic Information and Recruiting

Beliefs about Recruitment (adapted from Rynes et al., 2001)	Percent Correctly Answered
The most valid employment interviews are designed around each candidate's unique background (F)	63.2
During the campus interview, job candidates really don't pay attention to information about the less desirable aspects of a job (T)	29.5
Being very intelligent is actually a disadvantage for performing well on low skilled jobs (F)	77.7
Companies that screen applicants for values have higher performance than those that screen for intelligence (F)	45.3
On average, conscientiousness is a better predictor of job performance than is intelligence (F)	25.3

Question for Ethics	Percent Agreeing
I tell the candidates the negative parts of the job because it is the right thing to do	89.5

Beliefs about Realistic Information (adapted from Phillips, 1998)	Percent Correctly Answered
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview scares away qualified candidates (T)	13.7
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview attracts candidates who desire a challenge. (T)	77.9
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers voluntary withdrawal from the recruitment process (T)	65.2
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview increases new hire performance (T)	71
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview increases their perception of the organization's honesty (T)	94.7
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers candidates' initial expectations of the job (T)	21.3
Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers voluntary turnover (T)	73.4

Exploratory analyses indicated that recruiters who believed RJPs scare away qualified candidates provide more TPs, M = 53.62, $t(93) = 2.4$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .05$, than those responding "false," M = 45.60. Those agreeing that RJPs increase interviewees' perception of the organization's honesty were more likely to give RJPs, M = 3.94, $t(11.36) = 7.67$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .08$ (equal variances not assumed), more likely to give ROPs, M = 3.57, $t(11.65) = 6.24$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .05$, (equal variances not assumed), and less likely to give TPs, M= 45.87, $t(93) = -3.13$, $p = .01$, $r^2 = .10$, than recruiters who disagreed with the statement, M = 2.96, M = 2.80 and M = 61.60, respectively. Further, recruiters who believed that sharing RJPs during the interview lowers candidates' initial expectations of the job reported giving significantly more TPs, M = 51.80, $t(92) = 2.27$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .05$, than those disagreeing, M = 45.36. Recruiters agreeing that sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers voluntary turnover reported sharing more RJPs, M = 4.01, $t(92) = 2.57$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .15$, than those disagreeing with the statement, M = 3.55. Recruiters who believed it was their moral responsibility to share RJPs were more likely to share information about the open position based on materials gained from interview training/seminars, M = 2.50, $t(92) = 4.45$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .19$, than recruiters who did not agree that giving RJPs was a moral obligation, M = 1.50.

Research Question Six asked recruiters to report differences in sharing of realistic information with "outstanding" candidates compared to "good" job candidates. Sixty six percent of respondents (n = 64) completed the open-ended question. Exemplars of answers according to response categories are reported in Table 6. Fifty-eight percent (n = 38) reported giving the same type of information to both candidates, thirteen percent (n =

8) reported giving more positive information to the outstanding candidates; while 5% (n = 3) reported giving more positively skewed information to less attractive candidates. Interestingly, 3% (n = 2) reported selling the job or organization to both "outstanding" and "good" candidates, while 2% (n = 1) indicated giving the same amount of negatively skewed information to both types of candidate. Nineteen percent (n =12) of respondents could not be coded on this variable. Content analysis also revealed a new category of open-ended responses. In keeping with Jablin's (2001) observation that recruiters' information sharing may hinge in part on candidates statements and the nature of conversation during the interview, a number of recruiters (17%, n = 11) reported that the amount of positive and negative information about the organization and job given during the interview was a function of what questions the applicant asked. An example of this response is reported in Table 6.

Hypothesis One proposed that individuals recruiting full-time were more likely to share realistic organizational previews than those recruiting part-time. The hypothesis also stated that part-time recruiters (i.e., those recruiting part-time, assigned to recruit, and volunteers) were more likely to share realistic job previews than those recruiting on a full-time basis. Full time recruiters (n = 1) were combined with part time recruiters, to form three categories: full/part time recruiters (40%, n = 38); asked/assigned to recruit (29%, n = 27); and volunteers (31%, n = 29). No significant differences were observed among the three types of recruiters in sharing RJPs, ROPs, or TPs.

Subsequent exploratory analyses identified a number of noteworthy patterns among full/part time recruiters, those assigned to recruit, and volunteers. Volunteer recruiters, M = 4.34, reported drawing more upon their own job experience, F(2,90) =

Table 6

Exemplars of open-ended responses

Same proportion of information to both all candidates.

"There was no difference in the information. Just a difference in the questions asked of the candidate."

Same amount of positively skewed information to all candidates.

"Of course I sell my company, but I feel I portray an honest picture of what we are about."

Same amount of negatively skewed information to all candidates.

"What little negative information there is to share about working for my company I share this information equally with outstanding, good and poor candidates."

More positive information to outstanding candidates.

"The better the candidate the harder I worked at selling the company."

More positive information to average candidates.

"It's easier to talk with them [good candidates] about the negative aspects of the company and why you are looking for a certain skill/behavior set so you can fix it. The average candidate doesn't have a clue as to what we are talking about it we do the above."

The amount and type of information is based on applicant inquiries.

"In the interview I let the candidate determine what we discuss. Few or poor questions about the company/position will result in them not getting much information (or a good recommendation)."

2.68, p = .07, Eta^2 = .06, than full/part time recruiters, M = 3.68, in describing the open position approached significance. Full/part-time, directed, and volunteer recruiters also differed in their responses to the open-ended item measuring the amount of positive information they gave to outstanding and good candidates. Volunteer recruiters reported sharing realistic information in response to interviewee questions, $\chi^2(2, 62) = 7.15$, $p<.05$, more often than recruiters who were full/part-time or directed recruiters.

The second hypothesis predicted that recruiters with greater amounts of interview training were more likely to convey realistic information during the interview than recruiters with less training. Due to a considerable range in respondents' report of career training experiences, recruiters' career hours of interview training was divided into three categories: less than one day; one to three days; and more than three days. Hours of interview training over the past year was divided into no interview training (zero hours) and some interview training (one or more hours; range = 1-25 hours). Analyses of the five specific aspects of interview training measuring content of training over their entire career were also divided into two groups: those having less than one day of training in each of these areas; and those having more than one day of training. The hypothesis predicting that the amount of training would be positively related to the sharing of realistic information sharing was unsupported. Analyses also indicated that the amount of recruiter training in structured interviewing, illegal questions, evaluating job candidate's responses, providing realistic information about the position, providing information about the organization were not significantly related to the sharing of realistic job previews, realistic organizational previews, or traditional previews.

In terms of training (see Table 7), full/part time recruiters and volunteers reported a greater number of hours over their careers than directed recruiters, $\chi^2(4,93) = 14.45$, $p<.01$. A similar pattern was observed for structured interview training, $\chi^2(2,93) = 11.57$, $p <.01$, training on asking illegal questions, $\chi^2(2,92) = 7.01$, $p = .05$, and evaluating interviewees responses, $\chi^2(2,93) = 13.14$, $p<.01$. Differences in recruiters' training on providing realistic information about the position, $\chi^2(2,92) = 5.28$, $p = .07$, and providing information about the organization, $\chi^2(2,93) = 5.19$, $p = .08$, approached significance.

Recruiters' training experiences were tested with the propensity to share job or organizational information, and sources of job information upon which their information sharing with job candidates was based. The amount of training over recruiters' entire career was not related to their propensity to give job or organizational information, however several significant findings regarding information sources and training are reported in Table 8.

In terms of training over the recruiters' entire career, those with three or more days of interview training were more likely to draw from job analysis or assessments than those with less than a day of interview training. In turn, recruiters with three or more days or one to three days of interview training reported sharing information from interview training or seminars more often with applicants than recruiters with less than one day of interview training. No significant relationships were observed for other sources of job information, including coworkers or colleagues, organizationally prepared job descriptions, or the recruiters own experience doing the job. However, exploratory analyses indicated that determined organizations, $M = 7.25$, were significantly different

Table 7

Hours of Training of Full/Part-Time, Directed, and Volunteer Recruiters

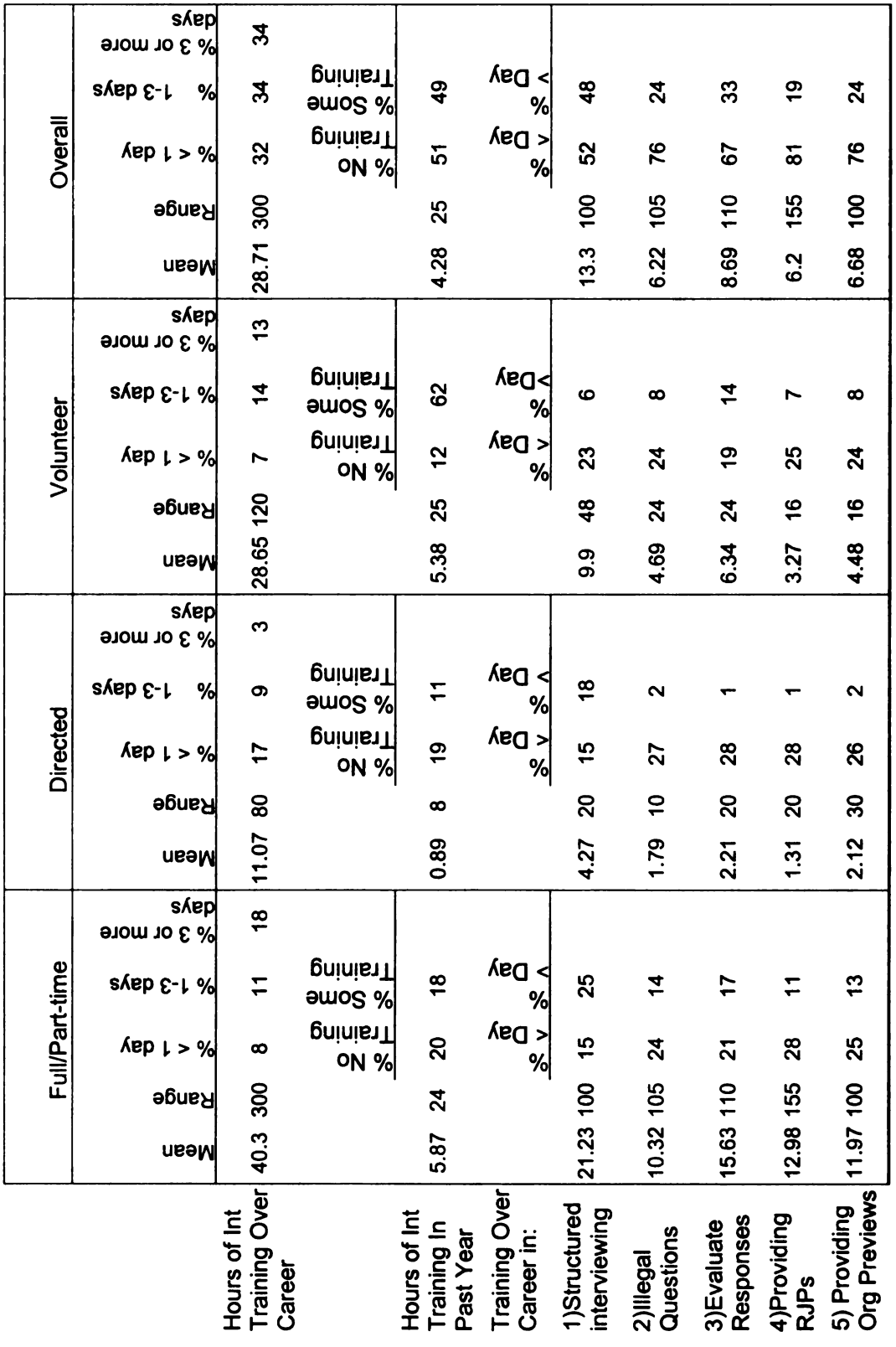

Table 8

Training Across Recruiters' Careers and in the Past Year

Sources of Information	Training Over Career		
	< 1 day	1 to 3 days	> 3 days
Job Anal or Asses, $F(2,86) = 4.23$, $p<.05$, $Eta^2 = .09$	1.93[a]	2.34	2.77[b]
Interview Training, $F(2,86) = 9.48$, $p<.01$, $Eta^2 = .18$	1.61[a]	2.77[b]	2.90[b]

Sources of Information	Training in the Past Year	
	No Training	Training
Prepared Job Descriptions, $t(88) = -2.29$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .06$	2.68	3.26
Job Analysis or Assessments, $t(87) = -2.81$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .08$	2.07	2.74
Interview Training, $t(88) = -2.34$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .06$	2.13	2.79

Type of Training and Source of Information Used in Interview	Training Over Career	
Structured Interview Training	< 1 day	≥ 1 day
Job Analysis or Assessments, $t(87) = -1.98$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .04$	2.18	2.66
Interview Train/Seminars, $t(88) = -4.57$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .19$	1.87	3.05
Illegal Questions		
Coworkers or Colleagues, $t(89) = -3.10$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .10$	3.15	4.09
Prepared Job Descriptions, $t(89) = -2.53$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .06$	2.75	3.48
Job Analysis or Assessments, $t(88) = -2.51$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .07$	2.22	2.91
Interview Train/Seminars, $t(89) = -2.21$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .05$	2.23	2.96
Evaluating Job Candidate's Responses to Questions		
Interview Train/Seminars, $t(85) = -2.99$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .10$	2.12	3.00
Giving Realistic Information		
Prepared Job Descriptions, $t(82) = -2.51$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .07$	2.81	3.68
Job Analysis or Assessments, $t(81) = -3.23$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .12$	2.19	3.19
Interview Train/Seminars, $t(82) = -3.06$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .10$	2.22	3.31
Information Giving About the Organization		
Prepared Job Descriptions, $t(82) = -2.43$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .07$	2.77	3.50
Job Analysis or Assessments, $t(81) = -2.42$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .07$	2.24	2.95
Interview Train/Seminars, $t(82) = -2.20$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .06$	2.22	2.95

[ab] Letters indicate significant differences in three-way comparisons.

than other, M = 4.30, organizations regarding the number of hours of interview training for the individual recruiters (equal variances not assumed, $t(87) = 2.48$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .07$.

With respect to interview training within the past year, those reporting interview training in the past year utilized organizationally prepared job descriptions, job analysis or assessments, and interview training more as a source of information about the jobs for which they were recruiting than recruiters who reported having no interview training within the past year. The remaining sources of information recruiters use to find out about the job for which they are recruiting (coworkers/colleagues, own experience doing the particular job) were not significantly related to amount of training over the past year.

Five items measured the content (i.e., structured interview training, training on illegal questions, evaluating job candidates responses, giving RJPs, and giving information about the organization) of interview training received over participants' career. Recruiters having one day or more of structured interview training were more likely to use job analysis or assessments and interview training and seminars more than those with less than a day of structured interview training. Recruiters with a day or more of training on illegal questions were more likely to base information about open jobs from coworkers or colleagues, organizationally prepared job descriptions, job analyses/assessments, and interview training/seminars more often than recruiters with less training in these areas. Recruiters with one day or more training on evaluating job candidate's responses to questions were more likely to share information about the open position from interview training or seminars than recruiters with less than a day of training in this area.

With regard to training on giving realistic information, recruiters with one day or more of training in this aspect used information from organizationally prepared job descriptions, job analyses/assessments, and interview training/seminars more than recruiters with less than a day of training. Recruiters with one day or more of training in information giving about the organization used organizationally prepared job descriptions, job analyses/assessments, and interview training/seminars in sharing information about the job for which they were recruiting than recruiters with less than a day of training.

Additional analyses revealed that recruiters with less than a day of structured interview training were less likely to feel a moral obligation to give RJPs, $\chi^2(1, 90) = 6.81$, $p<.01$, phi = .28 than those with more than a day's training. Those recruiters with more than a day of illegal question training scored higher on Rynes et. al. (2002) knowledge/beliefs of the recruitment process items, $M = 2.74$, $t(89) = -2.19$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .05$, (equal variances not assumed), than recruiters with less than a day of illegal question training, $M = 2.26$. Recruiters with one day or more training in evaluating candidates responses, $M = 2.71$, were more likely to score higher on the knowledge/beliefs items, $t(85) = -1.97$, $p<.05$, $r^2 = .04$, than recruiters with less than a day of interview training evaluating job candidates responses, $M = 2.23$.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that recruiters from organizations more concerned with person-job fit are more likely to share realistic job previews than those concerned with person organization-fit. Results revealed that the predicted relationship was not significant at the $p<.05$ significance level. Further analyses indicated that no significant relationships were detected between importance of fit and sharing ROPs, sharing of TPs,

propensity to share job or organizational information, sources of job information, timing of realistic job previews, ethics of giving realistic information, or training.

A significant positive correlation was observed between importance of fit and beliefs/knowledge regarding recruitment process, $r = .21$, $p<.05$, indicating that recruiters perceiving person-job fit to be more important than person-organizational fit score more accurately on Rynes, et al.'s (2002) beliefs/knowledge about the recruitment process items. In terms of the proportion of positive/negative information given to "outstanding" and "good" candidates, recruiters who were more apt to seek candidates fitting the job, $M=3.75$, $t(62) = 2.79$, $p<.01$, $r^2 = .11$, provided information to candidates based on candidates' inquiries more than when person-job fit was less important, $M=3.08$. Other analyses pertaining to background factors were inconclusive.

Chapter 4

Discussion

This study examines recruiters' beliefs with regard to giving realistic previews during the employment interview. This investigation seeks to address the gaps between research and practice. Realistic job previews are linked with lower voluntary withdrawal from the recruitment process, increased performance by new hires, increased perceptions of organizational honesty, lower initial job expectations, and lower voluntary turnover (Phillips, 1998). Yet, the extent to which recruiters share previews with job candidates is largely missing in the published literature. This chapter presents several key findings from recruiters' reports of interviewing practices and discusses their implications for realistic preview theory and practice. Next, the study's limitations are addressed, followed by suggestions for future research.

Realistic Preview Sharing

Overall, this sample of recruiters report sharing RJPs with some frequency, (3.89/5.0). Realistic organizational previews are also reported as being shared frequently, although to a lesser extent (XXX/5.0). The positive relationship evident between realistic job and organizational previews indicates that when recruiters give realistic information, they provide both previews to job candidates. These findings are somewhat at odds with Bowen, et. al., (1991) and others (e.g., Breaugh, 1992; Jablin, 2001) who argue that applicants are more likely receiving ROPs than RJPs. Full time recruiters are thought to be most able to convey organizational-level information (e.g., culture, size) since they are most familiar with organizational policies. In contrast, non full-time recruiters (i.e., unit managers, volunteers, or individuals assigned to recruit) may easily provide detailed

information about the open position (Miller et. al, 2001). As few full time recruiters are present in this sample, these recruiters may be well suited and motivated to provide realistic job previews.

Results also suggest that much less "selling" of the organization takes place than anticipated. A few recruiters willingly admit to selling their organization's positive attributes to job candidates. Indeed, research argues that recruiters must ensure candidates' continued interest in the open position/organization and promote favorable aspects of the position/organization to preferred candidates (Barber, 1998; Breaugh, 1992). Yet data also suggest that recruiters appear reluctant to admit sharing only positive information to candidates. This reluctance to give only positive information, however, is tied to selling thresholds. The items measuring traditional organizational and job previews and those measuring reluctant job and organizational previews form a Guttman Simplex. Recruiters' thresholds correspond to the amount of positive and negative information they share about the job and organization. Recruiters respond to the traditional preview items as if they were a continuum ranging from "soft sell" (i.e., reinforcing positive information) to "hard sell" (i.e., only giving positive information). However, overall item response indicates recruiters tend not to engage in "hard sell" tactics.

Recruiters tend to disagree with statements that are the most extreme with respect to the sharing of positive and negative information. For instance, most respondents disagree with the item, "I abstain from telling recruits about the worst parts of the job," signifying that this sample of recruiters are generally averse to providing only positive information. Recruiters are more apt to agree with the statement, "I downplay the bad

aspects of working for my company." The more moderate response to "downplaying" suggests that recruiters are willing to give negative information, as long as information is packaged positively. This repackaging of negative information is not surprising since applicants are often advised to turn negative attributes about themselves into positives. Why then, should we expect different communication behaviors from organizational representatives during this interaction? The item agreed with most (4.22/5.0), "I reinforce the positive qualities of the organization," demonstrates that many recruiters are "selling" the organization and job. The position taken here is that these item responses are less item wording problems. Rather, the disparity in responses reflects behaviors of reinforcing the positive aspects of the job and organization, and minimizing and reframing the negative. In this respect, the ogive response parallels others' observations that recruiters highlight the persuasive aspects of recruitment messages and downplay negative aspects of the job/organization (Jablin & McComb, 1984).

Recruiter Profile and Information Sharing

Most recruiters in this study identify themselves as managers or engineering/technical specialists rather than human resources personnel. These job positions within the organization, and reasons for recruiting, have important implications for the ability to give RJPs (Miller et al, 2001). First, on average, recruiters obtain information about the jobs for which they were recruiting from their own experience in the job. Volunteers are most likely to draw from their own experiences , followed by recruiters who are asked/directed. Those scoring the lowest on using their own job experiences are full part/time recruiters. Similarly, Human Resources personnel are less likely to use their own experiences as sources of information about the job compared to

those with engineering/technical or management assignments. In contrast, full/part-time recruiters most often use secondary sources of information to learn about specific positions. It is interesting to note that recruiters using secondary sources of information are more highly trained in interviewing. Those who have the most job experience and thus relevant job information receive substantially less training (mode 0 hours) in interviewing. The emerging picture casts those best suited to provide RJPs may be the least prompted to give RJPs while those trained and prompted to share RJPs are less able to do so because they must primarily rely on secondary sources (i.e., job descriptions). This duality may have contributed to the lack of variance in the amount of RJPs, ROPs, TPs as a function of recruiters full/part-time, volunteer, or asked/directed assignment and the lack of effect of training on recruiters' reports of giving realistic information.

Full/part time recruiters who generally use secondary sources of information are also likely to share organizational information rather than job information. Secondary knowledge of specific jobs may force recruiters to provide general information about the jobs and to emphasize organizational information. However, many recruiters use the campus interview to screen suitable organizational members (Miller, & Buzzanell, 1996) and are not concerned with Person-Job fit. In this case, applicants may be unable to acquire realistic previews of the position until the selection/on-site interview. Thus, applicants seeking RJPs can be more hopeful of acquiring such information when interviewed by supervisors and coworkers (Breaugh & Stark, 2000; Harris & Fink, 1987). It is also of little surprise that recruiters with personal job experience are seen as more credible by the applicants (Breaugh, 1992), who can obtain more accurate glimpses of what work would be like in the open position.

Training

Findings from this study indicate that many recruiters experienced very little interview training. A mode of zero hours exists for all types of training, save training on illegal questions (mode = one hour). The comparative increase in illegal question training demonstrates a tendency of organizations to minimize losses through lawsuits attributable to asking the wrong questions (those that are illegal). Conversely, organizations may not be investing in other types of interview training that will allow them to maximize gains by making sure that recruiters ask the right questions to make valid assessments of potential employees (Barber, 1998; Jablin, 2001).

The relationship between training and sources of information used suggest, along with Miller et al, (2001) that the recruitment literature pertaining to interview training as well as recruiter job assignments may need to be updated to encompass profiles of "average" recruiters. The varied sources of knowledge for the open position, amount of interview training, and work assignments of campus recruiters influence their ability and motivation to convey realistic job information. Presently, the influence of interview training on the sharing of realistic previews with job candidates is unclear. RJP and illegal question training may provide content and impetus for sharing scripted overviews. At this point, further investigation into the content and helpfulness of recruiter interview training might provide better insight as to recruiter readiness to share realistic previews in a scripted format, response to applicant queries, and the natural flow of conversation. However, Jablin (2001) argues that RJPs may be shared more in a conversational manner as a result of interviewee questions or prompts than from scripted prologues.

Timing

With regard to the timing of realistic information, recruiters most commonly identify that their organization shares realistic information about the open position at three points during the recruitment process: during an information session/reception; during the campus interview; and during the on-site interview. Each of these venues is characterized by face-to-face interactions between organizational representatives and recruits. Research suggests that face-to-face interactions are the most appropriate media environments where parties are able to more readily process information, potentially leading to more lasting impressions than in less rich environments (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Colarelli, 1984). While Phillips' (1998) meta-analysis did not show strong support for candidates self-selecting themselves out of a particular organization's recruitment due to realistic previews, presenting realistic previews often, in a manner similar to "determined" organizations in this study, may result in more candidates selecting themselves out of the candidate pool. In contrast, organizations that concentrate on sharing realistic information during the on-site interview may find candidates more receptive to realistic information in preparation for employment and able to associate what they have heard with cues from observing employees at work or the organization's physical environment (Jablin, 2001; Miller & Buzzanell, 1996). Miller and Buzzanell (1996) note that organizations may focus on recruiting and/or screening candidates in the on-campus interview and on conveying realistic information during the "second" or on-site interview.

In this investigation, nearly all recruiters report that their organizations often give realistic information at multiple points in time. Providing realistic previews at multiple points may facilitate candidates' development of more accurate expectations as frequent,

but smaller doses may be easier to digest. Alternatively, reiterating the messages reinforces importance and assists message processing (Barber, 1998). Surprisingly, few recruiters report that their organizations give RJPs after the second interview, including at newcomers' first day of work and learning as they do work. Perhaps, recruiters' responses reflect their lack of familiarity with their firm's induction process. Yet, this pattern is puzzling as entry and training are primary venues for receiving relevant positive and negative information about a particular job (Barber, 1998; Kristof, 1996).

Beliefs

Recruiters' beliefs on the usefulness of realistic previews are central to the discussion of recruiters' motivation and the extent to which they provide realistic previews. Indeed, recruiters who believe it is their ethical responsibility to give realistic information, who believe that giving realistic information decreases voluntary turnover, and who believe that realistic information leads recruits to consider the organization as being more honest generally give more realistic job and organizational previews and give less traditional previews. The opposite information sharing patterns exist when recruiters believe that realistic information will scare away qualified candidates and that the RJP will lower initial expectations about the job. These findings are consistent with what may be expected, though not completely consistent with the rationale given for the utility of beliefs.

Originally, it was thought that recruiters with beliefs consistent with realistic preview research would be more likely to create and use previews in a manner that reduced voluntary turnover, increased member commitment and improved performance. Practitioners are resistant to using realistic information if they believe it will scare away

qualified candidates or if they believe it will lower initial expectations. Paradoxically, realistic previews were first conceived (Wanous, 1992) precisely for this purpose: to decrease initial inflated expectations, to more closely match the position, and thereby to reduce "reality shock." It is possible that recruiters may adhere to realistic previews in the moral sense of not deceiving applicants and not leading them into jobs that they abhor. Yet, recruiters may be misinformed about fundamentals of how realistic previews work and/or be unwilling to risk losing a valued candidate by providing realistic previews.

Dynamic Nature of Information Sharing

Though it was of little relevance to the specific question asked, several recruiters indicate that the amount and type of information given to candidates was divulged in response to candidates' inquiries. Recruiters that volunteered to recruit are significantly more likely to report that interviewees' inquiries had a direct effect on their information sharing behaviors. As previously noted, realistic messages may be presented in a scripted format (Jablin & McComb, 1984). However, the findings in this research point to at least some previews and interviews in general, as dually constructed in response to job candidates' inquiries and the natural flow of conversation, consistent with Jablin's (2001) view of the contextual nature of RJP sharing.

Limitations

A number of weaknesses in the current study must be addressed. In terms of the measurement of variables, this investigation sought to assess recruiters' practices and beliefs through survey measures. While survey measures are often a reasonable alternative to behavioral measures or observations in most cases, concerns exist regarding the extent to which recruiters engage in more selling of the organization than reported.

Similar concerns relate to the extent to which recruiters share "all pertinent" positive and negative information about the job at the on-campus interview. It is also feasible that participants may have given little thought about the relative advantages of giving RJPs until reading the survey and then offered an inflated estimation of their behaviors. For example, few recruiters admit to selling the organization in open-ended responses. Yet, an inspection of their responses indicates that these respondents also report frequently sharing realistic job and organizational previews. As such, "selling" and giving realistic information are not mutually exclusive in the minds of recruiters, though according to RJP conceptualizations (Wanous, 1991) they should be.

For some respondents, the survey could also be construed as asking them how much they lied to interviewees. Indeed, two complaints were registered regarding the content of the survey, which was perceived as a test of their trustworthiness. The first 30 questions asked recruiters the extent to which they divulged positive and negative or mostly positive aspects of the job and organization. The remainder of the survey included items on the timing of sharing realistic information and their beliefs of giving RJPs, including a question on the moral obligation (i.e., "the right thing to do") to share realistic information with job candidates. Another respondent stopped the survey and asked to be deleted as a respondent. Consequently, other recruiters may have completed it in such a manner as to make them and their organization look more honest.

Fatigue in completing the survey (which was 5 pages in length in the mail survey) may also have contributed to the low response rate of approximately 40%. The internet for data collection procedure allowed the gathering of partial responses, allowing the

researcher to track response initiation and completion. About one-fourth of those who started the web survey did not complete it.

This study is also limited in its analyses by the sample size, which hampered the discovery of weak and modest effects. Often times correlations as high as .25 were not significant at $p<.05$ level, due to a lack of respondents. A power analysis (Cohen, 1977) indicates that with 96 subjects the ability to reject a correlation of .30 is .84, a correlation of .20 is .52, and a correlation of .10 is .18 at the $p<.05$ level of significance. Therefore, it is assumed that at least some of the moderate effect sizes present in the study are undetectable.

In addition, an open-ended question asked recruiters' to report differences in giving realistic information to "outstanding" candidates compared to "good" candidates. This question wording prompted some respondents to refer to the amount of overall information given to candidates while others referred to the proportion of positive versus negative information given to each candidate. The open-ended measure may have generated clearer responses if two questions were asked: one measuring the amount of information given to each of the candidates and another measuring the relative proportion of positive and negative information given to each.

Future directions

The utility of the RJP resides in providing information about the job and organization that enables candidates to asses their fit to the organization and/or prepare for employment. Despite the overall tendency for recruiters to report their frequent sharing of realistic information with candidates, prior research (Wanous, 1991) and this study suggests that recruiters may also be reluctant to share RJPs for fear of losing the

best candidates. Where there is real or perceived competition for job candidates, recruiters may skimp on sharing less attractive aspects of the position in favor of more attractive aspects. At the same time, those engaged in recruitment activities may be chosen to recruit because they are particularly positive about the organization/job. If recruiters do not perceive many negative aspects of a job, they are less likely to share accurate pictures of job characteristics and organizational culture. Consequently, future research should explore the beliefs of recruiters in giving realistic information. Coupled with videotaped or audio-recorded interactions, researchers may be able to link recruiters' beliefs with information that is conveyed in the interview. A knowledge of what information is shared and why may provide the basis for future training of recruiters and stronger outcomes associated with realistic reviews (Rynes et al., 2002).

Future research should also investigate moderators' patterns of sharing realistic information. Responses to the open-ended question in this study suggest that the quality of the candidate and candidates' questions prompted recruiters to provide additional realistic information. RJP research commonly neglects the role of the interviewee in the interview process (Jablin, 2001). In particular, candidates' information-seeking acts as well as information-giving may lead organizational representatives to provide information which assists candidates selection and or adjustment. Such investigations might validate notions of the RJP as dynamic and interactive, rather than a one-way dissemination of information. Future studies should focus on other attributes of candidates to determine why they might receive differing amounts of realistic information.

Past work on realistic job previews has largely focused on the effects of giving

realistic information during the recruitment process. This work underscores the utility of realistic previews, but we have lacked understanding of the extent to which realistic information is actually shared. This work is representative of a fundamental shift in the focus of researchers to better understand to what extent, when, and why realistic information is shared during the recruitment process. The practical nature of realistic job previews, and extant knowledge of recruitment activities offers a conceptual foundation to guide additional studies focusing on the transmission of realistic information. Crucial to this is the understanding of how realistic previews are collaboratively constructed by both the interviewer and interviewee and factors influencing their desire and ability to engage in a collaborative decision process.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Items Measuring Recruiters' Reported Patterns of Sharing Realistic Previews

When I am interviewing on a college campus, I generally...

Realistic Preview - Job
give candidates as much pertinent positive and negative information about the job as I can.
work on making sure candidates have a firm grasp of the tough and less pleasant aspects of the position.
make sure that I cover the positives and negatives of the position.
share the attractive as well as the less attractive aspects of the position.
help candidates gain a realistic grasp of the good and bad parts of the job.

Realistic Preview – Organization
Tell recruits the good and bad parts of the company.
convey to the candidate the pluses and minuses of working for my organization.
share information about all relevant aspects of the organization, including the negative.
help the candidate to understand the positive and negative aspects of the organization.
inform the interviewee of the less attractive aspects of the company.

Traditional Preview – Job
highlight only the best that the position has to offer.
give only the positive aspects of the job.
try to put a positive spin on all aspects of the job.
discuss only the good things about the job
attempt to convince the candidate of the positive aspects of the position

Traditional Preview – Organization
focus on "selling" the organization to candidates.
reinforce the positive qualities of the organization.
characterize the organization in the most favorable manner possible.
downplay the bad aspects of working for my company.
highlight only the positive aspects of the organization.

Reluctant Realistic Preview – Job
bring up less attractive aspects of the job only when asked.
do not bring up the less attractive aspects of the position.
defer from going into specific, less attractive aspects of the job.
avoid bringing up any information that would make the position seem less attractive.
abstain from telling recruits about the worst parts of the job

Reluctant Realistic Preview – Organization
try not to dwell on the less attractive aspects of the organization.
Avoid putting the organization in a bad light
refrain from telling candidates the negative aspects of the company
only discuss the negative parts of the organization when asked
do not tell recruits the distasteful aspects of the organization without prompting

Appendix B

Items Measuring Sharing Information about the Open Position or the Organization

To what extent do the following statements reflect what you say to job candidates during the campus interview?

I usually spend more time giving candidates information about the nature of the job than about the organization.
I find myself talking more about the organization and its overall characteristics than about the open position.
More time is devoted to discussing aspects of the job than the organization (i.e., its values, policies, products).
I emphasize the nature of work in the position over the life in the organization.
I give more information about the organization's culture than the nature of the work itself.

Appendix C

Items Measuring Sources for Realistic Job Preview

In terms of developing a knowledge base by which you can explain the nature of the job to candidates, to what extent do you receive information on open positions from...

Coworkers or colleagues
An organizationally prepared job description
A job analysis or assessment
Your own experience doing the job
Interview training or seminars

Appendix D

Items Measuring Recruiter's Report of Their Organization's Sharing Realistic Job Previews

This question is interested in learning about when, if ever, you or your organization consciously share information about the open position.

When do you or your organization typically spend the most time sharing positive and negative aspects of the open position?

1. Prior to the campus interview – via web site or video
2. On campus, but prior to the interview – during an information session or reception
3. Campus interview stage – during the first meeting with an organizational representative
4. Post-campus stage – the company communication to applicant after initial interview
5. Site Visit Stage – Second interview/ meeting with an organizational member
6. Job offer stage – when the company extends a job offer
7. Job offer decision – when candidate accepts an offer
8. Pre-entry - the company communication to applicant after accepting an offer, but before work begins
9. First day of work – when the newcomer begins work
10. Learn as they do work – as the newcomer works they will learn the job attributes
11. Never – positive and negative aspects of the open position are not consciously shared

Appendix E

Items measuring Recruiter Beliefs/Knowledge

Beliefs about recruitment (adapted from Rynes et.al., 2001)

The most valid employment interviews are designed around each candidate's unique background (F)

During the campus interview, job candidates really don't pay attention to information about the less desirable aspects of a job (T)

Being very intelligent is actually a disadvantage for performing well on low skilled jobs (F)

Companies that screen applicants for values have higher performance than those that screen for intelligence (F)

\

On average, conscientiousness is a better predictor of job performance than is intelligence (F)

Question for Ethics

I tell the candidates the negative parts of the job because it is the right thing to do

Beliefs about Realistic Information (adapted from Phillips, 1998)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview scares away qualified candidates. (T)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview attracts candidates who desire a challenge. (T)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers voluntary withdrawal from the recruitment process. (T)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview increases new hire performance. (T)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview increases their perception of the organization's honesty. (T)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers candidates' initial expectations of the job. (T)

Sharing realistic positive and negative information about the job during the interview lowers voluntary turnover. (T)

Appendix F

Items Measuring Amount of Recruiter Training

Does your organization provide interview training? Yes / No

How many hours of interview training have you participated in during your career?_____ hrs

How many hours of interview training did you participate in during the last year? _____ hrs

During the past year, how many hours (if any) did you participate in training in the following areas:

structured interviewing	_____ hrs
illegal questions	_____ hrs
evaluating job candidates' responses	_____ hrs
providing realistic information about the position	_____ hrs
providing information about the organization	_____ hrs

Appendix G

Items Measuring Relative Importance of Person-Job Fit Versus Person-Organization Fit

It is very important that a candidate has the "right fit" with the organization.

New employees sometimes have a hard time adjusting to the environment at your organization.

It is difficult for some newcomers to adapt to the way your organization does things.

A candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities will make a candidate more successful in your organization than their values and beliefs.

Generally you are interviewing to fill a particular position rather than find someone who is similar to others in the organization.

It is the goal of recruiters at your organization to find someone that fits the job rather than someone that fits the organizational culture.

The ability to perform the job well is the most essential aspect of a job candidate.

Most organizational members at your organization pretty much agree on the goals and values of the organization.

A candidate who has the "right" personality attributes for the organization is favored over someone that might do the job somewhat better.

Appendix H

Items Measuring Background Information

General Information

What is your total number of years recruiting? _____
How many years have you worked in your present job? _____
Approximately, how many campuses do you personally visit each year? _____
Age____
Sex_____
Ethnic Background: __ Asian-American __Black __Hispanic __Native American __White

Organizational Information

Type of organization you work for:

__ Agriculture	__ Construction	__ Wholesale Trade	__ Real Estate
__ Forestry	__ Manufacturing	__ Retail Trade	__ Service
__ Fishing	__ Transportation	__ Finance	__ Public Administration
__ Mining	__ Public Utilities	__ Insurance	__ Other _____

Approximately, how many people are employed by your entire organization? _____

Job Market Conditions

What is the job market like for hiring into your organization?

In your opinion, please select one phrase that best describes the job market in the past year (circle one):

more open positions than qualified candidates
more qualified candidates than open positions
about a similar number of open positions to the number of qualified candidates

When recruiting on campus you are looking to hire (Many / Few) new employees (circle one)

The number of hires is (More / Same / Less) as years past. (circle one)

Appendix I

Item Measuring Types of Information Given to Preferred Candidates

A final question – Previously, we asked you to think about your interview behaviors across all (outstanding, good, poor) candidates. Please think back across the past recruiting year and compare between candidates in whom you thought were outstanding candidates and those who were average. *In what ways, if any, did you differ in the amount of positive and negative information that you shared about the job and organization to these two types of candidates?*

Appendix J

Introductory Letter Sent By Career Services and Placement

Dear Recruiter:

Greetings from East Lansing! We hope you have had a relaxing summer and are looking forward to this year's recruiting season. We are writing to request your participation in a project.

Colin Baker, a graduate student in MSU's College of Communication Arts and Sciences, recently approached our office regarding a study of students and employers. As part of our commitment to educating and understanding both recruiters and students we are confident that you will find the results of the survey useful in identifying how your recruitment strategies compare with others recruiting at Michigan State University. We believe it has much relevance to our work and will be valuable for you, as a recruiter, so we agreed to assist Colin in identifying appropriate subjects.

As someone who interviewed students at Michigan State last year, you have the ideal perspective from which to contribute feedback. The web-based survey—which should take only about 10 minutes to complete—asks you to report on your behaviors and the type of information you convey to candidates during the recruitment process. The survey is completely anonymous, and we will share the results with you later in the year once the data has been tabulated. The survey is conveniently located online at:

www.msu.edu/~bakerco3

If it is more convenient for you there is also a paper version that we would be more than happy to send to you. Please contact Colin Baker by email: bakerco3@msu.edu or phone (517) 432-1310 to utilize this option.

We appreciate your willingness to share your input, and we thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelley Bishop
Executive Director

Theda Rudd
Assistant Director

Appendix K

Introductory Letter Sent From Researcher

Dear Recruiter:

Thank you very much for your interest in our study. I have been collaborating with the Career Services and Placement Center here at Michigan State University to advance understanding of the recruitment process.

This study looks at recruiter behaviors during the on-campus interview. More specifically, we ask questions regarding the types of information you convey to applicants during interviews, where you get information about the jobs for which you interview, and when certain information is expressed to employees.

Surprisingly, little systematic research has explored what behaviors recruiters actually exhibit during the interview process. The current study will enable the Career Services and Placement Center to understand issues important to both recruiters and graduates. This study may also bring to light current information giving practices (e.g., what information is given and when) during the campus employment interview.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and takes a small commitment on your part (about ten minutes), but the return from your investment will be considerable. We will make the results of the study available to you later this academic year so you can see what behaviors recruiters report practicing. This research will also be the basis of my thesis and will be shared with Human Resource scholars and practitioners.

We would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. Whether you are a full time recruiter or a manager who has only recruited once on-campus, your responses are very important.

On the enclosed index card, you will find a web address from which you can access the web-based survey. My office telephone number and email address are also listed on this card in case you have difficulty or questions. Alternatively, a paper version of the survey and a stamped, self-addressed envelope are enclosed for your convenience. Both versions of the survey are anonymous, and no one will be able to link your responses to you in any way. Please be as honest as possible in describing your behaviors during the on-campus interview.

If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact – anonymously, if you wish – Ashir Kumar, M.D., Chair of the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) by phone: (517) 355-2180, fax: (517) 432-4503, e-mail: ucrihs@msu.edu, or regular mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and sending this questionnaire.

Knowing that the Fall campus recruiting season is a busy time for you, I am seeking responses to the survey by **Friday, September 12**. The web page will be active until then.

Thanks in advance.

Sincerely,

Colin R. Baker
Graduate Student
Department of Communication

Dr. Vernon Miller
Associate Professor
Department of Communication

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REFERENCES

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