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An Analysis of Hourly Employees Fears of the "Into the Future" Testing Program

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**AN ANALYSIS OF HOURLY EMPLOYEES FEARS OF
THE “INTO THE FUTURE” TESTING PROGRAM**

**A Research Paper Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies
Old Dominion University**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Science, Business and Industry Training**

**By
Brian D. Anderson**

July 2002

APPROVAL PAGE

This research paper was prepared by Brian D. Anderson under the direction Dr. John M. Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Studies. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Science, Business and Industry Training.

APPROVAL BY: John M. Ritz
Dr. John M. Ritz, Advisor
and Graduate Program Director

DATE: 7-18-02

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Brian D. Anderson

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

As today's marketplace becomes more and more competitive businesses must find ways to attract, train, and retain quality employees. Corporations must make sure that every dollar spent on these efforts is maximized to its fullest extent, and not wasted on any employees who will not contribute to the long-term growth of the business. Many of today's businesses have begun to test all new and current employees to ensure that they possess the basic competencies necessary to perform their jobs, and learn the future skills needed to succeed. Businesses must then temper their goals with a desire for a fair test that does not unintentionally discriminate against any groups of employees. The tests are checked and refined to ensure that they meet these goals. However, employers have to make sure that tests are not revised so much that they wind up with a test that is indeed fair, but one that does not predict job performance (Scheig, 1997, p.18).

Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals, which is a division of American Home Products Incorporated, is one of those businesses. The Wyeth plant in Richmond, Virginia, began a new employee skills testing program in 2002. The program is entitled, "Into the Future", and was developed to test all current and future hourly employees in six areas of basic competence.

The six areas to be tested are Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, Applied Technology, Observation, and Teamwork. The hourly employees job classifications were then divided into eleven job classes. However, this study concentrates on three of them. They are Packaging Operators, Operations Mechanics, and Material Handlers. Employees in each job classification are given a

minimum score they must attain on each test. The scores differ from one job classification to another based on the basic knowledge needed to perform the job function.

John Tyler Community College of Chester Virginia developed the tests with input from some of Wyeth's hourly employees. The employee's input was also used to determine the minimum score needed for each test at each of the job classifications. This was done to ensure that each area of testing would accurately reflect the skills needed for each job classification. The ultimate solution to the problem of test fairness is to make sure the selection instrument reflects a very robust sampling of all the critical behaviors that make up the job. This is best accomplished by basing the selection instrument on a thorough job analysis (Scheig, 1997, p.18).

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze the hourly employees fears of the, "Into the Future" testing program, and how it affects departmental productivity and morale at Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia.

Research Goals

To answer the research problem, the researcher sought direction by developing the following questions:

1. Does the implementation of a testing program negatively influence hourly employee morale?

2. Are tests viewed differently by the different job classifications? (i.e., Production Operators, Operations Mechanics, Team Leaders and Material Handlers).
3. How do hourly employees feel members of management view the testing process, and the resistance of it by the hourly employees?
4. Is there a direct relationship between the hourly employees test fears and their overall job performance?
5. Are the hourly employees fears based on the test itself or is it a fear of change?

Background and Significance

Businesses have had the problem of screening potential employees and retaining their current employees since the beginning of time. The rate of technological advances in the workplace today has only managed to amplify the situation. Today, despite the news reports being filled with reports of layoffs and job cuts, the job market is far from being saturated.

Without a huge flood of applicants in the talent pool, companies are finding that recruiting and training qualified employees has become a challenging priority (Borck, 2001, p. 60). In today's business world corporations must maximize spending and reduce cost wherever possible to remain competitive. The amount of money that these businesses spend on their recruiting, hiring, and training programs can not be wasted on employees who will not be productive or will not remain with the company long enough for the business to realize a return on its investment. The high costs of a training program demands that businesses begin employing more effective training strategies (Borck, 2001, p. 60).

Not only do today's businesses need to concentrate on the screening of potential employees, but they also need to concentrate on the development of their existing workforce. Skills based testing will not only help during pre-employment screening, but it can also be a useful tool to size up the existing workforce for the purpose of team-building (Nicholson, 2000, p. 102). With the help of a good skills-based management (SBM) program in place, a business can identify skill deficiencies within its workforce and begin to take a proactive approach to adjust training programs. This also ensures that the company has a better-prepared workforce to fill staffing vacancies, and management will feel more confident to promote employees from within (Borck, 2001, p. 60).

Limitations

The scope of this research project was limited to the Packaging Operators, Material Handlers, Team Leaders, and the Operations Mechanics in the Liquid Focused Factory, at the Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceutical Plant, in Richmond, Virginia.

Assumptions

This research project was based on the following assumptions:

1. The costs of training and developing employees in today's business marketplace must be maximized.
2. There is a need for today's businesses to administer skills tests to all current employees and applicants.
3. These tests must be fair to all employees, and they must not have a negative impact on any one group of employees.

4. Hourly employees are in general fearful of a testing process, and this fear may have an adverse impact on their productivity and morale.

Procedures

A survey entitled Survey to Identify Employees' Feelings Towards a Corporate Testing Program will be distributed to all employees at the Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceutical Plant in Richmond, Virginia, who work in the Liquid Focused Factory. The survey will help identify the fears that the employee had about the skills test, and how those fears affected their job performance.

The information gathered from this source may then be used to refine the Into the Future program and enable the plant management team to address issues that may slow the programs implementation.

Definitions of Terms

The following is a list of key terms essential to the understanding of this study:

SBM- Skills Based Management

Into the Future- The name of the skills testing program developed by Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia.

Team Leader- An hourly production employee who coordinates the quality and operational aspects of a packaging line.

Packaging Operator- An hourly production employee who runs a packaging machine.

Operations Mechanic- An hourly skilled employee who repairs packaging machinery.

Material Handler- An hourly employee who moves components and finished goods (i.e., a forklift driver).

Assessment- The name given to each individual Work Keys module.

Overview of Chapters

In Chapter I, the topic of skills based training was introduced, and how it applies to the current business world. Chapter I also discussed why it is so critical for today's corporations to implement a solid employee testing program for all current and prospective employees. Chapter II will review the literature on employee testing, and how it affects both the corporation and the individual employee. Chapter III will address the methods used for this project, and Chapter IV will discuss the findings. Chapter V will then summarize the findings, make conclusions based on the research goals, and then make recommendations to be implemented.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Chapter II is the Review of Literature section of this research paper. In this chapter, the reader will be provided with a background and an overview of skills based employee testing. One topic that will be examined will be the use of standardized employee testing in the workplace, and how these types of tests relate to overall employee productivity and morale. Another topic will be how effective is pre-employment testing in determining how successful a potential employee will be. The third topic discussed will be the fairness of employee testing and the impact these tests can have on a particular sub-group of a population. Finally, this chapter will discuss how these topics impact employees' fears to change and to the testing process itself.

Standardized Employee Tests

As today's businesses search for a way to be more competitive, to increase their efficiency, and to control costs, the idea of implementing standardized employee testing becomes more attractive. Businesses today are finding that by incorporating a precursor to employee development they can minimize training, retain good employees, and decrease the costs associated with the hiring process. An American Management Survey found that 34.1% of job applicants tested at 1,627 companies lacked the basic skills needed for the job they wanted in 2000 (Business Horizons, 2000, p. 84). The focus of employee testing is to ensure a good employee fit with a job, enable the employee to learn new skills, and to identify which candidates have the greatest potential for success.

Tropical Sportswear International Corp (TSI) sought help from The Context Group, which was a soft goods consulting firm. The task at hand was to develop a program, which would help employees keep up with technological advances, improve their job skills, and address the issue of a high workforce turnover rate. The employees were tested in reading and mathematics. The tests were used to help identify where the employees would best fit in the corporation. Employees who need to improve their skills were offered training at TSI's free internal learning center. The end result of this initiative was a 38% reduction in turnover in the first six months. This increased the company's bottom line, which in turn had many far-reaching benefits throughout the company (Bobbin, 2000, pp. 108-114).

Basic reading and mathematics test scores are not the only factors that should be considered by a business when trying to place or promote an employee. An employee may score well on a math or reading test, but still not possess some of the basic skills needed to perform a particular job. Overall job performance is still a major consideration when evaluating employees' potential. Work behaviors that are important include conflict management, communication, persuasion, assertiveness, and risk management. These are all important factors to consider when evaluating an employee (Southworth, 2000, pp. 407-422).

Employees who are able to keep up with technology, who improve their work skills, and have a low turnover rate will generally have a higher job satisfaction than most other employees. By accomplishing these tasks an employer can assure himself or herself of a good employee fit, which should increase the employees' effectiveness and

productivity. The overall morale of the employees should then improve with this increased job satisfaction.

Pre-Employment Testing

The best way to increase your organization's productivity and to increase customer and employee satisfaction is to get the right people for the right jobs. Those were the results of an online survey by Development Dimensions International from Bridgeville, Pennsylvania. The survey was co-sponsored by The Electronic Recruiting Exchange (Association Management, 2001, p. 21). During the employee search several factors are given a high amount of thought, but the one factor that is often ignored is "how will this individual fit in this organization"? Having the right employee is one thing, but having the right employee in the right job is another. There is nothing more frustrating to an employee and to a corporation than having a poor employee fit.

Before you can begin to look at potential employees you must first look at the job that is available. Malcolm Coco, who is an assistant professor of human-resource management, and the director of internships at Abilene (Texas) Christian University, has stated that, "a thorough job analysis is the key to identifying what responsibilities the employee have and what qualifications they will need. How can you match an applicant with a job without knowing that?" Coco then went on to state that pre-employment tests are not designed to make the decision for you. They are there to help put the right person in the right job from the start by helping to narrow and focus the hiring decision (Williamson, 2000).

There are many industries that began to take a close look at pre-employment screening in the year 2002. One industry at the forefront of this movement was airport security. In March of 2002 the Transportation Department announced that it would begin to hire more than 30,000 security screeners. Transportation Secretary, Norman Y. Mineta, stated that, "I want to underscore my commitment to hire the best and the brightest". Finding the best and brightest employee for the job is finding the right person for the job and ensuring a good employee fit. Since the events that took place on September 11th, the United States has undergone a reexamination of its security measures. In addition the federal government has also undergone a reexamination of its security personnel hiring, screening, and testing procedures. NCS Pearson of Eden Prairie, Minnesota won the contract to recruit, test, and hire these new federal workers (Salant, 2002, AP Online).

Much like with the standardized employee tests, pre-employment tests can do more for a business than just measures basic math and reading skills. The Gallup Poll organization has developed a pre-employment test for Abilene Christian University called the Gallup Perceiver. Suzanne Allmon, the director of human resources, states that it is a screening instrument designed to measure recurring thought, feeling, and behavior. The questions deal with values and philosophy of life, style of interaction with others and situations with which you may deal with (Williamson, 2000). This type of testing is not just limited to ACU. There are many other companies that have begun to use psychometric testing to help find the right employees for the job. These types of tests can help firms find good leaders, more qualified workers, and better team players (Barbian, 2001, pp. 60-63).

Fairness of Employee Testing

Even though a business may have established its business goals, performed a thorough job analysis, identified the skills needed by the employee, and developed a test to measure it, there may still be more work to be done. A business must now go to great lengths to ensure that the process that has been developed is fair to all sub-groups of the population. The best-laid plans must be continually refined and revised to ensure that there is no disparaging impact on any one sector of the population. The system must be validated to prove that it does what it was intended to do, and does in fact accomplish the goals that were outlined at the start of the process. This in turn must be done without leaving one particular group behind.

Employees Fears to Change and Testing

The final step after developing a testing process is to implement it. The idea of giving a test to existing employees can stir up fear and anger in even the most dedicated worker. Most employees fear and resist change, preferring familiar routine and stability. Change can be scary and disruptive to productivity, but sometimes change is necessary to make real progress (Cottringer, 2000, pp. 11-12). This fear and resistance to change can have a negative impact on productivity, job satisfaction, and employee morale. It is now the companies management team that has the burden of implementing a program that will be unpopular at the outset but beneficial to the corporation in the long run. This is not a minor issue, and there is evidence the new work practices can negatively effect workers and increase stress. Another interesting question is raised in the area of employee

satisfaction, and that is whether over time will the workers just adjust to the new policy or will they experience an improved quality of life (Godard, Delaney, 2000, pp. 482-502).

Summary

Chapter II presented an overview of the use of standardized tests in the workplace, the role of pre-employment testing in the hiring process, the guidelines of establishing a fair employee testing policy, and the employees fears to change and testing. The general conclusion that can be drawn from the review of literature is that there is indeed a need in today's competitive business environment for standardized tests for all current and prospective employees. The tests that will be developed will have to be relevant to the employees' job, and will have to be fair to all sub-groups of the population. The implementation of the test itself must be done in a way that it will have minimal impact on the employees' natural fear of the unknown.

Chapter III will address the methods and procedures established for this research study. It will include Methods and Procedures, Population, Description of Instrument, Methods for Collecting Data, Procedures for Statistical Analysis, and the Summary.

CHAPTER III

Methods and Procedures

To accomplish the research goals of this study, the proper methods and procedures must be followed. The descriptive method of classification was used for this research project. This study was designed to analyze the hourly employees fears of the, “Into the Future” testing program, and how it affects departmental productivity and morale at Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia. The topics that will be discussed in this chapter are the population, description of the instrument, methods of data collection, procedures for statistical analysis, and the summary.

Population

The population for this study was composed of all Packaging Operators, Material Handlers, and Operations Mechanics who work on the first shift in the Liquid Focused Factory at the Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceutical Plant, in Richmond, Virginia. The population for this study consisted of 51 hourly employees. The population is comprised of both male and female employees. The population is also very diverse and is comprised of a wide variety of nationalities, backgrounds, and ages.

Description of Instrument

A Likert Scale survey was developed and distributed to all hourly employees in the Liquid Focused Factory. A Likert Scale survey was chosen due to its ease of data tabulation. The purpose of the survey is to identify the emotions the participants were

feeling before and after the testing process. This data can then be used to answer the applicable Research Goals. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Methods for Collecting Data

The survey will be given to all 51 employees on the shift. The purpose of the survey, along with a convincing statement, and a notification of agency will be stated in the survey cover letter that will be attached to the front of the survey. A copy of the survey cover letter can be found in Appendix D. A survey introduction letter will be given to the shift Supervisors to inform them about the survey. A copy of the survey introduction letter can be found in Appendix B. Permission to administer the survey was granted by a survey permission letter. A copy of the survey permission letter can be found in Appendix C. All surveys will have a survey number on the bottom. Individual code numbers will be assigned for Packaging Operators, Team Leaders, Mechanics, and Material Handlers. If an employee agrees to participate in the survey they will be given a survey with a code number that corresponds to their job title. This code number is used to identify the job title of the person who filled it out to compare the answers of different job classifications. An employees identity cannot be determined by this number only their job classification. Employee participation will be on a voluntary basis, and this is stated in the disclaimer paragraph at the top of the survey.

Procedures for Statistical Analysis

Upon receiving the responses from the surveys, the researcher will compile the data from the questions. Since a Likert Scale is being used for the surveys the data will

be tallied by the median because the data may be skewed. The responses will then be presented in the forms of tables and figures. These tables and figures along with the appropriate narrative will be presented in Chapter IV of this research study titled, Findings.

Summary

In this chapter, the methods and procedures used to collect the data for this research study were outlined. A Likert Scale survey was distributed to 51 hourly employees, which was comprised of a stratified random sample of the research population. The data collected from these sources will be analyzed in the chapters that will follow. Chapter IV will discuss the findings of the research project and Chapter V will outline the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter is a presentation of the findings determined through this research. The statistical results of the findings are reported in this chapter. An employee survey was distributed to all first shift hourly employees in the Liquid Focused Factory at Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia. The purpose of this survey was to collect data from these employees regarding an employee-testing program entitled, “Into the Future”. Of the fifty-one hourly employees in the Liquid Factory, forty participated in the survey. This equates to a seventy-eight percent participation rate.

Survey Results

The survey was used to collect data for this study to determine:

1. Does the implementation of a testing program negatively influence hourly employee morale?
2. Are tests viewed differently by the different job classifications (i.e., Production Operators, Operations Mechanics, Team Leaders, and Material Handlers)?
3. How do hourly employees feel members of management view the testing process, and the resistance of it by the hourly employees?
4. Is there a direct relationship between the hourly employees test fears and their overall job performance?
5. Are the hourly employees fears based on the test itself or is it a fear of change?

The following narrative and tables indicate the various participants' responses to the above-mentioned survey. The tables are divided into five separate sections. The first section of data gives an overall score. The second section of data is for Packaging Operators, the third is for Team Leaders, the fourth is for Mechanics, and the fifth is for Material Handlers.

Testing Programs Impact on Employee Morale

Table 1 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: When you first were told that there was going to be an employee-testing program did you feel frightened? Twenty percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, twenty-two and one half percent of disagreed, twenty percent were neutral, ten percent agreed, and twenty-seven and one half percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was two and one half, Mechanics was two, and Material Handlers was three.

When you first were told that there was going to be an employee-testing program did you feel frightened?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	9	8	4	11
20%	22.5%	20%	10%	27.5%
Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

6	5	5	3	10
20.5%	17%	17%	10%	35.5%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	1	1	1	0
25%	25%	25%	25%	0%
Median Score 2.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	3	0	0	1
20%	60%	0%	0%	20%
Median Score 2				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	2	0	0
0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Median Score 3				

Table 2 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel angry? Seventeen and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, seventeen and one half disagreed, twenty percent were neutral, twenty-five percent agreed, and twenty percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was two and one half, Mechanics was two, and Material Handlers was three and one half.

When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel angry?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	7	8	10	8
17.5%	17.5%	20%	25%	20%
Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	4	6	6	8
17%	14%	20.5%	20.5%	27.5%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	1	1	1	0
25%	25%	25%	25%	0%
Median Score 2.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	0	2	0
20%	40%	0%	40%	0%
Median Score 2				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	0
0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
Median Score 3.5				

Table 3 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: After you had taken the first set of tests did your fears go away? Twelve and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, ten percent disagreed, fifty-five percent were neutral, seven and one half percent agreed, and fifteen percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was one and one half, Mechanics was three, and Material Handlers was three.

Table 3				
After you had taken the first set of tests did your fears go away?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	4	22	3	6
12.5%	10%	55%	7.5%	15%
Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	3	17	2	5
7%	10%	59%	7%	17%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	0	1	0	1
50%	0%	25%	0%	25%
Median Score 1.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

1	1	2	1	0
20%	20%	40%	20%	0%
Median Score 3				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	2	0	0
0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Median Score 3				

Table 4 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: After you had taken the first set of tests did your anger go away? Seventeen and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, twelve and one half percent disagreed, forty-seven and one half percent were neutral, twelve and one half percent agreed, and ten percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was three and one half percent, Mechanics was three, and Material Handlers was four.

Table 4				
After you had taken the first set of tests did your anger go away?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	5	19	5	4
17.5%	12.5%	47.5%	12.5%	10%
Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

5	5	13	3	3
17%	17%	46%	10%	10%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	2	0	1
25%	0%	50%	0%	25%
Median Score 3.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	4	0	0
20%	0%	80%	0%	0%
Median Score 3				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	2	0
0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Median Score 4				

How Tests Are Viewed by Different Job Classifications

Table 5 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel that the test itself would apply to your particular job classification? Twenty-five percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, seven and one half percent disagreed, fifteen percent were neutral, seventeen and one half percent agreed, and thirty-five percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was four,

Operators was four, Team Leaders was three, Mechanics was one, and Material Handlers was three and one half.

Table 5				
When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel that the test itself would apply to you particular job classification?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10	3	6	7	14
25%	7.5%	15%	17.5%	35%
Median Score 4				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6	2	5	5	11
20.5%	7%	17%	17%	38.5%
Median Score 4				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	2	0	1
25%	0%	50%	0%	25%
Median Score 3				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	0	0	1	1
60%	0%	0%	20%	20%
Median Score 1				

Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	0	0	1
0%	50%	0%	0%	50%
Median Score 3.5				

Table 6 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: After you had taken the first set of tests did you feel that the test itself would apply to your particular job classification? Fifty-two and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, ten percent disagreed, seventeen and one half percent were neutral, ten percent agreed, and ten percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was one, Operators was one, Team Leaders was four, Mechanics was one, and Material Handlers was one and one half.

Table 6				
After you had taken the first set of tests did you feel that the test itself would apply to your particular job classification				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
21	4	7	4	4
52.5%	10%	17.5%	10%	10%
Median Score 1				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
17	2	5	3	2
59%	7%	17%	10%	7%

Median Score 1				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	1	0	2
0%	25%	25%	0%	50%
Median Score 4				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	0	1	1	0
60%	0%	20%	20%	0%
Median Score 1				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	1	0	0	0
50%	50%	0%	0%	0%
Median Score 1.5				

Hourly Employees Opinions of Managements View

Table 7 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: Do you feel that the site Management understands your perception of the testing process? Thirty-seven and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, seventeen and one half percent disagreed, twenty percent were neutral, seven and one half percent agreed, and seventeen and one half percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was two, Operators was two, Team Leaders was three, Mechanics was three, and Material Handlers was one.

Table 7				
Do you feel that the site Management understands your perception of the testing process?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
15	7	8	3	7
37.5%	17.5%	20%	7.5%	17.5%
Median Score 2				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
10	6	6	1	6
35%	20.5%	20.5%	3.5%	20.5%
Median Score 2				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	2	0	1
25%	0%	50%	0%	25%
Median Score 3				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	1	0	2	0
40%	20%	0%	40%	0%
Median Score 3				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	0	0	0	0
100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Median Score 1				

Impact on Job Performance

Table 8 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: Do you feel that your work output and your ability to concentrate at work were decreased while you were waiting to take the first test? Thirty percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, two and one half percent disagreed, twelve and one half percent were neutral, twenty percent agreed, and thirty-five percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was four, Operators was four, Team Leaders was three, Mechanics was one, and Material Handlers was three and one half.

Table 8				
Do you feel that your work output and your ability to concentrate at work were decreased while you were waiting to take the first test?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
12	1	5	8	14
30%	2.5%	12.5%	20%	35%
Median Score 4				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
8	0	2	7	12
27.5%	0%	7%	24%	41.5%
Median Score 4				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	2	0	1
25%	0%	50%	0%	25%

Median Score 3				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
3	1	0	0	1
60%	20%	0%	0%	20%
Median Score 1				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	0
0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
Median Score 3.5				

Table 9 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: Do you feel that your work output and your ability to concentrate at work were decreased after you took the first test? Thirty-two and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, ten percent disagreed, thirty percent were neutral, ten percent agreed, and seventeen and one half percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was two and one half, Mechanics was two, and Material Handlers was three and one half.

Table 9				
Do you feel that your work output and your ability to concentrate at were decreased after you took the test?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
13	4	12	4	7

32.5%	10%	30%	10%	17.5%
Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11	1	9	2	6
38%	3.5%	31%	7%	20.5%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	1	1	1	0
25%	25%	25%	25%	0%
Median Score 2.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	1	0	0
20%	40%	20%	0%	20%
Median Score 2				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	0
0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
Median Score 3.5				

Testing Programs Impact on Employee Morale

Table 10 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: Has your fear or anger of the testing process subsided since

you have completed the tests? Twelve and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, two and one half percent disagreed, fifty-seven and one half percent were neutral, ten percent agreed, and seventeen and one half percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was three and one half, Mechanics was three, and Material Handlers was four.

Table 10				
Has your fear or anger of the testing process subsided since you have completed the tests?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	1	23	4	7
12.5%	2.5%	57.5%	10%	17.5%
Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4	0	19	2	4
14%	0%	65%	7%	14%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	2	1	1
0%	0%	50%	25%	25%
Median Score 3.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	1	1	1	1

20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Median Score 3				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	0	1
0%	0%	50%	0%	50%
Median Score 4				

Fear of the Test or Fear of the Unknown

Table 11 shows the total number of scores for each answer by the employees who responded to the question: Looking back now do you feel that your fear or anger was of the unknown and not the test itself? Twenty-two and one half percent of all respondents strongly disagreed, seventeen and one half percent disagreed, thirty-seven and one half percent were neutral, ten percent agreed, and twelve and one half percent strongly agreed. The median score overall was three, Operators was three, Team Leaders was one and one half, Mechanics was three, Material Handlers was three.

Table 11				
Looking back now do you feel that your fear or anger was of the unknown and not the test itself?				
Overall				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
9	7	15	4	5
22.5%	17.5%	37.5%	10%	12.5%

Median Score 3				
Operators				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	5	12	2	5
17%	17%	41.5%	7%	17%
Median Score 3				
Team Leaders				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	1	1	0	0
50%	25%	25%	0%	0%
Median Score 1.5				
Mechanics				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2	0	2	1	0
40%	0%	40%	20%	0%
Median Score 3				
Material Handlers				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	0	1	0
0%	50%	0%	50%	0%
Median Score 3				

Summary

The findings of this study document the responses of the first shift hourly employees in the Liquid Focused Factory at Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia. There are fifty-one hourly employees in the Liquid Factory and forty

participated in the survey. This equates to a seventy-eight percent participation rate. The balance of the employees' were either on leave at the time the surveys were distributed or they declined to participate in the survey. The statistics resulting from their responses were tabulated in this chapter, and those findings were then used to arrive at conclusions in Chapter V. From the conclusions, recommendations will be made.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to report the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the findings to summarize the research report. The summary will be an overview of the research report. The conclusions will be the answers to the research goals, and the recommendations will be a plan of action by the researcher to continue with the project.

Summary

This study was conducted to analyze the hourly employees fears of the “Into the Future” testing program, and how it affects departmental productivity and morale at Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia. The research study surveyed forty, first shift hourly employees in the Liquid Focused Factory.

The goals were to determine whether the implementation of a testing program would negatively influence hourly employee morale, whether tests were viewed differently by the different job classifications, how do hourly employees feel members of management view the testing process, and the resistance of it by the hourly employees, whether there a direct relationship between the hourly employees test fears and their overall job performance, and were the hourly employees fears based on the test itself or is it a fear of change?

The significance of this study was based on the fact that businesses have had a problem of screening potential employees and retaining their current employees. The rate of technological advances in the workplace has only managed to amplify the

situation. Not only do today's businesses need to concentrate on the screening of potential employees, but they also need to concentrate on the development of their existing workforce. Skills based testing will not only help during pre-employment screening, but it can also be a useful tool to size up the existing workforce for the purpose of team-building (Nicholson, 2000, p. 102). This study showed how the hourly employees fears of the "Into the Future" testing program affected departmental productivity and morale at Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals in Richmond, Virginia.

Conclusions

The goals of this research were to answer the following questions:

- 1 Does the implementation of a testing program negatively influence hourly employee morale? The overall median score was a three when asked about their fears of the testing program. The overall median score was a three when asked about their anger of the testing program. The overall median score was a three when asked about both their fears and anger after taking the tests. So, the research showed that overall the hourly employees' did not have any fear or anger about the test itself either before or after they took it.
2. Are tests viewed differently by the different job classifications (i.e., Production Operators, Operations Mechanics, Team Leaders, and Material Handlers)? The overall median score was a four when asked whether they thought the test would apply to their particular job classifications. Operators had a median score of four, Team Leaders a three, Mechanics a one, and Material Handlers a three and one

half. The overall median score was a one when asked whether they thought the test did apply to their particular job classifications after they had taken it. Operators had a median score of one, Team Leaders a four, Mechanics a one, and Material Handlers a one and one half. So, operators scored closer to the overall population than any other groups when asked about the test before it was taken. Team Leaders in general seemed to accept the test process the best, while Mechanics seemed to be the most cynical of the process.

3. How do hourly employees feel members of management view the testing process, and the resistance of it by the hourly employees? The overall median score was a two when asked whether they thought Management understood their perception of the tests. Overall the hourly employees' feel that the tests themselves did not pertain to their particular job and that their site management does not understand their fears or concerns.
4. Is there a direct relationship between the hourly employees test fears and their overall job performance? The overall median score was a four when asked whether they thought their work output was decreased before the tests were taken. The overall median score was a three when asked whether they thought their work output was decreased after the first test was taken. So, overall and within the Operators and Material Handlers, the hourly employees' felt that anxiety had affected their work performance before they took the tests. This anxiety subsided after the tests were completed with the exception of the Material Handlers.

5. Are the hourly employees fears based on the test itself or is it a fear of change? The overall median score was a three when asked whether it was fear and anger of the testing program or of the unknown. Operators had a median score of three, Team Leaders a one and one half, Mechanics a three, and Material Handlers a three. So, the data showed that all groups except for the Team Leaders were neutral on this topic. The Team Leaders indicated that there was no fear of the unknown but of the testing process itself.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions made, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- The testing process itself should remain in place.
- The testing process should be sub-divided by job classifications to better meet the individual groups needs.
- The test should be revised to be job specific, and site management should take an active role in the preparation and administration of the testing process.
- More discussion should be undertaken prior to the administration of the test to ease employees' fears, which would allow them to better concentrate on their daily job assignments.
- Even though it was established that it was not a fear of the unknown, management should still institute a communication process prior to testing to answer any

employees' questions or concerns. This will eliminate fears and anger in the hourly employees and foster communication and trust between the two groups.

- Another study should be conducted of the “Into the Future” testing program one year after the above-mentioned recommendations have been put into place. The purpose of this study will be to track the progress of these recommendations and to identify any future issues that may need to be addressed to ensure the success of the program.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A, Sample of Research Survey: Survey to Identify Employees' Feelings Towards a Corporate Testing Program

APPENDIX B, Sample of Survey Introduction Letter

APPENDIX C, Sample of Survey Permission Letter

APPENDIX D, Sample of Survey Cover Letter

APPENDIX A

Sample of Research Survey: Survey to Identify Employees' Feelings

Towards a Corporate Testing Program

Survey to Identify Employees' Feelings Towards a Corporate Testing Program

Please score the following questions using the scale listed below:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Score

Question

- _____ 1. When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel frightened?
- _____ 2. When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel angry?
- _____ 3. After you had taken the first set of tests did your fears go away?
- _____ 4. After you had taken the first set of tests did your anger go away?
- _____ 5. When you first were told that there was going to be an employee testing program did you feel that the test itself would apply to your particular job classification?
- _____ 6. After you had taken the first set of tests did you feel that the test itself would apply to your particular job classification?
- _____ 7. Do you feel that the site Management understands your perception of the testing process?
- _____ 8. Do you feel that your work output and your ability to concentrate at work were decreased while you were waiting to take the first test?
- _____ 9. Do you feel that your work output and your ability to concentrate at work were decreased after you took the first test?
- _____ 10. Has your fear or anger of the testing process subsided since you have completed the tests?

_____ 11. Looking back now do you feel that your fear or anger was of the unknown and not the test itself?

· Thank you for your participation in this survey. All responses will be kept anonymous. Please **DO NOT** write your name anywhere on this paper.

Survey Number: _____

APPENDIX B

Sample of Survey Introduction Letter

Memo

To: All Liquid Factory Supervisors
From: Brian Anderson
CC: File
Date: 7/13/2002
Re: Employee Surveys

A survey will be distributed to your employees in the near future dealing with the topic of the "Into the Future" employee-testing program. This survey is being conducted to gather information for a research project I am conducting for my Masters Degree. If you have any questions as to how the information will be used, or if you have any other concerns you can contact me directly and I will try to answer them to the best of my ability. Thank you for your support in this endeavor.

APPENDIX C

Sample of Survey Permission Letter

Memo

This memo is to inform all those who are concerned that Brian Anderson does have permission to distribute a survey to all Liquid Factory hourly employees. Participation in this survey will be on a voluntary basis and all those involved will be informed that this survey is being done as part of a research project to satisfy a requirement for his masters degree. Also, all those involved will be informed that this survey is in no way connected to Wyeth-Ayerst Pharmaceuticals or any of its agents.

APPENDIX D

Sample of Survey Cover Letter

Memo

To: All First Shift Liquid Factory Employees
From: Brian Anderson
CC: File
Date: 7/13/2002
Re: Employee Surveys

This survey is being administered as part of a Graduate Research Project to satisfy a requirement for a Masters Degree at Old Dominion University. This is in no way connected to Wyeth Ayerst Pharmaceuticals or any of its agents. All information gathered will be held in the highest of confidence, and all responses to this survey will be anonymous. Participation in this survey is on a voluntary basis, please have the surveys completed and returned to me at your earliest possible convenience. Thank you for your cooperation in this endeavor.