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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present work was threefold: (1) to examine the perceptions of what makes retail recruiting organizations attractive to college undergraduates and examine what attributes recruiting organizations believe students are attracted to; (2) to examine the differences in these perceptions with particular interest in the role of the recruiters themselves and (3) to test whether specific recruitment attributes, ranked highly by the students, impacted variables already cited in the extant literature, in order to assist human resources professionals increase the effectiveness of their recruitment practices.

In the fall of 2008, four in-depth interviews with key retail recruiters, and a focus group with six senior retail undergraduate students were held. The following spring a Q-study was administered to eight recruiters and nineteen students utilizing the data collected from the focus group and interviews. In fall of 2010 and early 2011, three conjoint analysis experiments were conducted to measure the impact of specific recruiter behaviors identified by the students as being of key importance to their attraction, upon the variables of *personableness*, *informativeness* and *competence*, widely cited as being of significance to applicant attraction in the recruitment literature. An additional experiment was conducted to measure the impact of these behaviors on *likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this organization*. The specific recruitment behaviors were summarized as *structured interview format*, *relationship with student*, and *sustained presence on campus*.

Findings indicated that college undergraduates and recruitment professionals differ significantly in what they believe is of importance in attracting student applicants to organizations and the conjoint analysis experiments showed a strong influence by the identified recruitment behaviors on two of the variables from the extant literature.

APPLYING THE GOLDEN RULE
TOWARDS RECRUITMENT EFFECTIVENESS

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DISSERTATION
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Science
in the Graduate School of Syracuse University

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Recruitment of talented young executives on the college campus remains a critical human resource function for many retail organizations today. In spite of the serious recession during the 2008-09 college recruiting season, the hiring of new college graduates continued to take place, albeit at rates reduced from previous years (NACE, 2009 Recruiting Benchmarks Survey). Moreover, even in the depressed labor market, college recruiting maintained its core position as a critical element in a firm's overall development of human capital and competition for the most desirable students remains strong. In 2009, more than 40 percent of total entry-level hires at 247 responding firms came from the ranks of new college graduates—a rate comparable with the record level set in 2007-08 season (NACE, 2009 Recruiting Benchmarks Survey).

Thirty years ago, in the 1970s, there was rapid labor force growth in the United States. This growth was both a reflection of the baby-boom generation reaching working age and the increase in women working outside the home (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007). Since the 70's, however, the labor force has continued to grow but at a progressively slower rate and a substantial slowdown in its growth is projected to begin in 2015 through to 2025 as the baby-boom generation retires. (See Figure1 below).

As a result of the slowdown in the pace of labor force growth, the recruitment function is becoming even more vital as we move further into the twenty-first century. The shifting demographics and tightening of the labor market was projected as early as 1990 by Rynes and Barber who also anticipated the increase in the recruitment of female and ethnic/racial minority job applicants. For the decade following their projection, women

accounted for a 15.5% labor growth and racial minority representation grew to 27% from 15% (Fullerton & Toosi, 2001).

Figure 1: Annual rates of labor force growth, 1950-2025, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2007)



Excellence in recruitment is vital to organizational success and has been listed by researchers at Watson Wyatt as one of the five human resource practices that affect the bottom line (Grossman, 2000). Recruitment involves those practices which have the primary purpose of identifying a group of potential employees with desirable educational and personal characteristics, informing them about specific job opportunities and an organization's distinctiveness, with the ultimate goal of persuading them to join that organization (Barber, 1998; Breaugh, 1992; Rynes, 1991).

Over the decades, researchers have provided human resource recruiters with a great deal of information to assist them in the recruitment of desirable employees. Aptitude and ability tests, application form design and guidelines for questions to ask during interviews have been the subjects of numerous articles and publications. In addition strategies for

successful recruitment procedures have been studied in depth (Barber, 1998; Goldberg, 2005; Harris & Fink, 1987; Ryan & Ployhart, 2000; Ryan & Tippins, 2004).

Many areas of the employee recruitment process itself have been specifically studied to determine their impact on applicant attraction. These include the effects of the specificity of the recruitment message (Roberson et al., 2005), how recruitment communication media impacts attitudes (Allen, Van Scotter & Otondo, 2004), whether a firm's reputation can provide it with a competitive advantage (Turban & Cable, 2003), the impact of company web sites on applicants perceptions of organizational attractiveness (Williamson et al., 2003) and whether recruiter training improves recruiter quality and effectiveness (Connerley, 1997).

In the United States the employment interview remains the most popular mechanism to select employees (Campion et al., 1997). The Bureau of Labor Statistics confirms this assertion by reporting that the interview continues to surpass any other method for employee selection (Crosby, 2000). The employment interview can be considered an interactive process through which organizations and individuals both assess and then select or reject one another (Rynes, 1989).

Of particular interest to the researcher is the work published which links the perceptions of recruiter behavior and their personal characteristics during a campus interview with the applicants' attraction to a particular organization (Harris & Fink, 1987; Rynes, 1991; Turban & Dougherty, 1992). In all these studies, positive interpersonal recruiter characteristic ratings of personableness, competence and informativeness were correlated with positive applicant reaction.

There is also the suggestion from previous work in this area that perceived interpersonal effectiveness of an individual recruiter varies by individual applicant and

therefore cannot be generalized or factored in any way (Connerley & Rynes, 1997). The researcher is interested in examining this problem and challenges the position that interpersonal recruiter effectiveness cannot be generalized or factored at all.

Statement of Problem

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers 2011 Recruiting Benchmarks Survey, employers reported that 49.5% of their entry-level hires for 2009-2010 were new college graduates, an increase from the 41.5% reported in the 2009 survey. Of these 49.5% of entry-level hires, almost 80% of them were part of an on-campus interview process and the average cost-per-hire reported was \$8,947.

The costs of employee replacement also provide organizations with powerful incentives to improve their recruitment and selection process (O'Connell & Kung, 2007; Tracey & Hinkin, 2008). Utilizing statistics from the *Bureau of Labor Research*, O'Connell & Kung (2007) estimated the average cost of replacing an employee in 2005 was \$13,996.

An important initial step in employee recruitment is the attraction of individuals to apply for interviews for positions in an organization. According to Boudreau & Rynes, 1985), those organizations that attract more qualified applicants will have a larger pool to choose from and a higher likelihood of greater utility of their firm selection systems. This early work focused on the important role that the recruiter plays in the attraction of individuals during the recruitment process, particularly during the process of the interview.

Considering the extensive use of the interview as an attraction and selection tool for the best applicant talent, as well as the organizational resources and costs involved, there

remains a continuing need to improve recruitment effectiveness by enhancing the reliability of the process.

The problem of recruiter effectiveness is one that the author has been personally interested in for many years. While working as an instructor for a four-year university offering a degree in retail management for over a decade she noticed the positive correlation between personable and competent recruiters from retail organizations whom retail students generally ‘liked’ and their overall effectiveness at attracting student talent. Conversely, if a personable and competent recruiter was replaced, and recruiters do tend to be replaced frequently on college campuses, by one who was perceived to be a less personable and competent individual, the overall effectiveness of the newer recruiter was reduced as students reported the replacement to be ‘unfriendly’ and/or ‘uninterested’. It was also interesting to note that the students’ opinions were generally in harmony with each other as they frequently compare notes following interviews and interactions with recruiters. This lack of recruiter endorsement on the part of the students appeared to result in a lack of interest for the recruiter’s organization.

When these observations were offered back to the organizations concerned, they would typically argue, with some defensiveness, that the reason for this reduction in yield was due to other factors such as ‘lack of student talent this year’ or the ‘cooler brand image’ of a new retail competitor on campus. Such reactions were quite understandable, if somewhat illogical. However, they served to spark the interest of the author into attempting to determine more specifically what behaviors “likeable” recruiters displayed during the recruitment process.

Although it can be argued that the perceptions of interpersonal effectiveness of individual recruiters may vary by individual applicants, the author believes that there are some specific hallmarks of interpersonal effectiveness which could be uncovered and that would be of great benefit to recruiting organizations as they devote their resources to the recruitment of talent on the college campus and attempt to do so in an effective manner. Therefore the key problem was uncovering just what these specific hallmarks might be.

Purpose of Study

This research has at its core the purpose of uncovering specific hallmarks of recruiter behaviors, identified in the extant literature to date as ‘personableness’, ‘informativeness’ and ‘competence’ and then testing these hallmarks to determine if they positively impact applicant attraction. Specifically, the mission was to identify such behavioral hallmarks that significant numbers of applicants could agree upon, identify and describe to some specific degree, which would be most useful to the industry in general and to individual recruiters in particular.

With these hallmarks identified, human resource departments within recruiting organizations could then better identify and train suitable and effective college recruiters. An increase in the effectiveness of their college recruiters could contribute to both a rise in the hiring of the most desirable students and a decrease in the cost-per-hire.

Primary Research Questions

First, the researcher was interested in discovering what both sides of the interviewer/interviewee dyad believed to be important in terms of recruitment practices in

general, with a view to determining if there was agreement or dissonance between the two groups.

In order to do this, a two-stage research strategy to add to the body of knowledge concerning what specifically attracts students during the interview process to an organization was developed utilizing Q-Methodology. The first stage asked the question of both applicants and recruiters: ***What are the current key positive variables that attract undergraduate students at a business school to apply for an initial interview with various retail companies?*** The second stage then determined how the recruiters for different retail companies and the potential applicants for positions at these companies ranked these positive variables in terms of importance. The key question here under investigation: ***Are there differences between how student applicants rank positive attributes to specific companies and how these companies perceive and describe them?***

Next, using the data from the first two-stage study, four experiments were conducted utilizing conjoint analysis to measure what influence the key attributes, uncovered in the Q-study as most important to students, had on the three dependent variables identified in the extant literature, *personableness*, *informativeness*, and *competences* plus the effect these attributes had on the variable *likelihood to pursue an opportunity with the company*.

As conjoint analysis is an effective method to measure the effect that a variable has on a decision making process, this methodology was chosen. Students were presented with cards that consisted of combinations of attributes and asked to rank them with the goal of determining the composition of the most preferred combination.

Thus the conjoint analysis research questions specifically focused on *whether the constructs of personableness, informativess and competence described in the extant literature correlated with specific behaviors identified in the Q-Study.*

Limitations

As with any study, the findings from the current research should be interpreted in light of some limitations. First, only female students at the undergraduate level were studied and all of them interested in executive trainee opportunities at retail organizations. In addition, all the industry recruiters involved represented retail organizations and, with one exception, were all female themselves. It is fair to say, therefore, that any findings are not generalizable to other populations without further research. However, it is also fair assumption that similar results might well be found in broader student samples representing different disciplines at a business school with recruiters from corresponding organizations.

Secondly, there may be some concern in terms of same-source response bias. This is not an issue in terms of the student participants since all the data were collected from different participants during different semesters. Twelve recruiters were involved in both the initial stage of the Q-study and the Q-study itself. However as the Q-sample was drawn from both the students and from the recruiters perspectives, this would not be considered a bias in terms of this methodology.

Summary

In summary, this work was planned to add to the existing body of recruitment literature by delving into the details and more clearly defining specific factors within the three constructs of recruiter personableness, informativeness and competence so frequently uncovered by survey methodology in the past as being of great significance to applicant attraction.

To do this, a two-stage body of research was undertaken to first determine similarities and/or differences between recruiters' and applicants' views on important factors impacting attraction. Secondly, an experiment was designed and administered, utilizing the results data from the first study, to test specific hallmarks of recruiter behaviors during the interview process, and determine their level of attractiveness to prospective applicants.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

Recruiter Behaviors and Recruitment Effectiveness

Within the overall subjective indices of recruitment effectiveness, the role of the recruiter has been frequently cited as pivotal in numerous studies (Alderfer and McCord, 1970; Rynes & Boudreau, 1986; Harris & Fink 1987; Rynes, 1989; Turban & Dougherty, 1992; Connerley & Rynes, 1997; Cable & Judge, 1997; Judge et al. 2000; Ryan & Tippins, 2004; Goldberg, 2005).

As the recruiter is generally the first “in-person” embodiment of any organization, their role is crucial in the early stages of applicant attraction to that organization. One of the earliest studies identifying the role of the recruiter was Alderfer and McCord (1970) who surveyed graduating college students about the interview process and interview content to determine students’ best, worst and average interviews. Their results suggested that interviews that students rated as well-perceived, as compared to those rated as poorly-perceived were strongly correlated with interested and supportive recruiters.

Twenty-five years ago, Rynes and Boudreau (1986) surveyed 145 Vice Presidents of Human Resources from *Fortune 1000* companies to find out information regarding their college recruitment practices and the effectiveness measures that they utilized. A broad range of independent variables were tested within the general recruitment operations including communication strategies, the selection and training of recruiters, how the organizations chose the schools, what qualifications they were looking for in applicants, and how and what data were recorded. Their goal was to link recruitment practices with post-hire effectiveness. They examined both subjective dependent variables utilizing an index of

perceived recruiting strengths and objective measures, such as percentage of college vacancies unfilled, turnover rates of new recruits and the process for monitoring relationships between recruiting variables and early job performance.

One of the most disappointing aspects of their research, however, was how few statistically useful objective measures of recruiting effectiveness they obtained. What was discovered was that few companies were able to give the necessary turnover data to perform analyses and so the only “viable analysis of activity-outcome relationships involved the subjective effectiveness measure” (p. 747). In terms of the subjective index of recruitment effectiveness, the data suggested that the respondents at these organizations perceived their programs to be stronger in *outcomes*, such as the identification of applicants and the filling of vacancies, than *processes*, such as administrative procedures, cost control and program evaluation (p. 746).

In 2005, Chapman et al. published a quantitative meta-analysis of 667 coefficients from 71 studies examining the relationships between multiple predictors with applicant job pursuit intentions, acceptance intentions, job-organization attraction and job choice. The results of this work showed once again that recruiter behaviors were correlated with applicant attraction. Four recruiter behaviors were analyzed: personableness; competence; informativeness and trustworthiness. Among these recruiter characteristics, it was found that recruiter personableness was a particularly strong predictor of applicant intentions for job pursuit ($\rho = .50$). However the authors cautioned that this large coefficient should be regarded with caution as it was only based on three studies. They also noted that additional research is needed to ascertain if the personableness characteristic is significantly more

predictive of applicant job pursuit intentions than other behaviors exhibited, (e.g. competence and/or informativeness).

Overall the Chapman et al. (2005) meta-analysis showed that applicant attraction outcomes were predictable by job-organization characteristics, recruiter behaviors and applicant perception of the recruitment process itself, perceived fit and hiring expectancies. As mentioned earlier, this work is focused on the area of recruiter behaviors and how they impact applicant attraction. In the discussion portion of the Chapman analysis, the authors state: “Early in the recruiting process, recruiters demonstrating personable behaviors may entice applicants to pursue the position. Thus, selecting recruiters for personableness or training them to be personable would be worthwhile” (p. 940).

A 1997 study by Connerley investigated the influence of training on recruiters’ self-perceptions and on applicant perceptions of their interpersonal effectiveness. Her first hypothesis was that “participating in recruiter training will result in both recruiters and applicants perceiving higher levels of recruiter effectiveness” (p. 261). The results, however, did not bear out this belief. In fact, additional hours of recruiter training did not correlate significantly with higher ratings of either effectiveness or of interpersonal skills by either the applicants or by the recruiters themselves. This suggests perhaps that the personableness described as attractive to applicants might exist in a more innate form, such as a combination of personality traits, or that the training content delivered did not mirror what the applicants perceive as personableness.

An additional 1997 study by Connerley & Rynes once again demonstrated the dominant effect of recruiters’ interpersonal skills on applicant perceptions of effectiveness. However, the authors suggested, “... to a large degree, the interpersonal effectiveness of a

given recruiter is in the eye of the individual applicant” (p. 1583). It is also interesting to note in this study that the recruiters’ self-perceptions of their effectiveness were highly predictable, particularly on the basis of their self-perceived interpersonal skills. However, the applicants’ perceptions of the recruiter effectiveness did not match those of the recruiters. In fact, the recruiters self-reported themselves as possessing higher levels of interpersonal skills than were perceived by the applicants themselves.

In 1987 Harris & Fink published a seminal article regarding applicant reactions to recruiters that investigated recruiter characteristics and their impact on applicants’ regard for jobs, for companies and their likelihood to join an organization. The results from the two questionnaires they administered to some 145 students pre and post interview with recruiters from 76 different organizations (p. 770) indicated that recruiters characteristics did, in fact, have a significant impact on applicants’ positive perceptions of job attributes and applicants’ likelihood for joining an organization – specifically recruiter competence (e.g., willing to answer questions, effective, conducted interview well) and informativeness (e.g., stressed variety and change in job, spoke of job in great detail, gave balanced view of company) were significantly related to regard for company while recruiter personableness (e.g. warm personality, socially perceptive, cooperative) was significantly related to regard for job (p. 784). In addition, the impact of the recruiter appeared to go beyond the applicants’ positive perceptions of job attributes and extend into the area of intentions of job acceptance (p. 778).

Turban & Dougherty’s 1992 study examined the influences of recruiter behaviors and characteristics, interview focus and structure on applicants’ attraction to firms using expectancy and valence perceptions as measurements. Their results also indicated that applicant perceptions of recruiter behaviors, especially the interest shown in the candidates,

had the strongest influence on attraction. In the discussion portion of their study, they write: “The finding that applicants’ perceptions of recruiter interest in them as candidates was such a strong predictor of both expectancy and valence perceptions emphasizes the need to know more about what causes applicants to perceive that recruiters are interested in them. For example, future research should investigate the specific nonverbal and verbal behaviors leading applicants to believe that recruiters are interested in them” (p. 760).

In terms of recruiter friendliness or personableness, Goltz and Giannantonio (1995) investigated applicants’ positive inferences about the organizational characteristics in the relationship between applicant attraction to a job and recruiter friendliness. Their results were generated through a laboratory investigation where subjects watched videotapes of “friendly” and “unfriendly” recruiters. The two levels of recruiter friendliness differed only in terms of the *non-verbal* behaviors of the actor in the two videotapes. As hypothesized, the subjects who viewed the ‘friendly’ recruiter tape made more positive inferences about unknown organizational characteristics ($x = 3.88$) than the subjects who viewed the unfriendly recruiter ($x = 2.25$) (p. 115).

Two years later Connerley & Rynes (1997) published research designed to determine the influence of recruiter characteristics on perceived recruiter effectiveness, as well as other variables. The student applicants were asked to rate recruiters on items measuring personableness, informativeness, enthusiasm and toughness of questioning.

The results again indicated overall evaluations of recruiter effectiveness are “highly predictable for both applicants and recruiters; so long as data come from only one side of the process” (p. 1579). However, overall variance and individual efforts for most variables, in particular interpersonal effectiveness, decreased dramatically when there was an attempt to

predict applicant impressions on the basis of recruiter information. In fact, recruiters' self-perceptions of their interpersonal skills were found to be higher than the applicants'.

In terms of 'recruiter support' to enhance effectiveness, we have some literature regarding the use of structured interviews versus unstructured, and the impact of training programs. In 1988 Campion et al. published a study proposing that a highly structured employment interviewing technique would contribute to the reliability and validity of the employment interview. The results of this study showed that the traditional (unstructured) interview yield was 55% successful employees and the structured interview yielded nearly 70% successful employees.

To ascertain what influence recruiter training has on recruitment effectiveness, Connerley (1997) conducted a survey of some 150 recruiters and over 1000 applicants. Interestingly, she discovered that recruiters who spent "more hours in training did *not* significantly correlate with better ratings of either interpersonal skills or effectiveness by either applicants or recruiters" (p. 264).

More recently Carless and Hetherington (2011) examined the impact of recruitment time delays on applicant attraction to an organization. They hypothesized that perceived timeliness would have a positive effect on attraction, which indeed it did. However, contrary to their expectations, *actual* recruitment delays did not influence attraction. Their finding that applicants view time delays during the recruitment process as indicative of job and organizational characteristics is consistent with previous research (Rynes et al., 1991).

In summary, we know from the literature that there are key recruiter behaviors that positively impact recruitment effectiveness with applicants. These include recruiters' interpersonal skills such as personableness, competence and informativeness which are

clearly of great importance to applicants (Chapman et al., 2005). However, there is some evidence to suggest that the recruiters rate themselves more highly than the applicants do in terms of interpersonal skills (Connerley & Rynes, 1997) and that recruiter training to improve such skills does not necessarily correlate with recruitment effectiveness (Connerley, 1997). We also have some evidence in support of the use of structured interviews to improve conversion rate from interview to job offer (Campion et al, 1988) and that the manifestation of friendly non-verbal behaviors by recruiters also leads applicants to make positive organizational inferences (Goltz and Giannantonio 1995).

Similarity Attraction Paradigm

The conceptual foundation for almost all the research on organizational demography has been the similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971). This hypothesis maintains that similarity in attitudes is a major source of attraction between individuals and that a variety of social, physical and status traits could be used as the bases for inferring similarity in attitudes or personality. It also assumes interaction among individuals and the results of a high level of interpersonal attraction may include frequent communication, a desire to maintain group affiliation and high social integration (Tsui et al., 1992).

The attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework suggests that individuals and organizations are attracted to each other as a result of sharing similar goals and values (Schneider, 1987). This framework's underlying concept is that it is the attributes of *people*, rather than the nature of the external environment, the organizational structure or technology, that are "the fundamental determinants of organizational behavior" (p. 437). The paradigm proposes that we are attracted to those who we perceive to be similar to ourselves. In the

recruitment context, this paradigm would suggest that recruiters look to hire applicants who are more like themselves, rather than those who are different.

In Harris and Fink's (1987) field study of applicant reaction to recruiter characteristics described earlier, an interesting result they uncovered was that recruiter gender did *not* appear to moderate the effect of on applicants' job perceptions, even though they had hypothesized that there would be a relationship. However, in the 1992 Turban and Dougherty study on influences of campus recruiting on applicant attraction, the results were a little different. The authors measured the impact of the recruiters' demographic characteristics of perceived age, educational background, gender and work status within their organization (either in the HR divisions of their companies or in the divisions in which the jobs being interviewed for were located), plus the recruiters' similarity to applicants in terms of whether applicants believed recruiters were graduates of the applicants' university (p. 749).

Overall, recruiters' demographic characteristics in the study were unrelated to attraction but the hypothesis that applicants would be more attracted to firms when the recruiters were similar to themselves did receive some support. Male applicants had higher valence perceptions when interviewed by men which supported the similarity hypothesis. However, women had similar valence perceptions for male and female recruiters. Interestingly, and contrary to the authors' predictions, expectancy perceptions were lower when applicants were interviewed by alumni or alumnae of the same institution as the applicants (p. 761). This finding is at somewhat at odds with the next theory described, social identity theory.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1985) posits that people tend to classify themselves and others into various social categories that may be defined by prototypical characteristics abstracted from the members of these categories. In order to do this they first have to define themselves before they can know how to feel about others. They do this using a process of self-categorization (Turner, 1987) where they group themselves and others into different social categories by characteristics such as age, race, organizational membership or status. Such groupings or categories mean that an individual can define themselves in terms of a social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

The demographic effects observed in large organizational settings may well be part of an individual's self-evaluation of his or her group membership. In large settings it is unlikely that each individual will ever interact with all others in the group. However, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1972) and more precisely, self-categorization theory propose that each individual's self-evaluation is partly a function of their group membership and both can offer insight into conditions where demographic effects occur, without individuals actually engaging in interpersonal interactions (Tsui et al., 1992).

In terms of this work it could be argued that in universities of some size, the students belong to a large organization where they first group themselves into the whole organization ('the university') as part of their social identity, and then into smaller categories and then into smaller sub-categories, such as 'school of management,' and then sub-sub categories, such as 'marketing major,' 'finance major,' etc.

With regard to the recruiters who come onto college campuses to represent and recruit for their different organizations, they are the in-person manifestations of their

individual organizations' cultures. However, reputation of their organization may certainly precede them. Cable and Graham (2000) discovered that the type of industry in which a firm operates, the opportunities that it provides for the development of employees and organizational culture all affect job seekers' reputation perceptions. In terms of retail organizations these reputations also include students' personal consumer evaluations of the status of their brand in the marketplace, including their physical stores, websites, inventory assortments and service levels.

Cable and Turban (2003) examined how and why firms' reputations affect job seekers by designing an experiment using a recruitment job posting developed from a real job posting on the Internet. This design was a 2 x 2 x 2 between-subjects design in which they manipulated corporate reputation (good or poor *Fortune* magazine reputation), reputation advertising (present or absent), and salary levels (high and low). Their results indicated that corporate reputation and corporate familiarity did indeed influence job seekers' reputation perceptions.

An additional factor that affects job seekers' reputation perceptions is the personal reputation of the individual recruiters him- or herself within a student group, that leads students to align themselves, or form a social identity with particular organizations rather than with others. For the purposes of college recruitment a recruiter's reputation may be argued as one of the components of the organizational culture which impact job seeker's perceptions.

Person-Job Fit Theory

Person-job (P-J) fit describes the match between an applicant and the requirements of a specific job and is typically measured by comparing the fit between an applicant's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and the specific job demands (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). Fit may be evaluated either subjectively or objectively (Kristof, 1996).

Subjective P-J fit refers to individuals' personal perceptions of how well they fit with a particular job while objective P-J fit relates to how well individuals reported preferences for job characteristics correspond to the job's actual characteristics (Ehrhart, 2006).

Ehrhart (2006) studied two antecedents of individual job applicants' subjective P-J fit: job characteristic beliefs and personality, and found significant interactions between personality and job characteristic beliefs in the prediction of subjective P-J fit in the context of customer service jobs. Personality constructs for this study were utilized in terms of the Five-Factor Model (FFM), often termed the Big Five (Goldberg, 1990). This model has been demonstrated to be generalizable across cultures by Mount and Barrick (1995) and the five traits within the model are Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness.

Specifically, Erhart's study focused on the interactions of Extraversion, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability (or the absence of Neuroticism). All three characteristics showed a significant positive interaction to customer interaction beliefs in predicting perceptions of P-J fit. One of the author's suggested conclusions to her work was "Organizations that seek to attract and retain the best possible employees should benefit from an understanding of what leads to individuals' perception of P-J fit. The current research

suggests that personality and job characteristic beliefs are antecedents to subjective fit” (p. 222).

Person-Organization Fit Theory

Some forty years ago, Tom (1971) studied the role of personality and organizational images in the recruiting process and hypothesized that the greater the similarity between an individual’s self-concept and his or her image of an organization, the more that individual preferred that organization. In this work, he recast person-situation complementarity to focus on how persons fit into organizations.

Empirical studies have supported the distinction between P-J fit and person-organization fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown et al., 2002; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). As people apply for and work in specific jobs within organizations, research on both types of fit is therefore necessary and important.

The theory of person-organization (P-O fit) describes the congruence or compatibility between people and the organizational culture for which they work. This theory’s roots can be traced back to several earlier theories – two in particular bear mention. The first is social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1985) that posits that people tend to classify themselves and others into various social categories that may be defined by prototypical characteristics abstracted from the members. And the second is the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework that suggests that individuals and organizations are attracted to each other as a result of sharing similar goals and values (Schneider, 1987). This framework’s underlying concept is that it is the attributes of *people*, rather than the nature of the external environment, the organizational structure or technology, that are “the fundamental determinants of organizational behavior” (p. 437). Both these theories of social

identity and ASA are early 'arguments' that an assessment of person-organization fit should impact selection and hiring decisions.

In 1989, Chatman's seminal paper was published presenting different criteria for improving and constructing meaningful interactional organizational behavior models. In this paper she also presented a model of person-organization fit to satisfy these criteria. It was here that the following definition of person-organization fit was first published which is now so frequently cited: "The congruence between the norms and values of an organization and the values of persons" (p. 339). Her work stressed that in order to be able to determine the impact that organizations may have on individual's values and behaviors and vice versa, the extent of agreement between the two must first be assessed (p. 339). The instrument she was involved in developing to do this assessment is known as the *Organization Culture Profile* (OCP) instrument and was developed to be both idiographic, relating to or involving the study of individuals, and nomothetic, relating to the search for abstract universal principles.

Since that time, researchers have used this instrument, and others, to measure and assess both the relationship between P-O fit and recruitment and selection of applicants by organizations, and the impact of the relationship to the attraction and selection of applicants to organizations. In 1991, O'Reilly and his colleagues utilized a longitudinal study to assess the validity of P-O fit based on value congruency. Utilizing one group of MBA students who were asked to complete the OCP they first assessed their preferences for organization values and provided personality data. A second group of student gave OCP data on individual culture preferences and the two groups were combined to assess structure of individual preferences. A third group of newly hired accountants were part of the longitudinal study, which tracked their first two years in different accounting firms. The results showed that

measures of P-O fits at time 1 were significantly related to individual commitment and satisfaction 12 months later. In addition the degree to which individual preferences matched organizational realities was predictive of turnover 2 years later (p. 510). This work provided strong support for the importance of understanding the importance of fit and selecting individuals with preferences for specific organizational cultures.

In 1997, Cable & Judge developed a model of P-O fit and tested this using data from 38 interviewers making decisions about 94 applicants, utilizing a modified version of the original OCP. Their results suggested that the interviewers were able to assess values congruence between applicants and their organizations with “significant levels of accuracy” and that their “subjective person-organization fit assessments have large effect on their hiring recommendations relative to competing applicant characteristics...” (p. 546).

However, there are other theorized predictors of selection – many of which may come down to a statement of “fit” by HR professionals but are not necessarily part of the “culture” fit framework. These include person-job fit and person-vocation fit predictors. These are frequently measured using mental aptitude, assessment, simulation and personality trait tests in an attempt to select candidates who will match well with specific job characteristics and demands.

In 2000, Kristof-Brown conducted two studies to determine whether, in practice, recruiters are able to differentiate between person-job (P-J) and person-organization fit in the selection process and if the two types of fit provide value in predicting outcomes. How, in fact, do the two predictors relate to each other in the recruitment process? Person-job fit describes the match between an applicant and the requirements of a specific job and is typically measured by comparing the fit between an applicant’s knowledge, skills, and

abilities (KSAs) and the specific job demands (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). In this study two distinct methodologies were utilized to measure the discriminant validity of recruiters' P-J and P-O fit perceptions (p. 666). The results indicated that recruiters do in fact rely on knowledge, skills and abilities more frequently to assess P-J fit and on values and personality traits more often to assess P-O fit during early interviews.

In this study P-J fit was actually found to have the stronger relationship with recruiter relationship than P-O fit in the first interview, consistent with prior research (Bretz et al., 1993; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). The author rationalized that because many first interviews are basically screening interviews, the recruiter's first goal may be to eliminate applicants who do not match with job requirements and that the perception of P-O fit might be used in later interviews to select applicants already judged to be qualified.

However, as both perceived P-J fit and P-O fit explained unique variance in recruiters' hiring decisions, "there is evidence that P-O fit is considered by recruiters even at the earliest stages of the hiring process" (Kristof-Brown, 2000, p. 664). As stated in the Judge et al. (2000) article,

"Because interview research inherently deals with applicant-interviewer dyads and person-perception, there is a need to distinguish between actual congruence and perceived congruence. *Actual congruence* refers to the similarity between an applicant's attributes and an organization's attributes as independently reported by each party (Cable & Judge, 1997). *Perceived congruence*, on the other hand, refers to the similarity between an interviewer's *perceptions* of an applicant's and their organization's attributes. Finally subjective P-O fit perceptions refer to interviewers' holistic judgments about an applicant's P-O fit, because interviewers probably respond to applicants based on their perceptions. Thus, *subjective P-O fit evaluations* refer to an interviewer's interpretation of an applicant's fit within their organization" (p. 393).

As noted by Rynes & Boudreau (1986) most interviewers receive little or no formal training which suggests that each interviewer derives his or her own perceptions of organizational attributes from personal experience thereby calling into question interviewers' validity of their own perceptions of organizational culture. So what are the attributes that applicants and interviewers focus on when making P-O fit judgments? Are both groups focusing on similarity in terms of *values*, defined as beliefs that endure and which posit that a specific conduct or end-state is preferable than the opposite (Cable & Judge, 1997; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Or, alternatively, may the congruence be derived as a result of interviewers and applicant perceptions being in tune with each other on a more personal level?

In 1996, Amy Kristof published a comprehensive definition and presented a conceptual model of person-organization fit that integrated the perspectives of *supplementary fit* (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987) and *complementary fit* with the *needs-supplies* and *demands-abilities* perspectives (Caplan, 1987; Edwards, 1991). *Supplementary fit* can be described as present when someone "supplements, embellishes, or possesses characteristics which are similar to other individuals" (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 269). This can be differentiated from *complementary fit* which occurs when an individual person's characteristics "make whole" or add to what is missing in the environment (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 271).

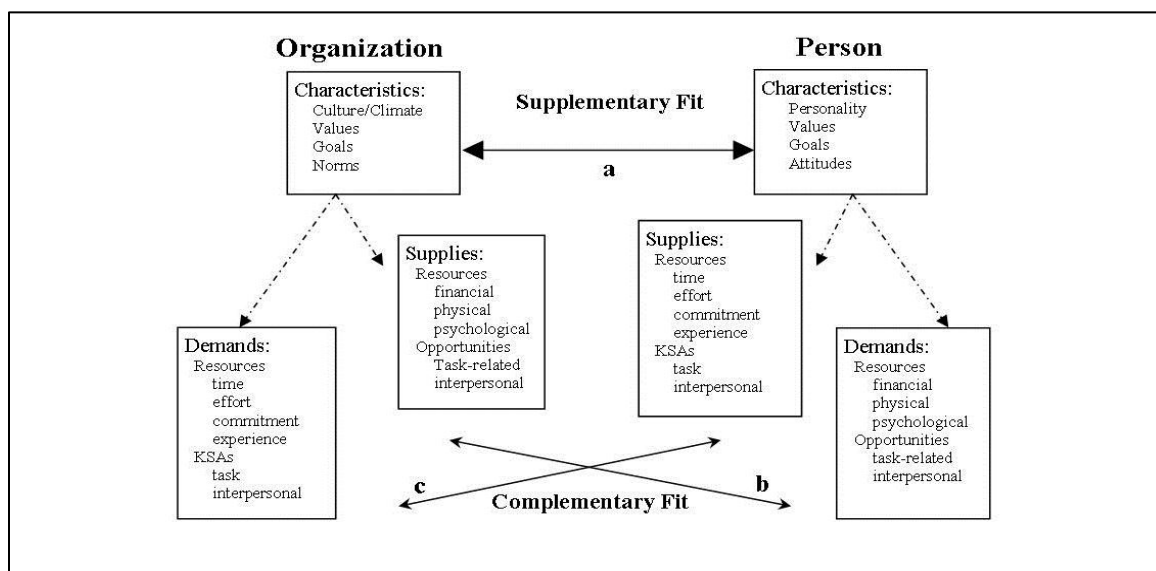
The second perspective is offered by the needs-supplies and demands-abilities distinction. P-O fit in the *needs-supplies* scenario occurs when an organization satisfies an individual's needs, preferences or desires and by contrast, from the *demands-abilities*

viewpoint, fit occurs when the individual has the abilities to meet an organization's demands (Kristof, 1996, p. 3).

In her model, reproduced below in Figure 2, P-O fit is defined as “*the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both*” (Kristof, 1996, p. 4-5). In this model, arrow “a” (supplementary fit) is represented by the relationship between the organization and a person's fundamental characteristics. On the organization side of the model these characteristics include culture, climate, values, goals, and norms. On the person side, the characteristics most often studied are values, goals, personality and attitudes. According to Kristof, the most common operationalization of P-O fit is the congruence between organizational values and individuals (e.g. Chatman, 1989, 1991; Judge & Bretz, 1992).

Figure 2: Existing Model of Various Conceptualizations of Person-Organization Fit

(Kristof, A. L., 1996. Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49 (10), 4).



In the scenario of the interview process, however, the organization is represented to the applicant by the recruiter. In as much as companies are interested in looking at an applicant's personality and attitudes, it can be argued that the applicant is also evaluating the organization's personality and attitudes in terms of the culture, climate, values, goals, and norms, as they are represented by the specific recruiting individual.

In the Judge et al. (2000) article reviewing recent research and recommendations for future research on the employment interview, another figure is provided to give a “conceptual roadmap for understanding the antecedents and consequences of P-O fit in the context of the interview” (p. 393). In this figure, there is no part of the model devoted specifically to the applicant's perceptions of the interviewer's attributes – one may assume that the applicant's congruence with the organization is what the interviewer has to discover during the interview, that this congruence is impacted by the organizational attributes (e.g. values, goals and policies) and that the applicant's perceptions of a personal congruence with the interviewer is contained within those organizational attributes.

Summary

It is clear from the extant literature that there is a significant body of recruitment research which has focused around the interview and, more specifically, the importance of the recruiter in the overall attraction of applicants to organizations. It is also evident in study after study that personableness, competence and informativeness of the interviewer are key attraction element for applicants during the interview process.

As Rynes (1989) explained the interview is an interactive process where both organizations and individual assess and then select or reject one another. Therefore, it is

important to note once more that as any organization is manifested to the applicant by the *recruiter* him- or herself in the context of the interview, a deeper understanding of what constitutes a personal attraction to the recruiter by the applicant is of paramount importance. It is also worth remembering that young college students experiencing the interview process often consider it an anxiety-arousing ordeal where the interviewer may be seen as a person with “life-or-death power over them” who may well exacerbate their feelings of fright and awkwardness if he or she does not behave in a welcoming manner (Higgins, M., 2004).

So what still remains unclear and under-researched, is exactly what defines and comprises recruiter attractiveness to potential employees in terms of the recruiter’s own interpersonal behaviors and the specific messages that might reflect or signal a congruence of fit between the applicant and the organization. Do these behaviors extend beyond constructs such as level of friendliness exhibited through facial expressions and eye contact, knowledge and enthusiasm about their own organizations to expressions of knowledge of the interviewee’s institution combined with genuine and sincere interest in the applicant herself? And if this is true, have such behaviors and messages been accurately measured through the post-interview use of the ubiquitous questionnaire which may measure cognitive aspects fairly efficiently but generally falls short on the measurement of the affective aspects of applicant attraction?

Noticeably absent from empirical examination is the psychological interplay and the contextual influences that occur between interviewers and interviewees prior and during the face-to-face selection interview. Therefore, at present, this general construct of ‘personableness’ remains somewhat vague and largely undefined in the context of the recruitment process and provides an opportunity for closer definition through research.

There is also the suggestion from previous work in this area that interpersonal effectiveness of an individual recruiter varies by individual applicant and therefore cannot be generalized or factored in any way (Connerley & Rynes, 1997). The researcher is interested in examining the possibility that there may be some general behavioral hallmarks of personableness and competence that significant numbers of applicants could agree upon, identify and describe, and that these would be most useful to the industry in general and to individual recruiters in particular.

The Person-Organization fit literature focuses on the fit between the applicant and the organization. However, it typically implies that it is the potential employees who must fit to the employer. This research attempts to suggest that understanding the mindset of the potential employees is of great importance and that by finding out exactly what is important to that audience will positively impact their perceptions of the organization.

In summary, the author's contribution to the area of recruitment knowledge focuses on discerning whether there are some generalizable specific recruiter behaviors that would enhance recruiter attractiveness and lead to improved effectiveness on the college campus.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

1. Q-Methodology Study

The first stage of the research, the Q-Study, was designed to determine recruiter and applicant viewpoints of what is important in the attraction of student applicants to hiring organizations. By clearly identifying the variables which each group finds important to attraction, and subsequently determining if there is agreement or lack of agreement between the groups it was then possible to set up a quantitative analysis in the form of four conjoint analysis experiments to determine influences on specific dependent variables identified in the extant literature.

The Q-study was a two-stage research project. The first stage was to solicit perceptions and comments from both recruiters and applicants to form the basis of the Q-sample to be described shortly. The second stage was to administer the study to both recruiters and students and then analyze the results and uncover areas of interest.

Theoretical Framework and Study Design

Q methodology, first introduced by William Stephenson in 1935 (Stephenson, 1935) embodies a distinctive orientation toward the systematic study of human subjectivity. It is a research technique which provides a systematic and quantitative method of examining human subjectivity, utilizing psychometric principles combined with the statistical applications of correlational and factor-analysis. It has been widely utilized and reported in research journal across the social sciences spectrum (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

Q methodology is based on two premises. The first is that subjective points-of-view are communicable and the second is that they are always put forward from a position of self-

reference. Key to this methodology is the constant need for the maintenance of the integrity of the subjects' self-reference and vigilance that this is neither compromised by, nor confused with, any external frame of reference from the investigator.

Analyzing respondents' opinions utilizing Q methodology is a departure from more traditional R analysis. The latter concentrates on finding correlations and factors representing respondents' behavioral traits where Q-methodology researches individually determined impressions drawn from personal experience. As Brown (1986, p.58) wrote: "Only subjective opinions are at issue in Q, and although they are typically unprovable, they can nevertheless be shown to have structure and form, and it is the task of Q-technique to make this form manifest for purposes of observation and study."

Q-Samples

Utilizing Q methodology, the researcher seeks to enable the respondents to model his or her viewpoints on a matter of subjective importance. It is the researcher's responsibility to design or acquire a Q-sample of a sufficient number of statements or opinions about a subject to ensure that the design reflects the relevant issues under study.

A Q-sample is this collection of items or statements that is presented to respondents for rank-ordering. Q-samples can be "naturalistic" or "ready-made" – statements taken from respondents' oral or written communications are considered naturalistic. Those drawn from other sources are considered ready-made. As neither type of sample is necessarily superior or inferior to the other, the researcher should choose which type is best suited to the specific research at hand.

Naturalistic Q-samples can be devised in different ways. However, interviewing is considered to be most consistent with Q's principles of self-reference and multiple

interviews, to be described shortly, generated the material for the Q-sample for this study. Q-samples are always representations of communication contexts and there are two basic techniques used for choosing items. The first is *unstructured* sampling where items presumed to be relevant to the chosen research topic are selected without undue effort to ensure the coverage of all possible sub-issues. This *unstructured* sample is therefore a reasonably accurate “survey” of positions that are often cited on a given issue.

Structured samples are composed more systematically and incorporate hypothetical considerations into the sample whereby statements are assigned to “(experimental) conditions designated and defined by the researcher” (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, p.28).

Q-Sorting and Conditions of Instruction

Q-sorting is the process where a subject models his or her point of view by rank ordering Q-sample items along a continuum defined by specific conditions of instruction. This *condition of instruction* is a guide for the sorting of the items. An example would be simple requests for levels of agreement or disagreement such as:

- “Sort the items according to those with which you *most agree* (+5) to those with which you *most disagree* (-5).”
- “Sort the items according to those that are *most like* object/person X (+5) to those *most unlike* that object/person (-5).”

Each participant in the study is given a brief overview of Q-Methodology and then handed an envelope with the Q-sample statements printed onto strips of paper, together with the Lickert scale from -5 to +5 printed onto similar strips, plus one or two Q-Score sheets (see Appendix C). If the study is designed to be co-orientational, two Q-Score sheets will be

needed. Each participant is then asked to rank-order the statements by sorting them, based solely on his/her frame of reference onto one of the Q-Score sheets.

When performing a Q-sort, each subject should have sufficient space to spread distribution markers from left to right with the 0 score in the middle. A desk or table is generally sufficient. Distribution markers the same length as the statement cards are included for each + and each – score and the 0 position in the center. These assist the subjects and they sort the statement on the continuum.

If the researcher wishes to address the degree to which two different groups' opinions converge when ranking the same Q-sample and thereby determine the co-orientational variables of accuracy, agreement and perceived agreement, each group participant is then asked to re-sort the same sample from the perspective of how each believe the “other” group would sort the statements, utilizing the same methodology as the first sort.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The researcher hypothesized that there would be fundamental differences in the way that the recruiters and that the student applicants view what makes a specific retail organization attractive. Specifically, she hypothesized that the recruiters would place more importance on such factors as their company's brand image in the marketplace and specific job attributes and would give less importance to the personal attributes and behaviors of the individual recruiters in the attraction of talent to their organizations.

H1: Recruiters will view factors such as company brand image and specific job attributes as more important to students' attraction than students will view these factors.

By contrast, she believed that the student applicants would place more importance on the recruiters' personal roles in the recruitment and attraction process and less on the organization's brand image.

H2: Students will view factors involving recruiters' individual behaviors and relationships as more important to them than recruiters will view these factors.

In addition, the author hypothesized that the views of the recruiters and the views of the students would not co-orientate. Specifically, the student's view of what attracts them to organizations and their estimation of how the recruiters' view the attraction would agree but the recruiters' views of what attracts students and the recruiters' estimates of students' view would not.

H3: The views of the students and the views of the recruiters will not co-orientate. While the students' views will agree with their estimation of how recruiters' view the attraction, the recruiters' views of what attracts students will not agree with their estimates of the students' views.

The research questions for the first stage of the Q-Study were open ended questions given to both the recruiters and to the students and were designed to solicit a list of statements that would reflect what both sides found important in the recruitment process. These open-ended questions posed to the selected recruiters in the fall of 2008 can be viewed in Appendix A.

The second stage of the Q-Study required both recruiters and students to rank order some 47 statements, known as the Q-Sample. These statements were generated from the focus group with the students and with the in-depth interviews with the recruiters (see Appendix B).

Participation, Data Collection and Instrumentation

The retail management undergraduate major is housed at the Whitman School and has a long standing relationship with its industry and their recruiters. The retail undergraduate students at the Whitman School and the corporate recruiters representing four core retail organizations were the subjects of the research for this two-stage proposal. The Martin J. Whitman School of Management at Syracuse University has an enrollment of some 1760 undergraduate and approximately 370 graduate students and is accredited by the *Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business* (Whitman School of Management, 2010).

As mentioned earlier, the primary study was designed and executed in the fall of 2008 and spring of 2009 and utilized Q methodology to study the subjective viewpoints of both undergraduate retail students and retail recruiters. The first stage was the conducting of a series of in-depth interviews with both retail recruiters and with senior retail students to determine those issues which are most important to them in the recruitment/interview process and thereby develop a Q-sample as described above.

Utilizing the open-ended questions in Appendix A as a guide, four two hour-long interviews with 4 key recruiters from organizations with long-standing relationships with the program were carried out. Appendix A not only included open-ended questions but asked each individual recruiter to rank some commonly considered areas of importance for the attraction of students and to add other suggestions of their own, if desired. Each interview was recorded, transcribed and then reviewed to discover the most salient issues from the recruiters' perspectives.

The retail organizations chosen for these in-depth interviews are all national chains and included an off-price retailer, a discount department store, a moderately-priced

department store and a specialty department store. All four organizations have had a long standing recruitment relationship with the university and consider Whitman as a “core” recruitment school.

To gather some perspectives from the student group, a one and a half hour focus group was carried out with senior retail students to determine what they found most important in answer to the general question “*What attracts you to (interview with) a specific retailer?*” This focus group was held in December of 2008 with six senior retail students, all in good standing. This focus group was videotaped, transcribed and then reviewed in detail to determine which issues were of most importance to these students (see Appendix D).

The second stage was the implementation of the Q-study to both students and recruiters in the spring of 2009. The recruiters’ study was set up over several different days according to the availability of the executives on our campus. The nineteen students carried out the study at one time.

The execution of the Q-Study with both students and with recruiters was executed to discover their rankings of these 47 issues which were most frequently mentioned during the individual interviews in order to represent the subjective importance to each respondent. First permission was requested and approved by the IRB (see Appendix E).

Eight recruiters and nineteen students participated in the Q-study during the 2009/2010 school year. Seventeen of the students were senior undergraduates and two were at junior level. All participation was voluntary and all participants had experience in the interview process. The researcher first requested verbal permission from the students and the recruiters for their participation (Appendix F) and read out specific instructions and guidelines for how to complete the study (Appendix G).

The researcher then requested that all participants complete the Q-study twice, once from their own perspective of what they believe attracts students to interview with organizations and secondly, from the perspective of the other group. So each group completed two score sheets (see Appendix C) and these instruments contained the data for analysis.

Data Analysis

For the first stage of the analysis, the data collected from the in-depth recruiter interviews were reviewed and summarized. As is evident from Figure 3 below, which summarizes responses to suggested factors, the one suggested factor that referred specifically to recruiter characteristics did not rank particularly high in this initial probing for what might be considered important by the four recruiters. In fact it ranked as one of the lowest factors scored, along with “friend/alum works at the company”, and “attractive base salary.”

In fact, the highest rank factor from this recruiter suggested list was “good future career prospects”, followed by other factors, such as “corporate culture”, “challenge of work”, “work-life balance”, and “corporate social responsibility” – all of which were not on the original list of suggestions. These other factors mentioned by three out of the four recruiters were all suggested by the recruiters themselves in the course of the interviews and their relative importance can be viewed below. An overall summary comparison by recruiters of key issues can also be viewed as Appendix H.

Figure 3: Summary of recruiters' initial rankings of suggested recruitment factors for applicant attraction during interviews (September 2008)

Recruitment Factors to be Weighted out of 100 points	Off-Price Store	Discount Dept. Store	Specialty Dept. Store	Moderate Dept. Store	Totals
<i>Attractive brand/reputation of organization in marketplace</i>	15	20	10	25	70
<i>Location of job opportunity (e.g. big city or local to home)</i>	10	15	10	15	50
<i>Attractive financial compensation (base salary/benefits)</i>	0	10	10	10	30
<i>Good future career prospects</i>	35	40	15	20	110
<i>Recruiter likeability/similarity or persuasiveness</i>	5	10	10	10	35
<i>Friend, other alum works at company</i>	15	5	5	5	30
<i>Other factors (Recruiter suggestions)</i>	20 "Corp. Culture"	0	20 "Challenge of Work" 20 "Work-life balance"	15 "Corp. Social Responsibility"	75
Totals	100	100	100	100	400

The information from the four recruiters' in-depth interviews was then combined with the information from the student focus group and formed the basis of a list of forty seven statements to create a naturalistic Q-sample (see Appendix B). This sample contained all the statements of importance that were brought up by both the recruiters and the students.

Reviewing the statements that form the Q-sample, they can be grouped into four broad areas, as indicated on Appendix B in parentheses after each statement. (It should be noted that these notations in parentheses were *not* on the statements given to the participants during the execution of the subsequent Q-study).

1. *Company* attributes; numbers 1- 3, 8, 11 - 15, 28 – 33, 41; 2. (Total: 16)
2. *Job* attributes; numbers 9-10, 34 – 40. (Total: 9)
3. *Recruiter* attributes; numbers 16 – 26, 42 – 47. (Total 17)

4. *Relationship* attributes; numbers 4 – 7, 27. (Total 5)

Upon completion of the data collection process from the Q-study in spring of 2009, the participants' rankings were correlated and factor analyzed to discover possible groupings of opinions. As McKeown and Thomas (1988) describe: "Data analysis in Q methodology typically involves the sequential application of three sets of statistical procedures: correlation, factor analysis, and the computation of factor scores" (p. 46). However, as indicated earlier, the psychometrics of Q methodology correlate and factor the actual respondents, as opposed to traits or behaviors dealt with in traditional R-method analysis.

Data from the Q-study were entered into the statistical software program PCQ (Stricklin & Almeida, 2002) which computed intercorrelations among the different Q-sorts and then factor analyzed the data. This program utilizes the eigenvalue criterion, whereby factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.00 are considered significant and those with lesser values may be considered too weak to deserve serious attention.

Resulting factors were then rotated analytically and reports run detailing factor loadings, the Varimax rotation detailing statement factor scores, distinguishing items for each, in addition to consensus statements.

The Q sorts were correlated and factor analyzed, revealing three distinct and significant factors, A, B, and C. 36 out of the 48 sorts were accounted for in these three factors. 7 sorts were confounded and 5 were not significant. Below are descriptions of each of the three factors:

Factor A - (Recruiters' views on what attracts students)

Twelve sorts loaded with significance onto this factor. Six out of eight recruiters loaded onto this factor, and the balance were students' views of how recruiters would sort.

The tables below summarize the nine most highly ranked and the nine statements most lowly ranked for this group which was heavily weighted with recruiters.

Most important, according to the recruiters' perceptions of what attracts the students were the students' positive views on image of the retailer's brand and its "cool" factor, opportunities for rapid advancement, the students' personal attraction to their stores/merchandise, and high salary potential for entry level full-time positions. Least important, according to the recruiters view of the students, were a structured interview format and recruiter familiarity with the school's majors and programs.

In summary, all the most important factors according to the recruiters of what attracts students were centered on company and job attributes, and, with one exception, all the least important factors according to the recruiters were those concerned with recruiters or relationships.

*Factor A: Ranking of recruiters' views of what is most important to students:

+5	+4	+3
Respected brand image in marketplace <i>(1**) Company</i>	Cool/prestigious brand image of retailer in the marketplace <i>(2) Company</i>	Location of corporate offices desirable <i>(11) Company</i>
Opportunities for rapid advancement within company <i>(37) Job</i>	Personal attraction to retailers' stores and merchandise <i>(3) Company</i>	Retailer that has growth potential <i>(30) Company</i>
	High salary potential for entry level full-time positions <i>(9) Job</i>	Job opportunities for entry level corporate positions <i>(34) Job</i>
		Prestigious entry level title of positions offered <i>(39) Job</i>

*Factor A: Ranking of recruiters' views of what is least important to students:

-5	-4	-3
Interview format which is structured and formal (44) <i>Recruiter</i>	Recruiter who is organized and thorough (26) <i>Recruiter</i>	Parents/friends know executives at the company (6) <i>Relationship</i>
Recruiter who is familiar with Whitman's programs and majors (46) <i>Recruiter</i>	Interview format which is flexible and informal (43) <i>Recruiter</i>	Parents/friends encourage student to interview with specific company/ies (7) <i>Relationship</i>
	Recruiter with personal experience at the jobs being offered (45) <i>Recruiter</i>	Reputation of retailer as socially responsible (14) <i>Company</i>
		Recruiter who listens during interview (22) <i>Recruiter</i>

*Each column is evenly weighted

**Numbers in parentheses are not rankings but the number randomly assigned to the statements in Appendix B)

Factor B - (Students' views of the recruiters' perspective on what attracts students)

Ten sorts with significance loaded onto this factor - 8 were students' views of how they believed the recruiters would sort the 47 statements. Most important in this factor were the influence of parents and friends, high salary potential, desirable location of stores and international opportunities. Least important were on-campus events, long term career opportunities and three recruiter characteristics; knowledge of company and positions, positive relationship with students, and high energy and enthusiasm.

The students' views of the recruiters' perspective on what attracts students did mirror some of the most important attributes reported in Factor A, such as "Personal attraction to the retailers' store/brand" and "Prestigious entry level title of positions offered."

*Factor B: Ranking of how students perceive what recruiters view as most important

+5	+4	+3
Parents/friends know executives at the company <i>(6) Relationship</i>	High salary potential for internships <i>(10) Job</i>	Personal attraction to the retailers' stores/merchandise <i>(3) Company</i>
Parents/friends encourage student to interview with specific company/ies <i>(7) Relationship</i>	Location of retailers' stores desirable <i>(12) Company</i>	Locations flexibility within retailer for internships and/or new hires <i>(13) Company</i>
	Retailer with international opportunities <i>(33) Company</i>	Prestigious entry level title of positions offered <i>(39) Job</i>
		Interview format which is flexible and informal <i>(43) Recruiter</i>

*Factor B: Ranking of how students perceive what recruiters view as least important:

-5	-4	-3
On campus event where students can meet recruiters face to face prior to interview <i>(27) Relationship</i>	Recruiter with good knowledge of company and positions <i>(17) Recruiter</i>	Respected brand image of retailer in the marketplace <i>(1) Company</i>
Opportunities for a great long-term career <i>(38) Job</i>	Recruiters who have a positive relationship with students over time <i>(18) Recruiter</i>	Recruiter friendliness and likeability <i>(16) Recruiter</i>
	Recruiter who has high energy and enthusiasm about company <i>(20) Recruiter</i>	Recruiter who appears genuinely interested in students <i>(21) Recruiter</i>
		Retailer that offers internships with positive reputations <i>(29) Recruiter</i>

*Each column is evenly weighted

**Numbers in parentheses are not rankings but the number randomly assigned to the statements in Appendix B

Factor C - Students' views on what attracts students

14 sorts with significance loaded onto this factor – 13 were students' own views of what attracts them to interview. Most important were recruiters who are familiar with college's majors and programs, structured interview formats, recruiters who are alums of the school, available entry level store management positions and the desirable location of stores.

Least important were the firms' reputations/cultures, opportunities for long-term career, rapid advancement, growth potential of the organization and work-life balance.

*Factor C: Ranking of what students perceive as most important:

+5	+4	+3
Interview format which is structured and formal (44**) Recruiter	Location of retailers' stores desirable (12) Company	Impressive alum who is executive from retailer spoke to school/class (5) Relationship
Recruiter who is familiar with Whitman's programs & majors (46)Recruiter	Recruiter who is an alum of the school (24) Recruiter	High salary potential for internships (10) Job
	Job opportunities available for entry level store management positions (35) Job	Prestigious entry level title of positions offered (39) Job
		Dedicated campus recruiter who visits campus regularly (42) Recruiter

*Factor C: Ranking of what students perceive as least important:

-5	-4	-3
Reputation of retailer as having a friendly, sociable work culture (15) Company	Retailer that has growth potential (30) Company	Respected brand image of retailer in the marketplace (1)Company
Opportunities for a great long-term career (38) Job	Opportunities for rapid advancement within the company (37) Job	Recruiter who follows through on promises (calls back, etc.) (25) Recruiter
	Positive work-life balance reputation of the company (41) Company	Retailer with strong financial stability (32) Company
		Entry level position which is interesting and varied (40) Job

*Each column is evenly weighted

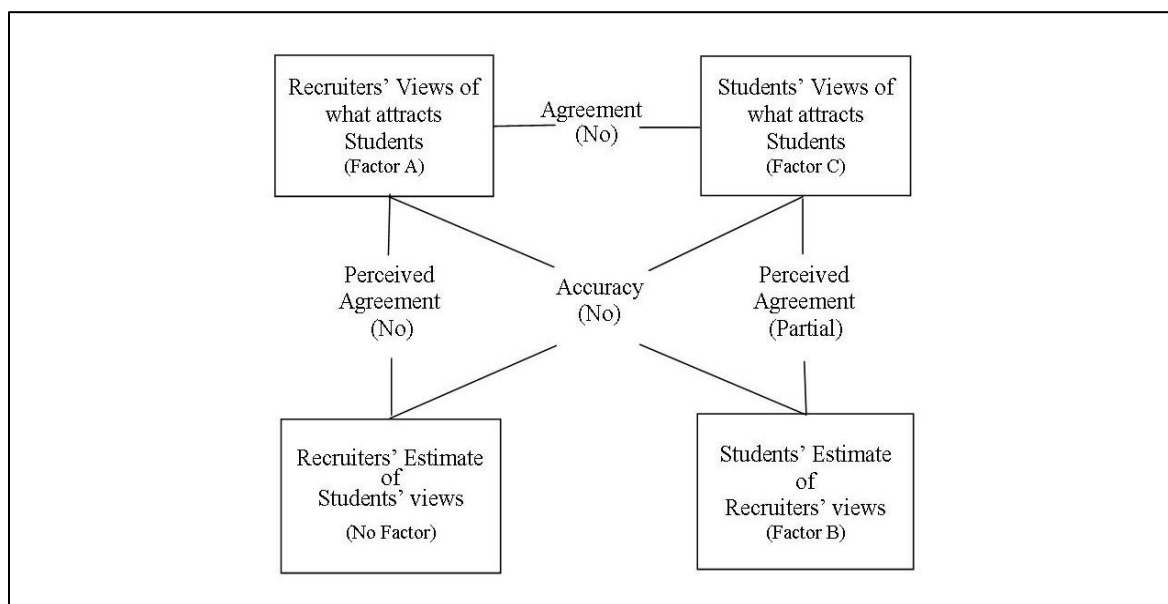
**Numbers in parentheses are not rankings but the number randomly assigned to the statements in Appendix B)

A comparison summary chart of the most important and least important attributes for students and recruiters can be viewed as Appendix I. It is interesting to note the opposition in placement of some key statements from both sides of the equation apparent in this summary. Specific results in 'opposition' of importance to the two groups were: *structured*

interview format and *recruiter who knows school's majors*, which were both rated as of high importance to the students and of low importance to the recruiters. Also interesting to note is there are three attributes listed in the quadrant as most important from the students' points of view (Factor C) that pertain to recruiter attributes: *Recruiter who knows school's majors*; *recruiter who is alum of school* and, *recruiter who is dedicated and visits campus regularly*. By contrast the recruiters place no attributes that relate to themselves directly as of importance to the applicants – in fact, they rate four recruiter attributes as least important.

Overall the views of the recruiters and the views of the students clearly did not co-orientate. Although there was partial agreement in the students' view of what attracts them to organizations and their estimate of how the recruiters' view the attraction, albeit differently from theirs, there was no other perceived agreement in the co-orientation of the results. Figure 4 below shows the co-orientation status of the two groups and how they related to each other.

Figure 4: Co-orientational results of Q-study



2. Conjoint Analysis Experiments

The second stage of the research proposed to test, utilizing four experiments, whether the case could be made that the organization, as represented by the recruiter, would be more successful in attracting applicants by utilizing behaviors and attributes that the students ranked as more like their points of view in the Q-study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The overarching hypothesis was that recruiters that possess profiles and display behaviors most closely aligned to those preferred by the students in the Q-study (i.e. those that attempt to tailor their “fit” to student preferences) would be viewed more positively than those who do not. In terms of the recruiter attributes considered important by the students in the Q-study described above, three independent variables were created from the results. The first attribute selected was *structured interview format*; the second was *recruiter who has a relationship with the student/school* and the third, *recruiter who has a sustained presence on campus*.

The first independent variable of *structured interview format* was selected as this particular attribute ranked as one of the two highest from the students’ point of view and, interestingly, one of the two lowest among the recruiters’ points of view. It was also thought that the idea of having a structured interview format may well speak specifically to the concept of a recruiter’s individual competence during the interview process.

The independent variable, *recruiter who has a relationship with the student/school*, was created as a combination of two of the highly ranked recruiter attributes in the Q-study; *recruiter who knows school’s majors* and *recruiter who is an alum of the school*. The

combination of these two suggests an applicant preference for recruiters who have some relationship or history with the applicant's organization.

The third independent variable, *recruiter who has a sustained presence on campus*, was an interpretation of the attribute *recruiter who is dedicated and visits campus regularly*, which was also ranked highly by the students in the Q-study. This variable speaks to the student preference for recruiters who stay in their positions for some time and who they have had the opportunity to get to know and who have had the opportunity to get to know them over time. This particular attribute was discussed specifically during the student focus group carried out in 2008 (Appendix D).

The last two independent variables fit well into the concept of supplementary fit within (P-O fit) as described earlier, in that they describe the relationship between the organization and a person's fundamental characteristics and they both were thought to be potentially interpreted as *personableness* and/or *informativeness* and/or *competence* (Chapman et al., 2005).

In addition, the four dependent variables were selected, as follows. The first was to see if recruiter behaviors identified by the students be more likely to pursue an opportunity with the organization. The second, third and fourth dependent variables of *personableness*, *informativeness* and *competence* were chosen as they have already been identified in the extant literature and the purpose of the study was to see if these behaviors identified in the Q-study would correlate and clarify these previous descriptions. The four dependent variables chosen are described below, with their resulting hypotheses.

1. Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with the organization.

Chapman et al.'s 2005 meta-analysis examined the relationships between multiple predictors of recruitment effectiveness upon applicant job pursuit intentions and acceptance intentions. The results of their work demonstrated that recruiter behaviors were positively correlated with applicant attraction. As the ultimate usefulness of this work is to determine behaviors that might be predictive of applicant job pursuit intentions, three hypotheses were proposed utilizing the first dependent variable of "likelihood to pursue an opportunity with the recruiter's organization":

H1: *Students who interview with recruiters who utilize structured interview formats will be most likely to pursue an opportunity with the recruiter's organization.*

H2: *Students who interview with recruiters who have formed a relationship with the student and the school will be most likely to pursue an opportunity with the recruiter's organization.*

H3: *Students who interview with recruiters who have a sustained presence on campus will be most likely to pursue an opportunity with the recruiter's organization.*

2. Recruiter that is most personable (i.e. warm and friendly).

This variable of *personableness* has been repeatedly cited in the literature as a recruiter characteristic that significantly influences applicants' positive inferences about organizational characteristics (Golz & Giannantonio, 1995; Turban & Dougherty, 1992; Connerley & Rynes, 1997). In addition, the 2005 Chapman et al. meta-analysis found the *personableness* characteristic to be a particularly strong predictor of applicant intentions for job pursuit.

As mentioned previously, however, there is little clarity in the literature about how precisely *personableness* might manifest itself, beyond very general constructs such as a level of friendliness demonstrated to the applicant. In addition we have evidence that recruiters' self-perceptions of their interpersonal skills have been found to be higher than the perceptions of the applicants (Connerley & Rynes, 1997). Therefore, the following three hypotheses were proposed to determine if there is indeed a link between *personableness* and the independent variables derived from the preceding Q-study.

H4: *Recruiter who utilizes structured interview formats will be perceived as the most personable.*

H5: *Recruiter who have formed a relationship with the student and the school will be perceived as the most personable*

H6: *Recruiter who has a sustained presence on campus will be perceived as the most personable.*

3. Recruiter that is most informed (i.e. knowledgeable)

In the 1987 Harris and Fink study recruiter informativeness (e.g. recruiter who stressed variety and change in job, spoke of job in great detail, gave balanced view of company) was also significantly related to applicants' positive perceptions for the company. Utilizing the third dependent variable, *recruiter that is most informed (i.e. knowledgeable)* three hypotheses were proposed as follows:

H7: *Recruiter who utilizes structured interview formats will be perceived as the most informed.*

H8: *Recruiter who has formed a relationship with the student and the school will be perceived as the most informed.*

H9: *Recruiter who has a sustained presence on campus will be perceived as the most informed.*

4. Recruiter that is most competent (i.e. capable of doing their job well).

The 1987 Harris & Fink article examining applicant reactions to recruiter characteristics also indicated that recruiter competence (e.g. willing to answer questions, effective, conducted interview well) was significantly related to regard for company and therefore the third dependent variable of *recruiter that is most competent (i.e. capable of doing their job well)* was selected. Utilizing the fourth dependent, three hypotheses were proposed as follows:

H10: *Recruiter who utilizes structured interview formats will be perceived as the most competent.*

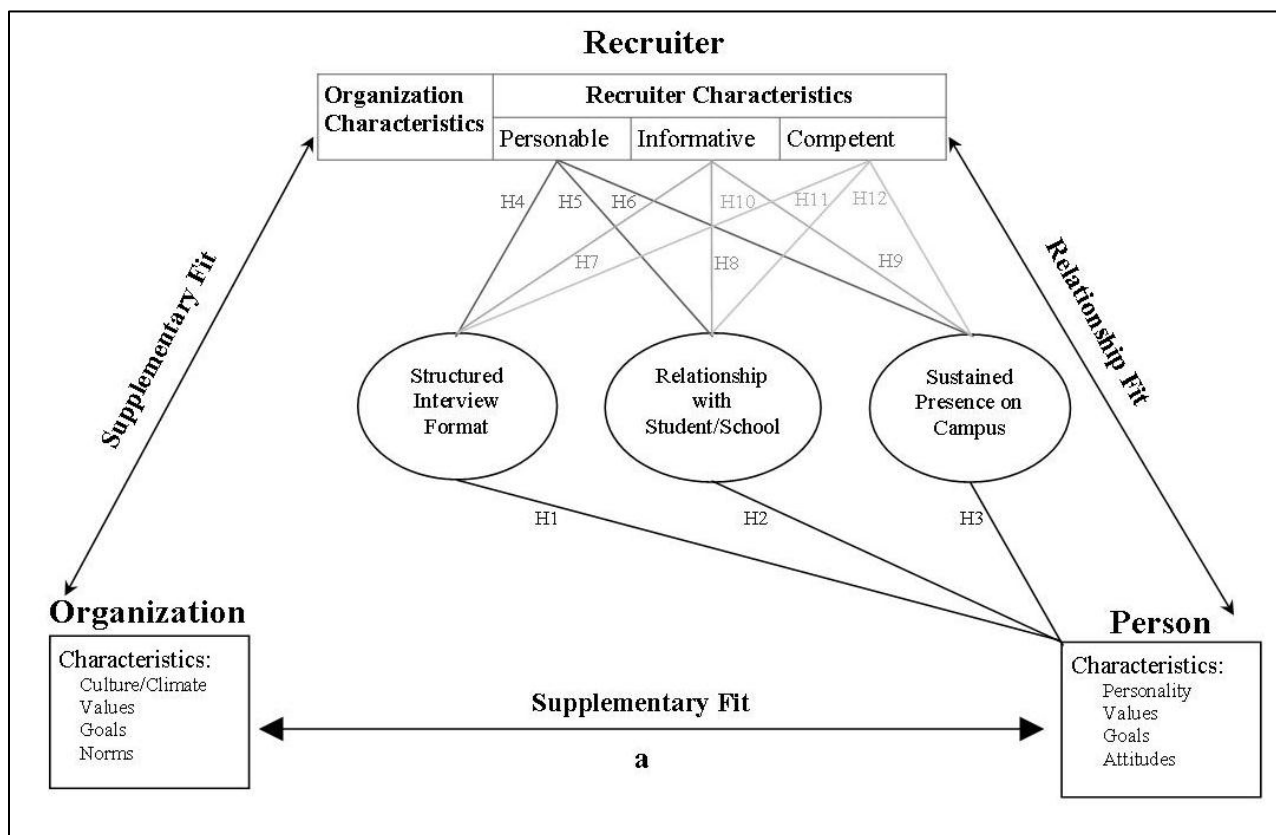
H11: *Recruiter who has formed a relationship with the student and the school will be perceived as the most competent.*

H12: *Recruiter who has a sustained presence on campus will be perceived as the most competent.*

Theoretical Framework

Based on the analysis of the Q-study above, the author proposed a revised model for Person-Organization fit, with a proposed expansion in the supplementary fit area – see Figure 5 below with hypotheses drawn in as described above.

Figure 5: Nicholson's proposed additions to conceptualization of person-organization fit, within supplementary fit, in the initial interview process (adapted from Kristof, A. L. 1996: Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49 (10), 4).



In this expanded conceptualization of supplementary fit within P-O fit, recruiter behaviors displaying the following behaviors of *structured interview format*, *relationship with student/school* and *sustained presence on campus* would positively tie back into the recruiter characteristics of *personableness*, *informativeness* and *competence*. In addition the students observing these behaviors would demonstrate a positive *likelihood to pursue an opportunity* with the recruiter's organization. Thus a 'new' fit is proposed, named 'relationship fit'.

Study Design

Conjoint analysis is an effective method to measure the effect that a variable has on a decision making process and is frequently used to test customer acceptance in many different areas such as new product designs, assessing a service design or the appeal of an advertisement. However, this method has begun to gain a wider audience in the social sciences as the need to understand more accurately how decisions are made by different constituent groups has become more important (Dwight-Johnson et al., 2004; Schuman & McGoldrick, 1999).

The conjoint analysis research technique originated out of mathematical psychology research and, as stated by Green and Wind (1973) is “concerned with measuring the joint effect of two or more independent variables on the ordering of a dependent variable.” When using this form of analysis, the researcher is concerned with the identification of values used by people making tradeoffs and choosing among options which offer multiple attributes and/or characteristics. Once these values are discovered, the marketer can then have a clearer idea of where to focus strategic efforts to best suit consumer preferences.

The determination as to which specific conjoint analysis technique to use should be made, at least in part, by how the researcher believes respondents determine alternatives in a particular situation. As the number of combinations of attributes and levels increases so does the number of potential profiles. Therefore the most appropriate method of conjoint analysis should be chosen to simultaneously measure both the joint effects and the separate independent variable contributions to that joint effect.

It also should be noted that there are other factors that may play into whether respondents are accurately sorting alternatives, regardless of which form of analysis is

chosen. These include the respondents' general familiarity or knowledge about the focus of the study as well as the level of complexity and sophistication of what is presented to the respondent, in text or graphic form, and to what degree the information presented matches the level of complexity and sophistication of the respondent herself.

There are three primary options that have been widely tested and used: Full Profile Conjoint Analysis (CVA); Adaptive Conjoint Analysis (ACA); and Choice-Based Conjoint Analysis (CBC). Which technique to employ should be determined based on several considerations including the number of attributes to be studied, the sample size, and the interview time available.

Full profile conjoint analysis (CVA) is the original form of this technique and is used for relatively simple, non-computer-based projects where a limited number of attributes are being investigated. It is recommended by Orme that this method is useful for measuring no more than six attributes (Orme, 2009, p.39). It may be used for paper and pencil studies or card studies, as well as for computer-assisted personal interviews and Internet surveys.

Traditional conjoint analysis studies can be considered multiple regression problems where the individual ratings from the respondents are observations on the dependent variable. After collecting the respondent data the researcher needs to code them appropriately to estimate utilities. Dummy coding is used to code the product characteristics or independent variables. Dummy coding utilizes a 1 for the presence of a feature and a 0 to represent its absence (Orme, 2009, p. 69). Conjoint utilities or part-worths are interval data which can be scaled within each attribute resulting from utilizing dummy coding in the design which is scaled to sum to zero within each attribute (p. 78).

When utilizing CVA, the respondents in this option are presented with *all* the attributes at the same time. For example, two attributes, say brand and price, each with two levels can be put together into one four-level composite attribute. As respondents see all the options simultaneously in this form of conjoint analysis, they tend to use simplification strategies to determine their sorting or ranking of the alternatives.

Participation, Instrumentation

The decision was made to use full profile (CVA) for the following reasons. First the number of attributes being measured was only 3, *structured interview format, relationship with student* and *sustained presence on campus*, measured both as a high and a low which meant that there was a limited number of attributes reducing the likelihood of over-simplification strategies by respondents which can sometimes lead to inaccuracy (Orme, 2009, p. 41). In addition, the undergraduate student respondents, were all at either a junior or senior level standing and all had experience in the recruitment process, plus strong general familiarity and knowledge about the focus of the study which added to the reliability of the method chosen.

Data Collection

The second stage of the research took place in early 2011. An experiment was carried out to measure the effect that the key attributes, uncovered in the Q-study as most important to students, had on the four dependent variables of:

1. Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with the organization.
2. Recruiter that is most personable (i.e. warm and friendly)
3. Recruiter that is most informed (i.e. knowledgeable)
4. Recruiter that is most competent (i.e. capable of doing their job well)

Four different groups of 20 junior and senior level female undergraduate business students pursuing degrees in marketing and/or retail management were presented with sets of eight cards that consisted of combinations of attributes. The students were asked to rank them with the goal of determining the composition of the most preferred combination.

The experiments were carried out with a convenience sample of 80 Whitman undergraduate students split into four groups of 20, one group per dependent variable, in December 2010 and early January 2011. Typically, by junior year, all retail and marketing undergraduate students have had some personal experience of the interview process and are therefore more capable of discriminating between various recruiter characteristics and interview variables.

The experiment combined the three independent variables of *structured interview format*, *relationship with student* and *sustained presence on campus*, uncovered in the Q-study. Each card contained three statements made by a recruiter that indicated either a high or low level of each independent variable on one of the four dependent variables. This created a 2 x 2 x 2 model, with eight possible permutations for each dependent variable. Please see Appendix J for the high and low phrases created for each of the independent variables.

The students were randomly broken up into four groups of exactly 20 students per group and each group was assigned cards for one dependent variable. Each student in each dependent variable group was then assigned a set of eight 5" x 3³/₄" coded cards in an envelope with the three independent variables on the cards, described by statements at either the high or low levels and with one of the four dependent variables printed at the top of each card (See Appendix K for sample of eight card set). The sets of eight cards handed to each student had each of the possible permutations of all levels for all three attributes. All

participation was voluntary. The researcher first requested verbal permission from the students for their participation (Appendix L).

The students were then asked to rank their set of cards, in ranking boxes located in the upper left hand corner of each card, from one, being the highest ranking to eight, being the lowest ranking, on one of four different dependent variables written on the top of each of the eight cards. In total 640 data points over the four experiments were collected. Each student was also asked to complete some basic demographic information on the front of the envelope giving name, year at school, majors, and estimated number of interviews to date.

Data Analysis

The collected data were then analyzed using *Stata* software. The software required the input of the profile cards and the respondents' rankings. Rank-order logit technique was used to calculate the coefficients in a "rank all alternatives," higher-better approach. Once this was complete the conjoint module created an output consisting of utility values with corresponding standard errors and importance statistics for each of the four dependent variables investigated in the individual experiments.

The following are the results of how the three independent variables of *structured interview format, relationship with student, and sustained presence on campus* impacted the four dependent variables of *likelihood to pursue and opportunity with this organization, recruiter that is most personable, recruiter that is most informed and recruiter that is most competent*:

Dependent Variable 1: Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this organization

Indep. Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z	P> z
Interview Format	.4773	.2101	2.27	0.023
Relationship with Student	1.4432	.2200	6.56	0.000
Sustained Presence on campus	.8924	.1999	4.46	0.000

Dependent Variable 2: Recruiter that is most personable (warm and friendly)

Indep. Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z	P> z
Interview Format	-.3446	.2103	-1.64	0.101
Relationship with Student	2.0818	.2606	7.99	0.000
Sustained Presence on campus	.7773	.2019	3.85	0.000

Dependent Variable 3: Recruiter that is most informed (knowledgeable)

Indep. Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z	P> z
Interview Format	-.1397	.2020	-0.69	0.489
Relationship with Student	2.5279	.2996	8.44	0.000
Sustained Presence on campus	1.1680	.2215	5.27	0.000

Dependent Variable 4: Recruiter that is most competent (capable of doing their job well)

Indep. Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z	P> z
Interview Format	1.5153	.2394	6.33	0.000
Relationship with Student	2.4401	.2854	8.55	0.000
Sustained Presence on campus	1.1768	.2208	5.33	0.000

As can be seen, all the dependent variables showed a strong positive relationship with the two independent variables of *relationship with student* and *sustained presence on campus*. The z scores for these two independent variables were extremely high, and positively above the mean for all the dependent variables, all resulting $p > z$ scores of 0.000. The independent variable *structured interview format* had a positive relationship upon the dependent variable of recruiter competence but weaker results for the other three dependent variables.

The relative influences of the independent variables upon the dependent variables, as evidenced by the coefficients, are summarized below in Figure 6:

Figure 6: Table of Coefficient Comparisons (measures of influence) by Independent Variables

	DV 1: Coefficient: <i>Likelihood to pursue opportunity</i>	DV 2 Coefficient: <i>Recruiter who is most personable</i>	DV 3 Coefficient: <i>Recruiter who is most informed</i>	DV 4 Coefficient: <i>Recruiter who is most competent</i>
<i>Interview Format</i>	.4773	-.3445	-.1397	1.5153*
<i>Relationship with Student</i>	1.4432*	2.0818*	2.5279*	2.4401*
<i>Sustained Presence on campus</i>	.8924*	.7773*	1.168*	1.1768*

* $p < .001$

The independent variable *relationship with student* showed the strongest level of influence of all the independent variables on all four dependent variables. This attribute was illustrated by the following two ‘recruiter’ statements in the experiment. The first represents a positive relationship with student, the second a lack of relationship with student.

1. “Well, it’s great to see you again, Alena – I remember first meeting you as a freshman when our senior VP (and also an alum from SU) spoke to one of your retail marketing classes – and now you’re a junior – how time flies! I’m very familiar with the Whitman majors, so let’s begin ...”
2. “So, Alena ... (is that how you pronounce your name? – OK – good), I travel all over the country interviewing students and should tell you that

we are not particularly fussy about what majors or what schools we recruit from.”

The relative influence of this independent variable with a coefficient of 1.44 was three times more important than *interview format* (.48) and close to twice as important as *sustained presence on campus* (.89) for the dependent variable *likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this organization*.

For the dependent variable *recruiter that is most personable*, the coefficient for *relationship with student* was 2.08, six times more influential than *interview format* and almost three times more influential than *sustained presence on campus* (.78).

For the dependent variable *recruiter that is most informed*, the coefficient for *relationship with student* (2.53) was about eighteen times more influential than *interview format* (-.14) and over twice as influential as *sustained presence on campus* (1.17).

Finally, for the dependent variable of *recruiter that is most competent*, the coefficient *relationship with student* (2.44) was over twice as important as *sustained presence on campus* (1.18) and over one and a half times more influential than *interview format* (1.52).

The independent variable *sustained presence on campus* showed the second strongest influence on the independent variables. This attribute was illustrated by the following two ‘recruiter’ statements in the experiment. The first represents a positive sustained presence, the second a lack of sustained presence.

1. “I have been involved in recruiting from the Whitman School for a few years now and have already planned my next visit so I’ll be back within a couple of months.”
2. This is actually my first time visiting Whitman, so could you tell me a little about the school?”

As can be seen in the table of coefficients above, this attribute was also positively influential on all the dependent variables with high z scores and $p > z = 0.000$.

The independent variable *structured interview format* only showed influence on the fourth dependent variable, *recruiter that is most competent*. Overall, hypotheses 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 were supported, whereas hypotheses 1, 4 and 7 were not supported due to the weakness of the p scores.

There are some explanations to be considered for the relatively weak influence of the independent variable *structured interview format* on the first three dependent variables. One key factor might be the relatively small sample size utilized. It is possible that a stronger influence would have manifested itself utilizing a larger student sample. Another contributing factor may have been that the Q-study was undertaken by a majority of senior students, seventeen seniors to two juniors, while the breakdown for the conjoint analysis experiments was approximately half junior and half senior students.

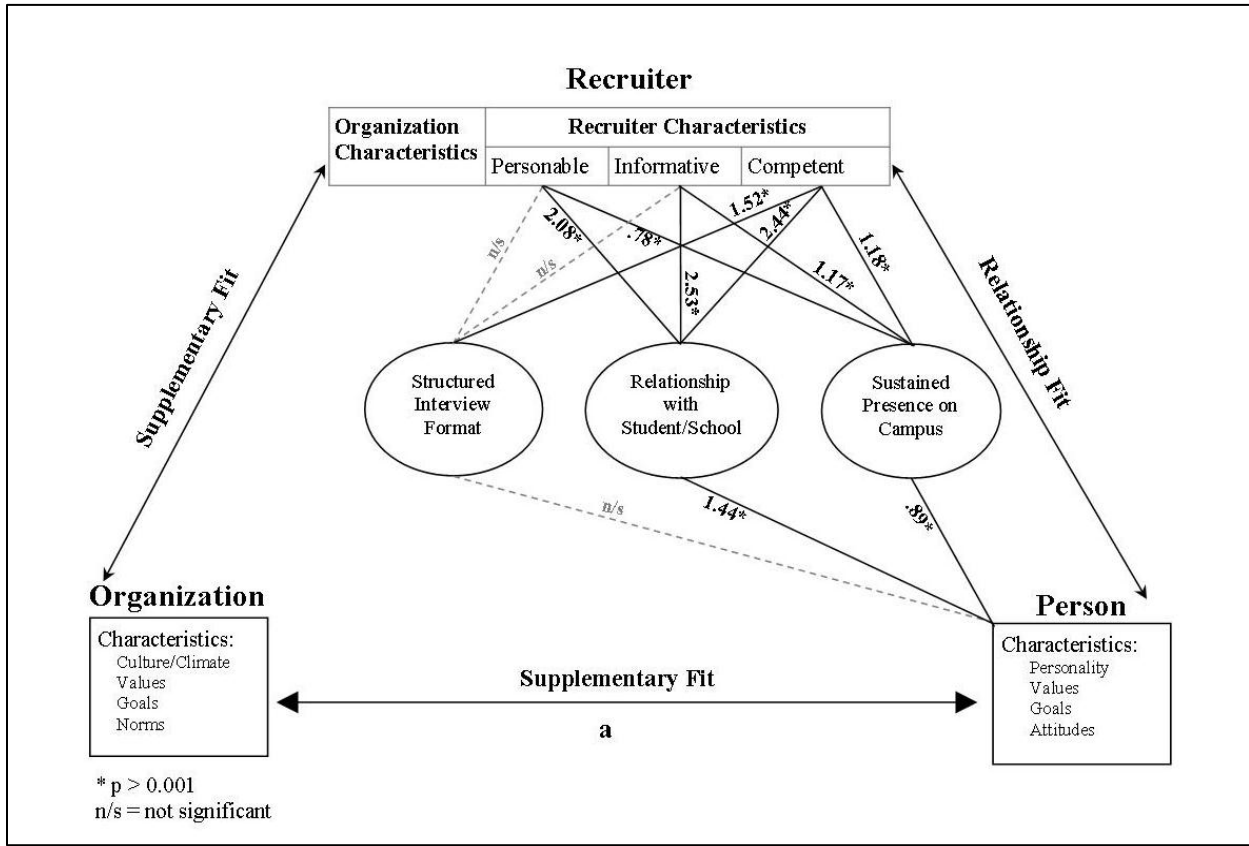
The two recruiter statements utilized in the experiment – the first represents a positive *structured interview* format, the second a lack of *structured interview format*, are shown below:

1. “I really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for Stars (so that I can be sure each candidate is being evaluated on the same criteria.)”
2. I don’t really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for *Stars Stores* ...

It is possible that the first statement might have been regarded as somewhat *unpersonable* by the students and that the second statement as rather more casual and friendly, when read within the context of the other statements on each card depicting the other independent variables of *relationship with student*.

The figure below detailed the results of the conjoint analysis experiments and illustrates the coefficient values between the independent and dependent variables.

Figure 7: Nicholson’s proposed additions to conceptualization of person-organization fit, within supplementary fit, in the initial interview process, showing coefficient results from conjoint analysis experiments (adapted from Kristof, A. L. 1996: Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49 (10), 4).



CHAPTER 4

Results

Q-Methodology Study

The results of the Q-study clearly indicate some fundamental differences in the ways that both sides of the recruitment dyad, the recruiter side and the applicant side, view what they consider are the most and least important elements of applicant attraction. As hypothesized, the student applicants gave much more importance to the recruiters' personal attributes and behaviors in influencing their perceptions of the retailers than did the recruiters themselves, the latter giving more weight to specific organizational and job attributes.

In addition the only area of co-orientation was between how the students' perceive the recruiters' would view recruiter attractiveness, indicating that the students are more understanding of how the recruiters perceive applicant attraction. The recruiters were clearly not of the same mind as the students (see Figure 3, p. 43). Specifically, the recruiters ranked *respected brand image in marketplace* and *opportunities for rapid advancement* as the two most important attributes in attracting students, while the students themselves ranked *structured interview format* and *recruiter who knows school's majors*.

The students also demonstrated a strong preference for recruiters who are alums of the school, visit the campus regularly and are dedicated. In addition they viewed the *structured interview format* as one of their two most important attributes, while the recruiters saw this as one of the least important factors along with *recruiter who knows school's majors* and three other recruiter attributes. It should be noted here that the retail program has been housed in three different colleges on the campus during the past twelve years in different departments and that the level of the recruiters' knowledge of the major has depended mostly

on their level of interest in researching the information and the amount of time spent on campus.

Conjoint Analysis Experiment

The purpose of the conjoint analysis experiment was to determine if specific highly rated recruiter attributes, identified in the Q-study by the student applicants, would tie back into applicant attraction and help clarify the chosen dependent variables already cited in the extant recruitment literature. The results clearly showed that when asked to rank a selection of recruiter statements that could be made during an interview which inferred either a high or low level of the chosen attribute, there were strong influences on the dependent variables of *likelihood to pursue an opportunity with the organization*, *recruiter that is most personable*, *recruiter that is most informed* and *recruiter that is most competent*. These specific dependent variables were chosen because the literature offered significant evidence of their importance related to applicant attraction in the recruitment process.

The independent variable of *structured interview format* only showed a strong correlation with the dependent variable of *recruiter that is the most competent*. This may indicate that, although this was a highly rated recruiter attribute by the students in the Q-study, it does not speak directly to either the *personableness* or *informativeness* of the recruiter, but is an indication that the recruiter is organized and fair in the delivery of interviews.

However, it would appear that the students may well view the concepts of likeability or *personableness* in a somewhat different way than the recruiters themselves may be viewing the concept. Whereas the literature would confirm that recruiters generally do

perceive themselves as ‘likeable’ people, they may be missing some elements of how this is interpreted by the students (Connerley & Rynes, 1997).

These results suggest that *personableness* demonstrated by a recruiter during an interview, from the students’ perspective, is more related to the recruiter having met the student prior to the interview and to the recruiter’s ability to demonstrate knowledge of the school and its majors, thereby having some type of relationship with the school, as opposed to being merely a pleasant and warm person to chat with during the interview itself.

These results are important findings for those interested in more effective recruitment practices on the college campus. We already knew that *personableness*, *informativeness* and *competence* were important attributes for recruiters in terms of applicant and organization attraction, albeit somewhat vaguely described. We also had evidence that participation in recruiter training to improve levels of interpersonal effectiveness had not led to higher ratings of effectiveness or of interpersonal skills by either the applicants or the recruiters, suggesting that the training content did not mirror what applicants really perceive as *personableness*, *informativeness* or *competence* (Connerley, 1997). Why this work is important is that there are now some specific behaviors and attributes described that recruiters can utilize to improve the effectiveness of their efforts in attracting top talent to their organizations.

Summary and Synthesis

The work described above set out to determine more specifically what behaviors “likeable” recruiters displayed during the recruitment process and how and if these behaviors were effective in attracting applicants. Although it has been argued that the perceptions of interpersonal effectiveness of individual recruiters may vary by individual applicants

(Connerley & Rynes, 1997), the researcher believed that there may well be some specific hallmarks of interpersonal recruiter effectiveness. The results of the two studies undertaken suggest there may well be such hallmarks and that a new approach to determining recruiter *personableness*, *informativeness*, and *competence* should be considered by the recruiting organizations that are truly interested in increasing the attraction of talent to their organizations.

One way of viewing the recruitment business is a comparison to personal selling. In the personal selling world, it is generally accepted that only by satisfying all of the client's requirements - those related to both the product and the sales process – can the salesperson maximize the chances for a sale (Szymanski, 1988). Relying heavily on the brand reputation of the organization in the marketplace and other tangible job benefits in the attraction of applicant talent may be considered the product components of the sales strategy. This strategy clearly has influence on applicants and the literature suggests that the reputation of the recruitment organization is significant in generating applicant interest (Cable & Graham, 2000).

However, as is indicated in the Q-study above, the organizations themselves ranked their 'cool/prestigious brand image' as being far more important than did the applicants. Although brand equity of organizations is of obvious value to applicants, there is also evidence here that applicants are also impacted by the recruitment processes themselves, particularly by the role of the recruiters as they interact with the applicants and conduct interviews. Thus the branding of the organization, at least for recruitment purposes, is also related to the recruiters' behaviors rather than solely to their organization's products or status in the marketplace. This may well be even more relevant for student applicants who have

had some experience at recruitment and have moved past the first blush of desired self-identification with the ‘coolness’ of a particular organization. In addition, it could well be argued that it is exactly these more mature candidates who are the most desirable to the organizations.

In addition, students clearly viewed the structured interview format as of key importance. This might well be because of the issues of fairness. The author has anecdotal evidence from student applicants that they become disillusioned with recruiters who demonstrate what they consider ‘favoritism’ to one student over another by just chatting through an interview with a candidate for whom they have a personal preference, for example, rather than asking each applicant the same set of questions.

The results uncovered above in both studies indicate that building a relationship bridge between the dyad of applicant and organization may well increase the student perception of person-organization ‘fit’ level and help attract talent to the organization. This relationship, from the student perspective, involves the recruiters themselves demonstrating their knowledge and relationship of the individual applicants, their names, their organizations (the schools and colleges they belong to), and their majors. Ironically, these very factors mirror closely those that employers consistently state that they want students to demonstrate that they have researched about the recruiting organizations in order to be prepared for the interview process.

Currently, the recruiting literature overwhelmingly focuses on the recruitment landscape from the employer’s point of view. In today’s increasingly connected world of social media, candidates are able to share their experiences quickly and in ways that can influence others who are considering applying to specific organizations for job opportunities.

All candidates, whether or not they are hired, should be considered as customers who have the ability to make choices, not only about products, but also as potential employees. The growth of Internet-based social media has made it feasible for one applicant to instantly communicate with hundreds of others about companies, their recruiters' behaviors and the hiring practices employed. This expanded consumer-to-consumer communication is a new element in the recruitment promotional marketing mix. It enables companies to talk directly to their customers in the traditional sense but also enables customers to talk directly and far more easily to one another about company practices and recruiters. This communication is outside company managers' direct control and could therefore be considered nontraditional, as it enables the student customers to talk directly with one another with higher frequency and more immediacy.

With this in mind, the implications are that employers should find new ways to shape customer discussions in ways that are not only consistent with their organizations' cultural values and norms, but are also consistent with the customers' need for relationship based communications, rather than solely relying on brand-building strategies. Too often, the prominent recruiting companies on campus focus on creating multiple brand-building events, where they stage themselves in what they consider to be the best possible light for the students by first making some form of presentation and then scanning the room for talent they find appealing. Generally the company representatives take no notes and quite frequently, from the author's experience, confuse one student with another after the event and do not bother to check out their findings with faculty or staff who are more familiar with the student body. It is also common for these companies to stage several of these events per semester and often host them with different executives and recruiting staff members –

generally based on executives' availability - none of whom have apparently any accountability back to the company in terms of the quality of talent being found apart from meeting 'quota' numbers by identifying enough students to move forward to interview.

Students who are interested in these companies are also encouraged to attend every one of these events, even though identical information is provided, and also to ask insightful questions at each event so that the company representatives will acknowledge their presence and remember them as being an applicant of 'promise'. After the first event, and with the ability to find a great deal of information via the Internet, many talented students find themselves turned off by the second or third event, where the same company information is provided to the students but still no real attempt has been made to find out much about the individual applicants themselves.

The research presented in this document reflects some of the students' disillusionment at this process and leads one to consider how the employers might attract talent in a more efficient and effective way prior to the interview itself. Firstly, employers might consider utilizing the same core recruitment team over a significant period of time so that the team members have the opportunity to get to know individual schools, the career center staff, the faculty and lastly, but by no means least, the student body at these institutions. Secondly, they might also consider the hiring of their recruitment team more carefully to include dedicated and committed people who are interested in this important human resource function as a profession, rather than as a stepping-stone to another position within the organization.

For the most part, the recruiting personnel utilized in this study were in their positions for less than one year and were frequently placed in the position having moved out of another

position where they were not fulfilled. These recruiters' personal stories often have an eerie similarity about them; a story which includes having been hired into the executive training program from college, had a year or two experience at the corporate office or in store and then deciding that this was not 'quite the right fit' and being subsequently hired on as a recruitment specialist by the human resource department. Ironically, these recruiters are often recruiting for the very positions that they themselves recently left, frequently under less than ideal circumstances.

Employer organizations may well consider utilizing more mature and seasoned employees for the recruitment function, who are more than two to three years older than the college students they are recruiting, and who may well have a less competitive view of the college aged men and women they encounter. In addition the maturity of such executives might help them form a more objective view of student talent and be also able to offer students a more mature, realistic and informed view of the career opportunities at the organizations they represent. In addition they would be able to provide applicants with a deeper understanding of their organization's culture and goals, in contrast with current recruiters who are often only a few years distant from their own college experiences.

In terms of the retail recruitment companies used in this study, not only is the turnover of the recruiting staff very high, which does not lend itself to an experienced and committed team, but the members of the staff are also frequently untrained in best practices of recruitment and interpersonal communication strategies. It is assumed that as these recruiters have experience within their organizations and as they are close to the candidates' age, they will be able to 'relate' to the students and be successful. This research would lead us to question these assumptions, at the very least.

As the manifestation of personableness uncovered in this work includes recruiters who know how to build individual relationships with students over a period of time, it would seem that specific training on how to do this should be considered by the recruiting organizations. For example, such training might include some interpretation of Dale Carnegie's classic principles outlined in his work *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (Carnegie, 1936). There are numerous books and seminars currently offered in this genre stemming from the core of his teachings, where participants learn how to inspire confidence and trust, gain agreement with others and engage others by building rapport.

In addition to training for personableness, recruiting organizations might also benefit from re-evaluating their interviewing formats to ensure they are consistent and reliable and speak both to the structure of the format, and to the fairness and competence of its delivery. Too often, the additional executives who are brought onto campus to help with the interview process are handed the interview sheets and a schedule, with no prior training or opportunity to ask questions about the job at hand. This does not speak to enhancing either the concepts of competence or informativeness.

Recruiting organizations should also consider monitoring recruitment effectiveness more carefully for continuous improvement. Even though recruitment is often an emotionally driven process, it still needs to be supported through metrics which empower the recruiters to become business partners to the organization. With the high turnover of recruiters on college campuses, there is a scarcity of institutional memory among many organizations about the history and results of their recruitment efforts.

From the applicants' perspective, it would appear that the career center staff and interested faculty should help their students understand the potential shortcomings of many

recruiting processes and help them learn how to best ‘play the game’ to enhance their own employment opportunities. Some suggestions of how applicants might deal with the recruitment process more successfully might include finding creative ways for the students to form relationships with recruiters from their side of the dyad, increasing their own applicant ‘attractiveness’ by asking questions at every on campus event, learning how to deal effectively with challenging situations and by keeping notes on all the recruiters’ names, backgrounds and hot buttons in order to position themselves in the best possible light.

In summary, as we know that excellence in recruitment is vital to organizational success, and that the employment interview remains the most popular method to select employees on the college campus, employers may want to consider changing the way they strategize and conduct their recruitment efforts. Specifically they may want to re-evaluate the candidate experience during the hiring process – particularly through the behaviors of their champions and organizational representatives - the recruiters themselves.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

Strengths and Limitations of Studies

One of the greatest strengths of the two studies described above is that they are both primary research efforts and the results are therefore current. In addition they capture the inter-relatedness of qualitative and quantitative methods utilizing both deductive and inductive enquiry (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This is particularly important when investigating the subjective and objective concepts of the recruitment process.

However, it should also be noted that these studies are limited in a number of ways. As mentioned earlier, they are limited studies in that they focus on respondents from one specific undergraduate major, on one gender only and with one industry segment. As such, they could well be replicated with larger and more diverse samples. The current study used only female undergraduates. This is very representative of most of the entry-level professionals aspiring to jobs in the retail sector. However, men and women may have slightly different expectations of what they perceive to be the informativeness, personableness, and competence of recruiters. Applicant perceptions of recruiters for executive entry level positions in different disciplines (e.g., accounting, finance) may define these attributes in different ways. In addition, the applicant gender balance in those fields is likely quite different than that of the retail sector, thereby possibly limiting these studies' generalizability.

It is also worth considering whether the impact of the recruiter behaviors lessens over the years for applicants, for example, in mid-career. It may be that the influence of recruiter

behaviors is not so impactful as candidates progress along their career paths and become more self-assured.

Implications for Future Research

Apart from replicating this work with larger and more diverse samples, there is also an opportunity for additional research exploring whether recruiter behaviors, as uncovered in these studies, would result in higher recruitment yield. These studies have suggested some recruiter behaviors (e.g. developing a better relationship with students) that might well attract talent, and subsequent work should be undertaken to measure how effective and long lasting these effects would be in terms of improved recruitment yield and retention.

Research could also be conducted to determine whether training recruiters to exhibit the specific behaviors outlined in these studies would positively impact applicant attraction. Although previous research on the impact of recruiter training (Connerley, 1997) did not show positive results, the findings of this work may well indicate a new opportunity for the design of the training content, focusing specifically on training recruiters in how to build relationships with the students, with the school, ensure they visit campus regularly and thereby understand how to be seen as informed, competent and personable.

Finally an area of great interest to the author is the impact of recruiter turnover on applicant attraction. We know that employers are very focused on the turnover of their employees, particularly those entry level hires who have traditionally demonstrated high levels turnover within a short time of hiring. However, what also needs to be researched is the impact of *recruiter* turnover on applicant attraction and recruitment effectiveness. During the progress of this research, the recruiters involved in the initial study have all been replaced, with no exceptions, in the space of two years – most of them twice. This fact alone

does not lend itself to either of two of the students' most important attributes - *sustained presence on campus* or to the concept of *relationship with school/student*.

Appendix A

Question Guide for Retail Industry Recruiters Fall 2008

Recruiter Demographic Data:

a. Name of recruiter/organization	
b. Years at organization	
c. Current position with organization	
d. Previous position with organization	
e. Other significant experience	
f. How long recruiting for organization	
g. Age of recruiter (circle)	24-29 30-35 36-40 41-45 46-50 51+

Organization's Recruitment Data:

a. SU's rank as recruitment school	
b. On how many campuses does your organization recruit?	
c. Approx. number of f/t hires per year from SU/total	
d. Approx. number of internships per year from SU	
e. Size of recruiting staff	

1. What do you feel attracts students to a specific retailer? In other words, why do they choose to interview with certain companies and not with others?
2. When you interview a student applicant at SU, have you usually met the applicant beforehand, e.g. at a career fair?
3. Do you believe the personal characteristics of the individual recruiter affects the students' level of interest in applying for an interview?
4. What personal recruiter characteristics do you think are generally appealing to students and why?
5. What personal applicant characteristics do you find most appealing for an entry level position?
6. When you are in the interview process with an applicant, how do you describe your organization and its opportunities to him or her? E.g. do you deliver a consistent message/description?
7. Here are some common reasons why students might decide to interview with _____. There are likely others (feel free to include them). If you had 100 points, how would you allocate them among the various reasons why candidate typically interview with your organization?

Appendix A (cont'd)

Attractive brand/reputation of organization in marketplace	
Location of job opportunity (e.g. big city or local to home)	
Attractive financial compensation (base, benefits)	
Good career future	
Recruiter likeability / similarity / persuasiveness	
Other (friend, other alum works there, etc.)	
Other	
Other	
	100points

8. What are some of the more rewarding aspects of being a recruiter for _____?
9. Realistically speaking, what are some of the more difficult aspects of being a recruiter?
10. How would you describe your organization's corporate culture? Do students generally seem aware of your organization's culture when they interview and is this of importance to them?
11. Please would you share any ways in which you believe your organization could be more productive in recruitment on the SU campus?
12. Do you have any specific metrics that you use to measure the effectiveness of recruitment?

Appendix B Q-Sample Statements

Spring 2009 Q-Study

What attracts students to interview with a specific retailer and what keeps them attracted post-interview?

1. Respected brand image of retailer in the marketplace (*Company*)
2. Cool/prestigious brand image of retailer in the marketplace (*Company*)
3. Personal attraction to the retailers' stores and merchandise sold (*Company*)
4. Impressive high level executive from retailer spoke to school/class (*Relationship*)
5. Impressive alum who is executive from retailer spoke to school/class (*Relationship*)
6. Parents/friends know executives at the company (*Relationship*)
7. Parents/friends encourage student to interview with specific company/ies (*Relationship*)
8. Reputation of retailer as being very selective in hiring (*Company*)
9. High salary potential for entry level full-time positions (*Job*)
10. High salary potential for internships (*Job*)
11. Location of corporate offices desirable (*Company*)
12. Location of retailers' stores desirable (*Company*)
13. Location flexibility within retailer (for internships and/or new hires) (*Company*)
14. Reputation of retailer as having a socially responsible culture, going green, giving back to community, etc. (*Company*)
15. Reputation of retailer as having a friendly, sociable work culture (*Company*)
16. Recruiter friendliness and likeability; smiling, easy to talk to, etc. (*Recruiter*)
17. Recruiter with good knowledge of company and positions (*Recruiter*)

Appendix B (cont'd)

18. Recruiter who has developed a positive relationship with students over time (*Recruiter*)
19. Recruiter who knows students by name (*Recruiter*)
20. Recruiter who has high energy and enthusiasm about company (*Recruiter*)
21. Recruiter who appears genuinely interested in students (*Recruiter*)
22. Recruiter who listens during interview (*Recruiter*)
23. Recruiter who obviously loves his/her job (*Recruiter*)
24. Recruiter who is an alum of school (*Recruiter*)
25. Recruiter who follows-through on promises (for call-backs, etc.) (*Recruiter*)
26. Recruiter who is organized and thorough (*Recruiter*)
27. On campus event/s where students can meet recruiters and executives face-to-face, prior to interview (*Relationship*)
28. Retailer that offers internships for underclassmen (*Company*)
29. Retailer that offers internships with positive reputations (*Company*)
30. Retailer that has growth potential (*Company*)
31. Retailer with current strong financial performance (*Company*)
32. Retailer with strong financial stability (*Company*)
33. Retailer with international opportunities (*Company*)
34. Job opportunities available for entry-level corporate positions (*Job*)
35. Job opportunities available for entry-level store management positions (*Job*)
36. Job opportunities for both entry level store and corporate positions (*Job*)
37. Opportunities for rapid advancement within company (*Job*)
38. Opportunities for a great long-term career (*Job*)
39. Prestigious entry level title of positions offered (*Job*)

Appendix B (cont'd)

40. Entry level position which is interesting and varied (*Job*)
41. Positive work-life balance reputation of company
42. Dedicated campus recruiter who visits campus regularly (*Recruiter*)
43. Interview format which is flexible and informal (*Recruiter*)
44. Interview format which is structured and formal (*Recruiter*)
45. Recruiter with personal experience at the jobs being offered (*Recruiter*)
46. Recruiter who is familiar with Whitman's programs/majors (*Recruiter*)
47. Recruiter who puts applicant at ease during interview (*Recruiter*)

Appendix D

Transcript of Retail Seniors Focus Group 12/8/08

Room 525 Whitman SOM, SU.
(Amanda G. Nicholson and six retail management seniors)

A. What attracts you to a specific retailer? In other words, why do you choose to interview with certain companies over others?

“**Culture of business main factor** ... the way the recruiter connects is a main factor for me ... if you click with them ...”

“Am I **getting along with the people I’m talking with** (at a certain company)? Will I enjoy going to work with them or seeing them every day?”

“Also seeing not only the growth path they are providing for me but seeing the growth path that these people’s careers paths (recruiters/interviewers) have come along...”

“I think also particularly the program they’re talking about. **There are some companies that may not sound traditionally, erm “cool” to work for but a lot of times their program, and their people and their enthusiasm for talking about it are really important** ... and also, info sessions we’ve had which are smaller and more intimate than the Career Fair – I’ve met people there and talked with them and I think that’s important...”

“I think that **reputation is important** ... I always listen to other students who have interned at a company and what they have to say about it ... I always try and find someone who has worked/interned at a company and ask their opinion of what it is really all about ...”

“I think **reputation** has a lot to do with it ... because I applied to a million retail companies but I know **I want to be able to say that I’m proud to work for certain companies** which comes from the perspective of the customer because if I know I like what they sell and what they do, I’ll be proud of being a part of them...”

“I agree with (4) because I believe that the **reputation** is very important, who they are and what they stand for...”

B. Picking up on (3)’s traditionally “cool” companies, have your views changed at all over the four years about who are the “cool” companies?

“I think this has a lot to do with reputation. (*Specialty store name*) is something that it’s really nice and luxurious (“cool”) **but maybe by talking with them and hearing about their program, it may not be the best fit for you.** ...but certain companies like (*name*) and off-

Appendix D (cont'd)

price at first I was “oh it’s just a discounter”, but by hearing about them more and more it became more attractive ...”

“Yes, like you can say I have an internship with *name* (discount chain) and people will say “who??” or even– but if you then say (*store names*), they’ll know what it is - you can allow that sort of thing to influence you ...”

“Some company like (*discount chain*) people will say (about) “well I don’t shop at (*store name*)” but it really does have a lot of growth opportunity and a lot of opportunity but you do have to talk to other people...”

“You definitely have to look beyond the outward reputation of the company and find out what their corporate culture is... and you don’t know that by their stores, you might be working for the corporate office.

“Two well-know national department stores), for example, are the ultimate goal for a lot of retail students when they come in (to the program) but may not be by the end, because it is a company that has (wants) a very specific person who can thrive in their culture but it’s not for everyone so I think that does change you (views on “cool”) as you learn about yourself and about a company and their culture and learn if you’re a good fit for that ...” Sometimes, some of the “top” (cool) companies may not be a fit for everyone ...”

“After being in the program, and when you go and talk to these companies, this can really change your perspective (from freshman year) ...” also, **once you’ve gone through an internship it can completely change your perspective on a company.**”

“I think there’s that perception in the retail department that a lot of things point you towards (*name of national department store*) and towards (*name of specialty store*) ...the amount of recruiting and the time they’re on campus, they’re kinda shoved down our throats and we meet with them multiple times – but I never got that gut feeling – it just didn’t click ... but at the same time they are such a power player, that how can you not interview with them?...”

“I think that’s one of the things they try to use ... **they think (two well-known department store retailers) that everyone wants to work for them so I don’t think they try as hard as other companies do** ... I feel that they think “we’re(name), we’re (name). and we know that you want us, **but other people (companies) actually try harder to build a relationship with you** ... and even, though I may be going to work for (*well known department store*), **I think the other companies really made me second guess my decision because they were so enthusiastic .. they would e-mail me to see what was going on and my company didn’t do that in the same way** ...”

Appendix D (cont'd)

“I loved interviewing with (*national discount store*), once I got an offer for an internship and accepted, I got a little fun like package for finals and it said “good luck on your finals” and it had a bunch of junk in it (laughter) – it was the sweetest thing ever!”

“Like with (*moderate department store name*), too – I always wanted to be in New York City because I thought that’s where retail and fashion were, but they came to school and they talked to us, they would have info. Sessions and they had lunch with us – and just talking to them, well it doesn’t sounds as glamorous - but them working and talking with you helps a lot ...”

“A lot of students were targeting (*name of off price retailer*) this year, more than before, their line at the retail reception was long... I don’t know if it was because D**** (HR recruiter) was talking so much or whether people were really interested but their line was always long... perhaps because of the economy, (*store name*) has become more of an interest (to students)”

1. I think we’ve also become much more educated – like everyone’s talking about two (*well-known high profile stores*) when we first come in - but as everyone is going through the interview process each year, you learn more about (*discount store*) and (*discount store*) and these other companies, and this can persuade you more one way or the other...”

C . What about the actual recruiters themselves?

I think someone like D**** (*off-price recruiter*) **is always very enthusiastic, showing the positive aspects of the company where some (other) recruiters just send in the Syracuse store manager, or someone, and they’re not going to be so dynamic, ...** it’s not strong to send that type of recruiter, I don’t think ... I’ve sometimes walked up to these recruiters and it seems like you’re bothering them ...”

“The recruiter is your first face-to-face interaction with a company so it’s really important for the first impression from the other side so as much as they’re interviewing you , you’re interviewing them ...and I think a lot of companies don’t spend enough time working on who they’re sending ... as I’ve moved on I’ve really tried to look beyond the HR because that’s not really who you’re working with but its hard because that interaction with the HR person can really turn you off ...”

“I think that the **consistency of recruiters is important** ... someone, if you’ve worked with them in another position - like D*** or M*** who I’ve known probably since freshman year and you really started developing relationships in sophomore year and then, when I see them again and again and again, they **know my first name and they make the extra effort to get to know you...**”

Appendix D (cont'd)

“Yes, I feel like D*** and some of the other recruiters have been at the school so long and they have a relationship where some of the other companies don't .. I think that's great – for his company – I think that's great ...” **he knows our program, and he knows how to interview and I think that's great (general assent)**

D . What personality characteristics about recruiters are positive?

“I think they **need to have knowledge of the whole corporation**, how each position works ... a lot of time, if they're not knowing (answers to) specific questions that could deter you... they also need to have excitement about being in the company, if they're more blasé about it, it can also turn you...”

I think **experience with the company too** ...if you've worked with them in another position outside of HR, I think that's also important ... and I think it sounds kinda simple but **people who are friendly and nice – you'd be surprised how people can be HR, but they don't know how to talk to people** ...” some recruiters just go by their list, they won't extend the conversation – they ask you a questions and then cut you off to ask the next generic question and it's hard to facilitate a conversation that way ..”

“**Eye contact is important to me** – I have a hard time if someone is not really looking at me – I just don't understand it... **and smiling** ...”

“Sometimes they act like, **they act like they're such your superior** and we could be working at the same company next year... sometimes it's like they want you to suck up to them ... and I know it's formal but at the same time, just a smile, a head nod, non-verbals so you know when you've covered the question and it's time to move on...”

“Yes, I'm getting an education, I've learned a lot in four years and **sometimes they look at you like you're worthless... an idiot ..**”

E. Does that change depending on how “cool” the company is, do you think?

“I think the “cooler” the company the more often they (the recruiters) make you feel dumb!”...

“Like (*name of store*) recruiter, used to be H****, and I think she was pretty nice, we chatted and everything... now I think their recruiter, well everyone knows J****, I don't think he's very friendly, and like I know who he is but I don't think there's any warmth there ...”

“He doesn't seem excited to talk to you... whereas if you see D*** (*recruiter from another company*) across the atrium, he's going to wave at you and get excited....”

Appendix D (cont'd)

“The worst one I think I had was an interview where I don’t think she was even listening to me and she was pretty high up in HR in the company and she completely turned me off to the company and I had a hard time getting over that ... it wasn’t even a first impression thing, this was my third interview and second round, and she was staring out into space... ”

F. Have you generally met the recruiters before the interview at some type of career event?

(All nod in assent)

“I can’t remember the last time I walked into an interview and hadn’t seen the person before... sometimes there can be confusion with some of the larger firms, like when Macy*s turns up, I don’t know who I should be talking to ... because I’m not sure I want buying or product development ... and I’m not sure who is higher than who so who is really making the decisions?”

“But I think the (*moderate price retailer event*) thing they do the night before is good where you get a chance to talk to different people...” (All agree).

“I think a good idea that some companies use is the availability of sheets with the different positions available so it is clear... being a little creative and prepared ...

G. What do you think they’re (the recruiters) looking for in prospective hires?

“I think they want you to know about the job you are interviewing for – they don’t want to hire someone who is going to go in and be like “I didn’t know this is what I was going to be doing ...”

“I think in their intern programs, they’re looking for future leaders, analytical skills that will take you to the next level...”

“They ask you describe something from your resume and talk about it and of course, some people can b.s. but being able to express what you have done, details and explaining ...

“They all ask the same questions – I haven’t had a new question in the last 5 interviews I’ve been on ...

“And you have to tell a story about how you overcame an obstacle (“Right, right...”) “Another thing I think they’re looking for is your passion for working for them – they don’t want to extend an offer unless they think that you really want to work for the company ... you need to show that you’d done your research

Appendix E: IRB Approval Forms



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY Institutional Review Board MEMORANDUM

TO: Pamela Brandes
DATE: March 20, 2009
SUBJECT: Determination of Exemption from Regulations
IRB #: 09-079
TITLE: *What Attracts Students to Interview with a Specific Retailer?*

The above referenced application, submitted for consideration as exempt from federal regulations as defined in 45 C.F.R. 46, has been evaluated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the following:

1. determination that it falls within the one or more of the five exempt categories allowed by the organization;
2. determination that the research meets the organization's ethical standards.

It has been determined by the IRB this protocol qualifies for exemption and is assigned to category 2. This authorization will remain active for a period of five years from March 19, 2009 until March 18, 2014.

CHANGES TO PROTOCOL: Proposed changes to this protocol during the period for which IRB authorization has already been given, cannot be initiated without additional IRB review. If there is a change in your research, you should notify the IRB immediately to determine whether your research protocol continues to qualify for exemption or if submission of an expedited or full board IRB protocol is required. Information about the University's human participants protection program can be found at: <http://www.orip.syr.edu/humanresearch.html>. Protocol changes are requested on an amendment application available on the IRB web site; please reference your IRB number and attach any documents that are being amended.

STUDY COMPLETION: The completion of a study must be reported to the IRB within 14 days.

Thank you for your cooperation in our shared efforts to assure that the rights and welfare of people participating in research are protected.

Diane Young, Chair

Note to Faculty Advisor: This notice is only mailed to faculty. If a student is conducting this study, please forward this information to the student researcher.

DEPT: SOM, 641 SOM

STUDENT: Amanda Nicholson

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 121 Bowne Hall Syracuse, New York 13244-1200
 (Phone) 315.443.3013 ♦ (Fax) 315.443.9889
 orip@syr.edu ♦ www.orip.syr.edu

Appendix E (cont'd)



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY Institutional Review Board MEMORANDUM

TO: Pamela Brandes
DATE: November 22, 2010
SUBJECT: Amendment for Exempt Protocol
AMENDMENT # : 1 - Revised Consent Document
IRB #: 09-079
TITLE: *What Attracts Students to Interview with a Specific Retailer?*

Your current exempt protocol has been re-evaluated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) with the inclusion of the above referenced amendment. Based on the information you have provided, this amendment is authorized and continues to be assigned to category 2. This protocol remains in effect from March 19, 2009 to March 18, 2014 .

CHANGES TO PROTOCOL: Proposed changes to this protocol during the period for which IRB authorization has already been given, cannot be initiated without additional IRB review. If there is a change in your research, you should notify the IRB immediately to determine whether your research protocol continues to qualify for exemption or if submission of an expedited or full board IRB protocol is required. Information about the University's human participants protection program can be found at: <http://www.orip.syr.edu/humanresearch.html>. Protocol changes are requested on an amendment application available on the IRB web site; please reference your IRB number and attach any documents that are being amended.

STUDY COMPLETION: The completion of a study must be reported to the IRB within 14 days.

Thank you for your cooperation in our shared efforts to assure that the rights and welfare of people participating in research are protected.

Kathleen King, Ph.D.
IRB Chair

Note to Faculty Advisor: This notice is only mailed to faculty. If a student is conducting this study, please forward this information to the student researcher.

DEPT: Whitman School of Management, 641 SOM

STUDENT: Amanda Nicholson

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Appendix F

Oral Consent for Q-Study

What attracts students to interview with a specific retailer?

Welcome!

My name is Amanda Nicholson. I am a doctoral student at the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. I am inviting you to participate in a research study. Involvement in this study is voluntary, so you may choose to participate or not. Please feel free to ask questions about the research if you have any, at any time. I will be happy to explain anything in detail. I am conducting research to investigate the factors that attract undergraduate students to particular retail organizations that visit our campus to recruit for both internships and full-time hires.

I am interested in learning more about those factors that attract students to particular organizations. I will be asking you to carry out a Q-sort. This will involve rank ordering 47 statements that have been generated from interviews with students and industry representatives. In the next few minutes, I will be giving you very clear instructions on how to go about sorting these statements. I will ask you to sort the statements from two different perspectives and the whole process should take no longer than one and one quarter hours.

With regard to confidentiality, all information will be kept confidential. I will assign a number to your responses and only I will have the key to indicate which number belongs to which participant. There is no anticipated risk for any participants in this study. If you have any questions about this research, please ask me now.

I really appreciate you taking the time to help with this research. Thank you.

Appendix G

Sorting Instructions for Q-Study Participants

1. Begin by reading through the 47 statements, at the same time dividing them into three roughly equal piles: (1) those statements that you find the most important in attracting students to a particular organization; (2) those statements that you find least important in attracting students to a participating organization, and (3) those statements that you find neither particularly important nor unimportant in attracting students to a participating organization.
2. Next, spread out the sorting scale (-5 to +5) across the top the desk/table in front of you, with the +5 to your right and the -5 to your left and with 0 in the center, as per the scoring sheet, Appendix C. Now go back over those statements that you found the most important and pick the two statements that are the most characteristic and place them one under the other under the +5 column. Then pick out the next three statements that are the next most characteristic and place them under the +4 as shown on the scoring sheet.
3. Now, forget the plus side for a moment and turn to the group of statements that you find least important and pick out the two that you find the most unimportant and place them beneath -5; the next three that are most uncharacteristic and place them under the -4 as shown on the scoring sheet. Now, return to the positive side and from the remaining statements that you find important, pick out the next four and place them beneath +3, and then reverse the procedure for -3.
4. By this time, you may have run out of statements that you have determined are the most important or least important. If so, start selecting statements from the neutral pile and place them as best you can to fill up the remaining spaces.
5. When you have finished you should have all 47 statements in front of you – ranked from those you find the most important to those you find the least important. Make any changes you desire, but place in each column only the number called for on the scoring sheet. (For example, there should only be seven statements under 0).
6. On the score sheet (Appendix C), write in the numbers in the squares provided which correspond to your Q-sort. Then fill in any additional comments you may have.
7. Take a break! Now, re-sort the statements from what you imagine is the perspective of the “other” group, i.e. if you work for a retail organization, sort them as you would imagine a student would; and if you are a student, sort the statements in the manner of a retail recruiting executive

Appendix H: Comparison of Key Issues from Recruiter Interviews

	Off-Price Recruiter	Discount Recruiter	Specialty dept. store recruiter	Moderate dept. store recruiter
Organization Brand:	Relationships developed with recruiter is key to develop our brand; High touch organization	Personable Kohl's staff on campus very important; Growth company; Improved store brand image through designer names; Not as glamorous as a Macy*s or Bloomingdales;	Brand association with store; Kind of work offered;	Brand association with store is key; Thanksgiving Parade; Flower Show; Fun and dynamic execs. on campus
Percentage of students met before interview at another event	Have met minimum 60%	Have met 60-70%	Generally yes, have met majority of interviewees	Have met 90%
Recruiter personality and experience:	V. Important (only uses himself and one other) – outgoing and welcoming	V. important – need to be outgoing and engaging (use staff from all over country); Ability to understand the generation you are addressing; Have the right attitude	Openness and honesty important; Being a coach	V. Important – distinction between recruiter and staff interviewers
Company Culture:	Very important to students; Social culture; Work-life balance;	Very important to students; Work Life balance;	Very important to company that students fit in – students don't comment as they're focused on getting job offer	Plays a role in students' decisions – we stay true to our brand values
Interview format utilized:	Primarily behavioral questions	Structured questions – behaviorally based	Strong believer in structured interviews for recruiters vs. organization's staff who look for people they "like"	Structured for staff (interview guides)
Interview pre-requisites:	Generally 3.0 > although exceptions made for special students	No GPA requirement but will question low GPA	3.0 > GPA	3.0> GPA
Ideal Candidate characteristics:	Outgoing personality; Professionalism	Ability to lead and motivate a team; Engaging personality;	Having a personality	Personality; Leadership skills

Appendix I

Q-Study Summary of Most Important and Least Important Attributes for Students and Recruiters

	Students' point of view (Factor C)	Recruiters' point of view (Factor A)
Most important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Structured interview format 5. Recruiter who knows school's majors 4. Location of retailers' stores 4. Recruiter who is alum of school 4. Job opportunities for entry level store mgt. 3. Impressive alum/exec spoke to class 3. High salary potential for internships 3. <u>Prestigious entry level title</u> 3. Recruiter who is dedicated and visits campus regularly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Respected brand image in marketplace 5. Opportunities for rapid advancement 4. Cool/prestigious brand image 4. Personal attraction to retailer' stores/brands 4. High salary potential at entry level 3. Location of corporate offices desirable 3. Retailer that has growth potential 3. Job opportunities for entry level corp. positions 3. <u>Prestigious entry level titles</u>
Least Important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -5. Reputation of retailer for friendly work culture -5. Opportunities for great long-term career -4. Positive work-life balance -4. Retailer that has growth potential -4. Opportunities for rapid advancement -3. Respected brand image of retailer -3. Recruiter who follows through on promises -3. Retailer with strong financial stability -3. Entry level position which is interesting/varied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -5. Structured interview format -5. Recruiter who knows school's majors -4. Recruiter who is organized and thorough -4. Interview format which is flexible and informal -4. Recruiter with personal experience of jobs -3. Parents/friends know execs. at company -3. Parents/friends encourage student to interview -3. Reputation of retailer as socially responsible -3. Recruiter who listens during interview

Appendix J

Phrases for Conjoint Analysis Research

Dependent Variables:

1. Likelihood to pursue opportunity with organization
2. Recruiter that is most personable (i.e. warm and friendly)
3. Recruiter that is most informed (i.e. knowledgeable)
4. Recruiter that is most competent (i.e. capable of doing their job well)

Independent Variables	Low	High
Structured Interview Format	“I don’t really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars Stores...</i> ”	“I really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars</i> (so that I can be sure each candidate is being evaluated on the same criteria.”
Recruiter relationship with student/school	“So, Alena (is that how you pronounce your name? – OK – good) I travel all over the country interviewing students and should tell you that we are not particularly fussy about what majors or what schools we recruit from.”	“Well, it’s great to see you again, Alena – I remember first meeting you as a freshman when our senior VP (and also an alum from SU) spoke in one of your retail marketing classes – and now you’re a junior - how time flies! I’m very familiar with the Whitman majors so let’s begin...”
Recruiter with sustained presence on campus	“This is actually my first time visiting Whitman so could you tell me a little about the school?”	“I have been involved in recruiting from the Whitman School for a few years now and have already planned my next visit so I’ll be back within a couple of months.”

Appendix K: Sample of 8 Card Set for Conjoint Analysis Research

<div data-bbox="228 344 342 432" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I don’t really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars Stores</i>...”</p> <p>“So Alena ... (is that how you pronounce your name? – OK – good). I travel all over the country interviewing students and should tell you that we are not particularly fussy about what majors or what schools we recruit from”</p> <p>“This is actually my first time visiting Whitman so could you tell me a little about the school?”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1000</p>	<div data-bbox="873 338 987 426" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars</i> (so that I can be sure each candidate is being evaluated on the same criteria).”</p> <p>“Well, it’s great to see you again, Alena –I remember first meeting you as a freshman when our senior VP (an also an alum from SU) spoke to one of your retail marketing classes –and now you’re a junior – how time flies! I’m very familiar with the Whitman majors, so let’s begin ...”</p> <p>“I have been involved in recruiting from the Whitman School for a few years now and have already planned my next visit so I’ll be back within a couple of months.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1111</p>
<div data-bbox="228 1136 342 1224" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I don’t really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars Stores</i>...”</p> <p>“Well, it’s great to see you again, Alena –I remember first meeting you as a freshman when our senior VP (an also an alum from SU) spoke to one of your retail marketing classes –and now you’re a junior – how time flies! I’m very familiar with the Whitman majors, so let’s begin ...”</p> <p>“I have been involved in recruiting from the Whitman School for a few years now and have already planned my next visit so I’ll be back within a couple of months.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1011</p>	<div data-bbox="857 1136 971 1224" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I don’t really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars Stores</i>...”</p> <p>“So Alena ... (is that how you pronounce your name? – OK – good). I travel all over the country interviewing students and should tell you that we are not particularly fussy about what majors or what schools we recruit from”</p> <p>“I have been involved in recruiting from the Whitman School for a few years now and have already planned my next visit so I’ll be back within a couple of months.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1001</p>

<div data-bbox="245 201 354 285" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I really like to follow a set list of questions for All the candidates I interview for <i>Stars</i> (so that I can be sure each candidate is being evaluated on the same criteria).”</p> <p>“So Alena ... (is that how you pronounce your name? – OK – good) ..I travel all over the country interviewing students and should tell you that we are not particularly fussy about what majors or what schools we recruit from”</p> <p>“This is actually my first time visiting Whitman so could you tell me a little about the school?”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1100</p>	<div data-bbox="867 201 976 285" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I really like to follow a set list of questions for All the candidates I interview for <i>Stars</i> (so that I can be sure each candidate is being evaluated on the same criteria).”</p> <p>“Well, it’s great to see you again, Alena –I remember first meeting you as a freshman when our senior VP (an also an alum from SU) spoke to one of your retail marketing classes –and now you’re a junior – how time flies! I’m very familiar with the Whitman majors, so let’s begin ...”</p> <p>“This is actually my first time visiting Whitman so could you tell me a little about the school?”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1110</p>
<div data-bbox="245 942 354 1026" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I don’t really like to follow a set list of questions for all the candidates I interview for <i>Stars Stores</i>...”</p> <p>“Well, it’s great to see you again, Alena –I remember first meeting you as a freshman when our senior VP (an also an alum from SU) spoke to one of your retail marketing classes –and now you’re a junior – how time flies! I’m very familiar with the Whitman majors, so let’s begin ...”</p> <p>“This is actually my first time visiting Whitman so could you tell me a little about the school?”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1010</p>	<div data-bbox="867 942 976 1026" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Ranking</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">_____</p> </div> <p><i>Likelihood to pursue an opportunity with this company</i></p> <p>“I really like to follow a set list of questions for All the candidates I interview for <i>Stars</i> (so that I can be sure each candidate is being evaluated on the same criteria).”</p> <p>“So Alena ... (is that how you pronounce your name? – OK – good). I travel all over the country interviewing students and should tell you that we are not particularly fussy about what majors or what schools we recruit from”</p> <p>“I have been involved in recruiting from the Whitman School for a few years now and have already planned my next visit so I’ll be back within a couple of months.”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1101</p>

Appendix L

Oral Consent for Conjoint Analysis Experiments

What attracts students to interview with a specific retailer?

Welcome!

My name is Amanda Nicholson. I am a doctoral student at the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. I am inviting you to participate in a research study. Involvement in this study is voluntary, so you may choose to participate or not. Please feel free to ask questions about the research if you have any, at any time. I will be happy to explain anything in detail.

I am conducting research to investigate the factors that attract undergraduate students to particular retail organizations that visit our campus to recruit for both internships and full-time hires. I am interested in learning more about those factors that attract students to particular organizations during the recruitment process. The concepts on the cards I am about to hand out were generated from previous research with students and industry representatives.

This research will involve you rank ordering the eight cards inside each envelope from 1 to 8. . Please order them from the card containing the three recruiter statements that you find the most likely to attract you to pursuing an opportunity to a company to the card with the statement which you find the least likely to attract you - with 1 being the highest ranking and 8 being the lowest ranking . There is a box for you to fill in with your ranking on the top left hand corner of each card. Please also fill in the information requested on the envelope: your name; your major/s; your current year and the estimated number of interviews you have experienced at college.

With regard to confidentiality, all information will be kept confidential. I will assign a number to your responses and only I will have the key to indicate which number belongs to which participant. There is no anticipated risk for any participants in this study. If you have any questions about this research, please ask me now.

I really appreciate you taking the time to help with this research. Thank you.

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 Le Moyne College, Syracuse, New York
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DEGREES AWARDED:

Master of Science in Communications and Management, 2001, Syracuse University
 Bachelor of Science in Psychology and English Literature, 1993, Regents College

AWARDS AND HONORS:

Sam Walton Fellow of the Year, *Students in Free Enterprise*, 2011-2012
 Beta Gamma Sigma Outstanding Faculty Member, Whitman School of Management,
 Syracuse University, 2010-2011
 VPA Teacher of the Year Award, Syracuse University, 2005

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Assistant Professor of Retail Practice, Whitman School of Management, Syracuse
 University, 2006 – 2011
 Assistant Director of Retail Management & Consumer Studies, VPA, Syracuse University,
 2003 – 2005
 Assistant Director of Retail Management & Consumer Studies, College for Human
 Development, Syracuse University, 1999-2003
 Assistant Professor of Retail Management, College for Human Development, Syracuse
 University, 1997-1999.
 Retail Marketing/PR Consultant, *Taussig & Associates*, 1989- 1993
 Principal, *Corporate Presence*, 1987-1989
 Executive Director, *Corporate Level* at *Carson, Pirie, Scott*, Chicago, 1984-1987
 Vice President & Divisional Merchandise Manager, *Carson, Pirie Scott*, Chicago, 1983 –
 1985
 Senior Buyer, Men's Designer Sportswear, *Carson, Pirie, Scott*, Chicago, 1981-1983
 Buyer, Men's Dress Shirts, *Carson, Pirie, Scott*, Chicago, 1979-1981
 Buyer Men's Neckwear & Accessories, *Marks & Spencer*, London, England, 1977-1979
 Assistant Buyer, Women's Sportswear, European Division, *Marks & Spencer*, London,
 England, 1975-1977
 Assistant Trainee Buyer, Women's Coats, *Marks & Spencer*, London, England, 1974-1975
 Assistant Advertising Manager, *Marks & Spencer*, London, England, 1972-1974