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SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

The Graduate School

March, 1966

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION

BY Karel Ann George

ENTITLED A SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS TO DETERMINE THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS OF  
BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF Master of Science in Education

Mary M. Brady  
In Charge of Thesis

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Recommendation concurred in\*

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Committee  
for the  
Final Examination\*

\*Required for doctor's degree only

A SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS TO DETERMINE THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS OF  
BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

by

Karol Ann George

B.S. in Ed., Southern Illinois University, 1962

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the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science in Education

(Division of Education, in the Graduate School)  
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(Edwardsville Campus)

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## INTRODUCTION

Today, over 75,500,000<sup>1</sup> persons make up the total labor force in the United States, filling positions which require every level of skill and authority. Many of these persons are not properly placed and are, therefore, dissatisfied with their work. Some are seriously maladjusted to their work. A great many of these dissatisfied persons would be happier and more productive in other occupations.

Another sizable number of the working population are indifferent to their jobs. Others, who are not really misplaced, would be discontented with any job into which they entered.

As a practical principle applicable to all of us, it would be rare to discover a job placement which offers to its holder complete satisfaction of all his needs. There are, thus, few persons who may be said to be, and actually are, in the job which fits their needs like a custom-made suit.<sup>2</sup>

The preparation of young men and women for gainful and productive careers in office employment is no longer the easily achieved undertaking it was forty to fifty years ago. Today, more than in the past, employees must adjust successfully and quickly to office patterns which have become increasingly complicated and promise to become even more complex.

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<sup>1</sup>U.S., Bureau of the Census, STATISTICAL ABSTRACT OF THE UNITED STATES: 1964 (85th ed.; Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 216.

<sup>2</sup>James E. Gates and Harold Miller, PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT TO BUSINESS (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958), pp. 6-7.



This adjustment, in a great many cases, is not easy. Too often, a person finds employment; but disillusionment follows, as he discovers too late that he is not qualified for a happy and contented life with the job at hand.

Business educators have a responsibility for preparing young men and women for life adjustment by aiding youth in the development of knowledges and skills. Educators cannot, however, do this alone; they need help from prospective employers who possess knowledge which is needed by educators to meet the needs of future beginning office workers. As Meyers states:

If effective communication between businessmen and educators is not properly developed, educators are sorely handicapped, being forced to work without a complete knowledge of the business communities' basic employment requirements. Since those requirements do change, educators and businessmen must remain in close rapport.<sup>3</sup>

Myers adds:

Unless reciprocal efforts of both employers and educators in a community are achieved and sustained permanently, the quality of business education there is doomed to stagnate . . . . business education planning must occur now, individually in local business communities and collectively through the forces of our educational and business associations.<sup>4</sup>

Today, more than ever before, it is becoming increasingly necessary for businessmen and business educators to work closely with one another toward the common objective of providing sufficient numbers of employable workers who can be properly placed in forms of office employment in each business community.

<sup>3</sup>W. L. Meyers, "Develop the Office Skills Your Community Will Need, OFFICE, LVII (January, 1963), 118, 209-272.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



This researcher purports then to bring businessmen and business educators closer together by surveying employers to determine the problems of beginning office workers. At Roxana High School, a survey of this type needs to be done since one has never been undertaken. In addition, the researcher felt that the high school must assume a responsibility for preparing students in areas other than skill areas, that is, in areas which pertain to getting and holding the job.

## CHAPTER I

### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to set, define, and limit the problem.

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this survey was to determine the nature of the problems of beginning office workers as seen by employers in selected business firms employing Roxana High School graduates in order to implement the secretarial-clerical courses at Roxana High School, Roxana, Illinois. Implementation of this survey will be based on answers to the following questions:

1. Should the present secretarial-clerical courses at Roxana High School be changed in order to make these courses more effective in preparing beginning office workers?
2. Should any changes be made in the secretarial-clerical curriculum at Roxana High School?

#### Significance of the Study

This survey is significant because it indicates the present status and nature of the problems of beginning office workers as seen by employers of Roxana graduates. The study was designed to reveal whether present procedures, practices, and/or content should be

continued, eliminated, added to, or emphasized differently in the secretarial-clerical courses as a whole or in the individual parts of the courses.

This survey should reveal insights into the problems involved in the overall business education curriculum at Roxana pertaining to instructional practices, testing procedures, and instructional equipment. In addition, the researcher hopes that the study will be of value in contributing to the establishment of course standards at Roxana High School.

Furthermore, the study should be of benefit to personnel managers, counselors, and to beginning office workers in the identification of problems of beginning office workers.

#### Need for the Study

The major purpose of business education in the high school is the preparation of students for entrance into a business career. However, in order to adequately prepare students, the school must be in constant touch with the business community in order to know the businessman's needs and requirements for beginning office jobs as well as the problems beginning office workers are having.

In addition to getting this information, community surveys improve the relationship between the school and community. This advantage is stressed by Forrest Mayer who states that

community surveys of occupations opportunities and training requirements are not new, but they can still do much for school and community relations. Businessmen who are actively involved in sponsoring such a survey are inclined to be less critical of the school, its attempts at vocational training, and its graduates.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Forrest L. Mayer, "The Community Survey--A Grassroots Approach," BUSINESS EDUCATION FORUM, XIII (October, 1958), 27.



The opportunity for a community survey is further stressed by Theodore Yerian.

Businessmen are easy to approach and are, in most areas, ready and willing to be of assistance to the business education program . . . . Business education, especially, has opportunity for ready access to the very business heart of the community . . . . Businessmen take pride in assisting an educational program that has part of its make-up in the training of workers for their use. They see a tangible and economic return to business in general; and consequently, feel an ownership type of loyalty that probably no other school department can enjoy.<sup>6</sup>

The need for community surveys on the local level in another authoritative source stated that: "Hundreds of studies have been made on both a national basis and a local basis to determine what businessmen want. Every community should make its own survey of the opportunities for business employment and the requirements of employers."<sup>7</sup>

An example of these studies which shows the need for a survey is reported by Anderson.

A dynamic business curriculum must be in line with current business methods and practices. As one means of developing such a curriculum for the Phoenix Christian High School, a survey was made of 24 offices in Phoenix to develop practical instructional materials, to determine levels of achievement and standards to be established, and to serve as one means of guidance in selecting equipment needed to carry on a functional office training program.<sup>8</sup>

Several studies have been written which indicate the need for further identification of the problems of beginning office workers.

<sup>6</sup>Theodore Yerian, "Business Men Co-operate with Business Education," UBEA FORUM, IV (May, 1950), 9-11.

<sup>7</sup>MONOGRAPH 83 (2nd ed. rev.; Chicago: South-Western Publishing Co., 1959), p. 3.

<sup>8</sup>Dean C. Anderson, "Requirements for Beginning Office Employees," BUSINESS EDUCATION FORUM, XI (December, 1956), 27-28.

One such study is a research paper by Joyce Niemeier, in which she states that a survey of the employers of Roxana business education graduates would be desirable as the information obtained would be very helpful to the business faculty of Roxana in evaluating their curriculum and in preparing students for their first positions.<sup>9</sup>

Another study, made by Doris Berry, indicates the need for a survey of offices in local areas to determine the duties of the initial clerical employee and also to determine the areas in which businessmen believe that high school training needs to be given.<sup>10</sup>

Frank Liguori made a study in which he states that "the high school should modify their [sic] course offerings and course content as shown to be desirable through follow-up studies of graduates and frequent conferences with employers to determine what they expect of beginning office workers."<sup>11</sup>

An article written by an employer stresses a related need.

In offices, the ratio is about one out of five-- that is, we hire one out of every five who visit our employment offices. Why? . . . . The reasons for rejection are many. Here are some of the most common, grouped into three broad categories: medical, skills, and personal . . . . As we review this list of rejections, it becomes apparent that many of the people can

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<sup>9</sup>Joyce Niemeier, "A Follow-up Study of the Clerical and Secretarial Graduates of Roxana Community High School 1961-1963" (unpublished Master's research paper, Department of Education, Southern Illinois University, 1965), p. 59.

<sup>10</sup>Doris Berry, "The Role of Office Practice Instruction in the Training for General Office Assignments (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1963).

<sup>11</sup>Frank E. Liguori, "Problems of Beginning Office Workers" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh), p. 129.



be helped. And since the help they need must fall in the area of counseling, skill training, and personality development, the best place we can offer them help is in the vocational-training departments of our schools.<sup>12</sup>

These writings are only some of the many which indicate the need for and value of follow-up surveys similar to the one made in the present study.

### Assumptions

While conducting this survey and writing this paper, the researcher assumed that:

1. All beginning office workers, in general, experience problems.
2. Many of the problems beginning office workers experience in getting the job and in holding the job are the same as those experienced by Roxana High School graduates.
3. In general the problems of former beginning office workers will be the problems of future beginning office workers.
4. Respondents have in some fashion developed an opinion or attitude toward the topic under study.

### Definitions

In order that the exact meaning of certain terms used in this study be clearly understood, they are defined as follows:

Beginning office worker: Any person having graduated from high school and having no more than one year of work experience.

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<sup>12</sup>Wilbert E. Scheer, "Why Are So Many Job Applicants Rejected?" BUSINESS EDUCATION WORLD, XXXVII (March, 1957), 19, 44.



First-year employment: Any and all clerical (office) positions held during the first year after graduation.

Roxana graduates: Graduates of the secretarial-clerical curriculum at Roxana High School from the years 1955 to 1964.

Secretarial-clerical courses: The final courses in the sequence of courses which make up the secretarial-clerical curriculum of a high school.

Secretarial-clerical curriculum: Those courses which make a sequence of courses whose goal is the attainment by the student of a high standard of education in the broadest sense of the word in the secretarial-clerical subject matter area.

#### Limitations

This study has been limited to:

1. companies hiring three or more female secretarial-clerical graduates of Roxana High School from 1955 to 1964.
2. companies whose personnel directors or managers could be interviewed.
3. companies hiring Roxana graduates who had no more than two positions in one year at two different companies.

#### Delimitations

This study was delimited by:

1. the researcher's knowledge and ability to interpret the data.
2. the researcher's ability to use the interview technique effectively.

3. the appropriateness of the technique used.

4. the fact that if another data-collection technique had been used different results might have been obtained.

5. the amount of related literature available which could be reviewed.

6. the opinions of those surveyed.

7. the fact that the expressed wants of a businessman may not be his needs.

8. the fact that answers of the interviewee may not be reliable.

This chapter set, defined, and limited the problem of the survey. The next chapter will deal with research studies related to this study.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE OF A RELATED NATURE

Many studies have been made which are closely related to this study. Since it was impossible to review all of this literature, an attempt was made to select that literature which is most pertinent to the study. The fact that much has been written on this topic leads the researcher to believe that the topic under study is an important one.

By conducting a survey of selected businesses to determine the secretarial and clerical requirements as stated by an employer from each firm personally contacted, Raymond A. Ward of the University of North Dakota found that:

1. Eleven male and 197 female secretarial and clerical office workers were employed in the 25 firms surveyed.
2. Of the 58 female employees possessing a shorthand dictation skill, 33 used shorthand on the job.
3. Ten employers stated that they would pay higher salaries to the office worker who possessed shorthand dictation skill.
4. One hundred and eighty-five manual typewriters and 59 electric typewriters were used in the firms surveyed.
5. Most of the employers commented that the typewriting skill possessed by the office worker was adequate.
6. Major strengths of employees as reported by employers were willingness to learn and machine skills; weaknesses of employees were inability to spell and lack of job interest.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Raymond A. Ward, "A Survey of Employers in Selected Business Firms in Grand Forks, North Dakota, To Determine the Office Requirements for Clerical and Secretarial Workers," NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY, XXXII, No. 1 (Fall, 1963), 56.



Patricia A. Rothermel made a study of businesses to ascertain knowledges, skills, and attitudes that employers consider essential for successful clerical performance. Her conclusions were:

1. Nearly 40 percent of the firms hired part-time workers and about 10 percent of the clerical workers were part-time employees.
2. About 40 percent tested clerical applicants and more than one-half of these firms used routine letters and straight copy to test typewriting ability and routine letters to test shorthand dictation ability.
3. Nearly one-half of these firms did not require a minimum speed in typewriting or shorthand dictation.
4. Most important knowledges were planning the day's work, preparing receipts, keeping cash records, applying principles of filing, and keeping a neat office.
5. Most important subject matter was spelling, basic arithmetic, analytical ability, and English.
6. Most important skills were handling telephone calls and meeting callers.
7. Most important attitudes were job attitude and attitude toward co-workers and public.<sup>14</sup>

By sending a questionnaire to 119 office workers at 65 manufacturing companies, Walter Holmes collected data for helping prospective office workers adjust in business. By identifying practical problem areas through classifying office workers as to their background and status, ascertaining opinions of where certain knowledges should be obtained, and establishing a degree of importance on various job factors and job attitudes, the study showed:

1. Manufacturing companies offer many varied job opportunities as was illustrated by 64 different job title classifications reported.

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<sup>14</sup> Patricia A. Rothermel, "A Study of the Skill and Knowledge Requirements of Clerical Workers in the Oceanside-Carlsbad Area," *THE NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY*, XXVIII, No. 1 (Fall, 1959), 63.

2. Office workers believe that knowledge about on-the-job relationships with office workers and supervisors, scope of office jobs, promotions and security, company policies and practices, supply economy, housekeeping habits, resourcefulness and initiative, and quality and quantity of work expected should be obtained through work experience and school.
3. Fifty factors pertaining to job productivity and satisfaction were reported as being very important. These factors included the areas of supervision, situations with fellow office workers, job factors, company policies, and personality and character traits.
4. Through 50 direct questions, it was revealed that office workers do have problems and that office conditions and circumstances differ.<sup>15</sup>

In evaluating the present business education high school curriculum and guidance program in Muscatine, Iowa, Kenneth Fread made a study of 52 industrial firms to gain information that would be useful. His findings were:

1. Additional surveys are needed.
2. One or more electric typewriters should be purchased.
3. A part-time program for seniors should be considered.
4. Students should be counseled as to the number and kinds of jobs available.
5. Present skill standards should be maintained with emphasis on accuracy.
6. Addition of a second year of bookkeeping course and an office practice course should be considered.<sup>16</sup>

In her study of selection procedures of beginning office workers, Jean Quarve surveyed 124 business concerns. Her conclusions were:

<sup>15</sup>Walter M. Holmes, "A Study of Office Workers' Attitudes Toward Their Jobs," THE NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY, XXVIII, No. 1 (Fall, 1959), 32-33.

<sup>16</sup>Kenneth Lee Fread, "A Survey of the Requirements for Beginning Office Workers in Industrial Firms in Muscatine, Iowa," THE NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY, XXVII, No. 1 (Fall, 1958), 26.



1. The most frequently used sources for recruitment of beginning office personnel were the voluntary applicants, indicated by 92 firms; the advertising want ads, indicated by 86 firms; and the commercial agency, indicated by 85 firms.
2. A preliminary or screening interview was used by 107 of the 120 firms responding.
3. Job specification is used as a guide to hiring in 80 of the 120 firms.
4. Firms requiring the applicant to fill out an application blank numbered 118; 68 firms have a special form for office employees.
5. The following information was checked with reference to the applicant: character references, work histories, and educational history.
6. Of the 120 firms surveyed in this study, 117 indicated a willingness to hire married women.
7. Minimum hiring ages by firms in this study ranged from 16 years to 22 years; maximum hiring ages ranged from 20 years to over 65 years.
8. Most of the firms contacted give some sort of test to office applicants. Typewriting tests were given by 84 firms, shorthand tests by 64 firms, and intelligence tests by 34 firms.
9. Sixty-five of the firms contacted do not require a medical examination.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Sister Magdalena Shelly made a study of businesses to reassess the contemporary approved secondary school preparation of adolescents from the viewpoint of current requirements for beginning office workers. She found:

1. Since the problems of one eventually become the more acute problems of the other, it is mutually advantageous for business education personnel to share with office managers (through business organizations) the burdens of effective education of future office workers.

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<sup>17</sup>Jean M. Quarve, "Selection Procedures of Beginning Office Personnel," THE NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY, XXVII, No. 1 (Fall, 1958), 59-60.



2. Basic skills of English and mathematics are the outstanding skill weaknesses of those now trained.
3. Maladjustments in personality are the primary causes of dismissal of office personnel; skill deficiencies are listed as secondary causes.
4. Stenographic and clerical fields offered the greatest opportunity for employment of those students who have high school education only and who wish to become office workers.<sup>18</sup>

Frank Liguori, in his dissertation, "Problems of Beginning Office Workers," conducted interviews in the greater Cincinnati, Ohio, and the greater Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, areas to determine the nature of the problems of beginning female office workers as experienced by beginning employees and as seen by the employers. His findings indicate that:

1. A majority of the high school graduates did not possess adequate training and information for locating job opportunities.
2. Few high school graduates had adequate understanding of the details of the job application blank, the job interview, job references, and employment tests.
3. The job aspirations of beginning office workers were not in keeping with what business could offer them.
4. There is evidence that beginning workers encountered considerable difficulties in various skills.
5. The lack of such desirable personal qualities as tact, courteousness, dependability, self-confidence, initiative, and the use of common sense created problems in job finding and job holding.
6. Although the percentages are not high, the fact that percentages exist, indicates that there is some evidence that problems of beginning office workers are associated with unsatisfactory working conditions.

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<sup>18</sup>Sister Magdalena Shelly, S.N.D., "A Study of Requirements for and Deficiencies of Beginning Office Workers in Selected Firms of the Manhattan Area, New York, New York," THE NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY, XXXII, No. 1 (Fall, 1963), 47.

7. The necessity for adjusting to the realities of a working life so different from the life in the classroom caused many beginning workers to question their choice of a particular position or occupation and brought about a positive feeling of confusion and unhappiness.
8. Even though business and education have entered into a new era of cooperation, it is evident that this cooperation program must be developed to a considerably greater state of effectiveness if adequate job counseling and job training are to occur in schools.<sup>19</sup>

The studies heretofore reviewed are similar to this study in that all of them dealt with job application, interview, orientation, skills, and/or relationships. However, these studies differ from the present one in that this study included only those businesses employing Roxana High School graduates and in that an attempt was made to implement only the secretarial-clerical program at Roxana High School.

Other studies rather closely related to the present study are those which dealt with the opinions of graduates concerning the problems of beginning office workers as seen by graduates themselves.

One such study was made by John Davitt in which he evaluated the effectiveness of the business curriculum as revealed by opinions of the graduates. His findings were:

1. Thirty-three percent of the graduates attended college. Eighteen percent of these graduates were still attending college at the time they answered the questionnaire.
2. Direct application was the method used by 36 percent of the graduates in obtaining initial employment.
3. Twenty-five different job titles were indicated by the graduates. "Straight typewriting" was the most frequent individual office assignment.

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<sup>19</sup>Liguori, op. cit., pp. 127-130.



4. Sixty-six business employees indicated their employment offered opportunity for advancement. Sixty-two persons had received a promotion.
5. Seventy-two percent of the graduates are using their business preparation. Sixty-two percent of those participating in the study said their high school education qualified them for a position in business.
6. Typewriting and English were mentioned in the majority of cases as the most valuable subjects studied in high school. Shorthand and history were considered least valuable business and nonbusiness high school subjects.
7. Sixty-six percent of the graduates said they made little or no personal use of shorthand.
8. Eighty-two percent of the graduates made personal use of typewriting. Sixty-eight percent said they had made business use of typewriting.
9. Sixty-two percent of the graduates checked basic business as being a subject that should be offered at Alexander Ramsey. Distributive education was also very popular as a program that should be offered.<sup>20</sup>

Davitt's study points up that graduates do not always see the problems of beginning office workers as being identical to the problems of these workers as seen by employers.

Another study, by Joyce Niemeier, which was a follow-up study of the 1961, '62, and '63 secretarial graduates of Roxana High School to determine the companies where graduates were first employed, the duties they performed, the training that was required, the companies where they were presently employed, the duties they performed, the training that was required, and the recognition for that training which the graduates received resulted in the following findings:

1. Of the 128 graduates surveyed, 118 replied, or 92.1 percent.

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<sup>20</sup>John J. Davitt, "A Study of the Business Department and Its Graduates of Alexander Ramsey High School," THE NATIONAL BUSINESS EDUCATION QUARTERLY, XXIX, No. 1 (Fall, 1960), 21.

2. Of the 118, 110 reported they had worked at some time.
3. Of the 110, 49 reported they are now working at positions other than their first positions.
4. Over one-third of the respondents went to St. Louis for their first positions.
5. Over one-third were first employed by businesses with twenty-five or fewer employees.
6. Three-fourths did office type work in their first positions.
7. Typing and filing were the most frequent types of office work done.
8. Nearly two-thirds had a personal interview for their first position; over one-half obtained the information about the job from an employment agency.
9. The second year of shorthand seemed to be helpful in obtaining some positions but the first year did not.<sup>21</sup>

In this chapter, selected studies were reviewed which are closely related to this study. Studies similar to the present study dealt with job application, interview, orientation, skills, and/or relationships. However, these studies differ from the present one in that this study included only those businesses employing Roxana High School graduates and in that an attempt was made to implement only the secretarial-clerical program at Roxana High School.

Other studies dealing with the opinions of graduates concerning the problems of beginning office workers as seen by graduates themselves were also reviewed. These studies show that graduates do not always see the problems of beginning office workers as being identical to the problems of these workers as seen by the employer. Niemeier has already studied Roxana graduates' to learn their problems

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<sup>21</sup>Niemeier, op. cit., pp. 54-55.



as beginning office workers. This researcher surveyed selected employers of Roxana graduates to learn their opinions and attitudes concerning the nature of the problems of beginning office workers in general. Since these problems would be applicable to all Roxana business education graduates, the combined studies make possible a broader view of these problems in order to implement the secretarial-clerical program at Roxana High School.

## CHAPTER III

### PLAN OF RESEARCH

The preceding chapter dealt with those studies related to the present topic under study. This chapter will explain the selection of employers for participation in the present study and the method used in obtaining information to determine the problems of beginning office workers in obtaining and holding jobs to be discussed in Chapter IV.

#### General Procedure

Two major tasks were involved: First, the development of an interview guide; second, selecting and interviewing employers.

Since an interview guide developed by Frank Liguori was found suitable for the purposes of this study, permission was secured from him to use his guide (See Appendix I.) with modifications if these became necessary.

Employers were selected on the basis of a tally kept on the follow-up questionnaires which were returned by business graduates to Roxana High School. Through personal interviews with employers, data concerning the problems of beginning office workers were collected.



### Selection of Employers for Participation in the Study

After the names of organizations employing the largest number of Roxana graduates was determined, a decision was made to include all those organizations hiring three or more graduates as Niemeier's study indicated that most Roxana graduates were hired in offices with twenty-five or fewer employees.

To obtain the names of organizations hiring three or more female secretarial and clerical graduates from 1955 to 1964, a search through the follow-up questionnaire files of the Business Education Department of Roxana High School was made. The name of each organization qualifying was listed on an 8½ x 14 sheet of white paper; and a tally was placed by each name as the researcher determined that a student had worked at that organization for one year or less, as only workers with one year or less of experience were to be included. Table 1 shows the distribution of graduates hired by each of the organizations.

Table 1 also shows the approximate total of office workers and types of organizations represented by the employers interviewed. The organizations of the 15 employers interviewed employed office workers ranging in number from 2500 to 15. The 15 employers selected represented 11 different types of organizations. The variance in background and experience of employers interviewed, coupled with the variations in size and type of businesses, provided a representative sampling for this research.

### Method Used in Obtaining Information

After securing permission to use Liguori's interview guide with modifications, a letter (See Appendix II.) was written to the selected

employers requesting an appointment for an interview. Approximately two to three days later each employer was contacted by telephone to secure a definite appointment.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF ROXANA GRADUATES EMPLOYED ACCORDING  
TO SIZE AND TYPE OF ORGANIZATION AND  
APPROXIMATE TOTAL OF OFFICE EMPLOYEES

Type of Organization	No. of Roxana Grads. Employed 1955-1964	Approx. Total of Office Employees
Mfr. of Ammunition	20	450
Mfr. of Space and Aircraft	17	2500
Mfr. of Automotive Products	10	300
University	10	480
Mfr. of Paper Products	5	-----*
Mfr. of Glass Products	5	100
Banking	5	1200
Insurance	5	175
Banking	5	914
Hospital	4	65
Communications	4	135
Banking	3	-----*
Hospital	3	45
High School	3	15
Hospital	3	27

\*Information not made available to researcher.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher restated the purpose of the survey reminding the employer that the information would not be identified with his name or the organization name. During the interview, all comments made by the employer were recorded in shorthand. (See Appendix IV.)

This chapter explained the procedure for selecting employers for participation in the study and the methods used in obtaining information to determine the problems of beginning office workers in obtaining and holding jobs which are discussed in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER IV

### PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS IN OBTAINING AND HOLDING OFFICE JOBS

The purpose of this chapter is to point out the problems of beginning office workers as those problems were seen by 15 employers interviewed for this study.

Since employers were asked to think not in terms of an individual but of beginning office workers as a whole, their opinions of problems were general rather than specific.

The answers given by the employers to specific questions on the interview guide are presented in the tables of this chapter. The complete tabulation of answers to the questions on the employer's interview guide will be found in Appendix III.

Comments recorded in shorthand during the interviews are presented in Appendix IV. These represent the employers' thoughts about the problems beginning office workers generally encounter. Therefore, these comments should be of value to personnel managers, to counselors, and to beginning office workers in the identification of problems of beginning office workers.

#### Problems of Beginning Office Workers in Obtaining Office Jobs

##### Locating Job Opportunities

Although employers did not agree as to the problems of office workers on the job, there were several who indicated the existence of

problems in obtaining jobs. Table 2 gives the responses of the employers concerning these problems of beginning office workers in locating jobs.

TABLE 2  
PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS IN  
LOCATING JOBS AS INDICATED  
BY EMPLOYERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
In looking for a job, do beginning office workers generally encounter any problems concerning the		
kind of job for which to look?	33	67
manner of obtaining job leads?	27	73
method of making the initial contact?	37	64
name of the person she has to see?	54	46
use of public-private employment agencies?	33	67

One-third of the employers indicated that beginning employees did not know the kind of job for which to look. Over one-fourth said that beginning workers did not know how to obtain job leads. Thirty-six per cent felt that the workers did not know the correct method for making the initial contact for a job. Slightly more than half asserted that the workers did not know the name of the persons they had to see when applying for a position. One-third of the employers believed that these beginning workers did not understand the functions of public and private employment agencies.



and neighbors were sources used by seventy-nine and sixty-nine per cent, respectively.

The high school as a source for obtaining job leads was mentioned by sixty-nine per cent of the employers. Sixty-two per cent of the employers pointed out that beginning workers obtained job leads through employment agencies, but only thirty-eight per cent of the employers said that their beginning workers came to their company because of advertisements in the local paper.

Table 4 gives the replies of the employers to questions concerning the beginning workers' methods of making the initial company contact. This table indicates that 86 per cent of the employers said their beginning workers made their initial job contact in person. The remainder mentioned that the beginning workers' first contact was made by telephone or by letter of application.

TABLE 4

METHODS USED BY BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS  
IN MAKING THE INITIAL COMPANY CONTACT

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
In applying for a job, how do your beginning workers generally make their initial contact?		
In person?	86	14
Telephone call?	7	93
Letter of application?	7	93

The employers also thought that beginning office workers were not able to assess their qualifications and skills in relation to the

demands of the job. Because of this inability, employers felt that beginning office workers often chose jobs for which they were unsuited temperamentally or for which there was little employment demand. As is indicated by Table 5, a high percentage do select jobs for which they have been trained.

TABLE 5  
THE ABILITY OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS  
TO SELECT THE CORRECT JOB

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
In seeking work, do beginning office workers generally select the kind of job		
in which they are interested?	79	21
for which there is an employment demand?	46	54
for which they are suited temperamentally?	58	42
for which they have been trained?	79	21

Over half of the employers felt that beginning workers did not select jobs in which there was an employment demand. In addition, 42 per cent indicated that these workers were not suited temperamentally for their jobs.

However, 79 per cent did feel that the beginning workers had selected jobs in which they were interested and for which they had been trained.



### The Application Blank

Many employers felt that high school graduates were unfamiliar with application blanks. Table 6 shows the replies of employers to questions concerning the supplying of information on application blanks by their beginning workers.

TABLE 6  
PREPARATION OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS  
TO COMPLETE AN APPLICATION BLANK

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Do beginning applicants generally feel well orientated with respect to completing application blanks?	60	40
appear to have studied sample application blanks prior to her job interview?	54	46
know the type of information the typical application blank asks?	64	36
find any parts of the application blank especially difficult to understand?	36	64
think the application blank asks too many irrelevant questions?	15	85

As the table indicates, two-fifths of the employers did not feel that the beginning workers were well orientated with respect to completing application blanks. Almost half of the employers thought the beginners had not studied application blanks prior to their job interviews. Thirty-six per cent of the employers said their beginning workers did not know the type of information the typical application blank asks and the same percentage of employers declared that their

workers found parts of the application blank especially difficult to understand. Only 15 per cent said that the beginning workers thought the application blanks asked too many irrelevant questions.

### The Job Interview

Before selecting an applicant, a considerable number of companies gave more than one job interview for each job applicant. Table 7 shows the number of interviews the employers gave for selecting each of their applicants. Only 24 per cent of the employers interviewed applicants once, while 29 per cent of them interviewed prospective employees twice. One-third of the employers interviewed applicants three times, and 14 per cent of them administered four interviews.

TABLE 7  
NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS GRANTED  
TO EACH JOB APPLICANT

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
How many interviews do you give each job applicant?		
One	24	
Two	29	
Three	33	
Four	14	
Do they generally come alone for the interview?	92	8

Almost none of the employers said that high school graduates generally made the mistake of going to the interview in company with another person.



With the possible exception of the personal data sheet, most of the employers felt that the graduates were adequately prepared to supply the information desired by the interviewer. Table 8 shows the replies of the employers concerning questions asked of the beginning workers during the job interview. In addition, the table shows the number of employers who felt their interviewees were prepared to supply the information asked during the interview. Only 27 per cent of the employers said that the prospective employee was prepared to furnish a personal data sheet. However, 47 per cent of the employers desired this information to be obtained from a data sheet.

Table 8 also indicates that there was wide diversity among employers as to the kind of information which they sought during the job interview. Most of the employers asked their beginning workers for references, information concerning work experiences, and a record of skill accomplishments. Employers were divided in their opinions on the desirability of obtaining the other information listed.

The employers' answers to questions concerning references indicated that some deficiencies exist. Table 9 shows the replies of employers concerning references when considering high school graduates for office positions.

This table shows that all of the employers required references. It is evident that more employers were interested in part-time employers of the graduates as references than in any of the others listed, though, 92 per cent of the employers were also interested in the high school principal as a reference. While two-thirds of the employers were interested in both the high school guidance counselor and the high school

business teacher as references, only one-half were interested in the person for whom the applicant had done baby sitting. Only 38 per cent said they call on the minister or priest as a reference for the graduate.

TABLE 8

INFORMATION SOUGHT DURING THE JOB INTERVIEW AND THE BEGINNING WORKERS' PREPAREDNESS TO GIVE SUCH INFORMATION

Questions	Per Cent of Replies			
	Information Sought		Prepared to Give Information	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Did you ask the applicants for the following?				
Social Security card	33	67	93	7
References	73	27	93	7
Extra-curricular activities	67	33	100	0
Names and addresses of persons for whom she did part-time work	80	20	93	7
School record (marks)	67	33	67	33
Record of skill accomplishments (speed, accuracy, and quality of work)	73	27	79	21
Personal data sheet	47	53	27	73
Hobbies	64	36	100	0
Home background	53	47	93	7
Attendance record	64	36	80	20
Personal habits	43	57	79	21
Ability to drive a car (whether or not she had a driver's license)	33	67	91	9
Her casual employment experience				
Summer vacation	93	7		
After school	80	20		
Christmas vacation	73	27		

Table 9 also points out that 21 per cent of the employers stated that the applicants did not have the full names and addresses of the references they used. Eighty-two per cent of the employers indicated



that the applicants did not ask permission of the references before they used their names.

TABLE 9  
REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO  
QUESTIONS CONCERNING REFERENCES

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Do you require references?	100	0
In which type of reference are you interested?		
High school principal	92	8
High school guidance counselor	67	33
High school business teacher	67	33
Person from whom applicant did baby sitting	50	50
Minister or priest	38	62
Part-time employer	100	0
Do the applicants generally have the names and addresses of these references?	79	21
Do the applicants generally ask permission of the references before they use their names?	18	82
Are the references furnished you always used?	93	7

Surprisingly, 7 per cent of the employers said they did not always use the references furnished them.

Table 10 shows the replies of the employers concerning the beginning office workers' answers to questions of the interviewer.

TABLE 10

TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED DURING  
THE APPLICANTS' INTERVIEW

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Do beginning office workers generally know the kind of information you want during the interview?	86	14
Do you ask the minimum salary the beginning office worker expects?	43	57
Is the question of salary usually a difficult item in the interview for beginning office workers?	20	80
If so, do they usually have a specific figure in mind?	14	86
Do you use "leading or suggestive" questions causing the interviewee to give inaccurate or wrong replies?	33	67
Do you encourage the interviewee to tell her own story about her qualifications and fitness for the job in question?	86	14
Are you frank about the chances of the prospective employees' being hired?	93	7
Before the interview do beginning office workers usually make an inventory of what they have to offer the company?	50	50
Do you ask the applicants what they have to offer the company?	73	27
Before the interview do beginning office workers usually ask themselves why they want to work with your company?	36	64
Do you ask the applicants why they want to work for your company?	80	20



The table shows that 14 per cent of the employers mentioned that the beginning office workers did not know the kind of information the employer wanted during the interview. Almost half of the employers indicated that high school graduates were asked the minimum salary they would expect, but only 14 per cent said the question of salary was a difficult item in the interview for the beginning worker. Eighty-six per cent of the employers declared that the high school graduates did not have a specific salary in mind.

Eighty-six per cent of the employers said they encouraged the interviewees to tell their own story about their qualifications and fitness for the job in question, but only one-third of them used "leading or suggestive" questions which might cause the interviewer to give inaccurate or wrong replies.

According to Table 10, 7 per cent of the employers admitted they were not frank about the applicants' chances of employment as a result of the interview.

Seventy-three per cent of the employers revealed that they asked their beginning applicants what they had to offer the company, but half of the employers felt the high school graduate could not answer this question because they had not made an inventory of what they had to offer the company.

Similarly, though four-fifths of the employers asked the beginning applicants why they wanted to work for the company, 64 per cent of the employers stated that the beginning workers had not considered this question before the interview.

### Office Job Aspirations

Generally, employers felt that the high school graduate aims too high in applying for a job. Table 11 shows the replies of employers concerning the chief types of jobs beginning office workers applied for as opposed to the jobs they actually obtained.

Fifteen per cent of the employers mentioned that secretarial work was the chief job desired, but only 5 per cent hired beginning workers as secretaries. Eleven per cent of the employers indicated that beginning workers applied for a position as a receptionist, but only 2 per cent hired beginning workers as receptionists.

Otherwise, the percentages of employers who indicated a particular type of job as being the chief job applied for by beginning workers were somewhat equal to the percentages of jobs obtained.

### Employment Tests

Table 12 gives the replies of the 15 employers to questions concerning employment tests. This table shows that more than three-fourths of the employers gave tests in shorthand, letter dictation, typewriting, and spelling. Most of those who gave these tests felt that high school graduates had enough training in all of these areas except for spelling. Seventy-seven per cent of the employers, however, indicated the graduates had insufficient training in spelling. Slightly more than half of the employers administered tests in transcription, English, and arithmetic, with 70 per cent indicating a lack of training in English.

Nearly half of the employers gave intelligence and aptitude tests, but only 22 per cent gave personality tests. Thirty-six per cent of the employers gave adaptability tests.



TABLE 11

TYPES OF JOBS DESIRED AND ACTUALLY  
OBTAINED BY BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Question	Per Cent of Replies	
	Type of Job Requested	Type of Job Obtained
What types of jobs do beginning workers generally desire and what types do they generally obtain?		
Stenography	16	14
General Clerical	22	30
Secretarial	15	5
Typewriting	20	25
Messenger	2	5
Filing	7	14
Key Punch	7	7
Receptionist	11	2

Almost all of the employers felt that high school graduates generally were not confronted by serious problems with respect to test situations. Table 13 shows the replies of the employers concerning employment tests for beginning employees.

Over three-fourths of the employers said that the beginning workers had no knowledge in advance that they had to take employment tests and that the environment of the examination room was satisfactory. Eighty-three per cent indicated that beginning workers had had previous test experience similar to the employment tests they gave. Only seven

TABLE 12

 REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING  
 EMPLOYMENT TESTS AND TRAINING FOR SUCH TESTS

Area	Do you give a test in this area?		Do you think beginning workers had enough training in this area?	
	Per Cent of Replies		Per Cent of Replies*	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Shorthand	86	14	77	23
Letter dictation	80	20	82	18
Typewriting	86	14	92	8
Straight copy	86	14	82	18
Tabulation	28	72	62	38
Rough draft	36	64	67	33
Letters	43	57	60	40
Transcription	60	40	57	43
English	60	40	30	70
Spelling	86	14	23	77
Bookkeeping	23	77	50	50
Office machines	7	93	33	67
Arithmetic	67	33	44	56
Penmanship	7	93	50	50
Intelligence test	40	60	--	--
Aptitude test	47	53	--	--
Personality	22	78	--	--
Adaptability	36	64	--	--

\*Of those who gave tests



TABLE 13

EMPLOYMENT SITUATION INVOLVED IN THE  
TESTING OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Do beginning office workers generally have any previous test experience similar to the employment tests you give?	83	17
Do beginning office workers generally have knowledge in advance that they have to take such tests?	77	23
Is the testing situation arranged so that beginning office workers are at ease while they take the tests?	93	7
Is the room quiet and comfortable and conducive to good testing?	79	21
Do the tests appear to fit the requirements of the job for which beginning office workers apply?	93	7

per cent of the employers felt that prospective employees were not at ease in the testing situation and that the tests failed to measure the basic skills which these prospective employees needed.

Instruction for Obtaining Employment

Table 14 shows the replies of the employers to questions concerning school instruction of beginning office workers in necessary information and techniques for obtaining employment.

Eighty-six per cent of the employers felt that high school graduates had not had enough instruction from a film on taking an interview and a demonstration interview. Approximately three-fourths of the employers indicated a lack of instruction with respect to a practice

interview and what to say concerning minimum or maximum salaries. More than half of them thought the graduates had insufficient instruction in writing letters of application, and half said the graduates lacked instruction with respect to what to say at the interview.

TABLE 14

REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING SCHOOL INSTRUCTION OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS IN TECHNIQUES FOR OBTAINING EMPLOYMENT

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
In your opinion do the beginning office workers generally seem to have had enough instruction with respect to		
locating job openings?	53	47
interview techniques?	53	47
application blanks?	67	33
information to have at the interview?	79	21
references?	93	7
a film on taking an interview?	14	86
a practice interview?	27	73
a demonstration interview?	14	86
what to say at the interview?	50	50
how to dress for the interview?	86	14
letter of application?	45	55
what to say concerning minimum or maximum salary?	22	78



Almost half were critical of the high school graduates' instruction in locating job openings and interview techniques, while one third said the graduates lacked instruction with respect to application blanks.

Employers were generally satisfied with the instruction the graduates had had with respect to information to have at the interview, how to dress for the interview, and references to use.

### Problems of Beginning Office Workers in Holding Office Jobs

#### Vocational Counseling

The responses of the employers show that they felt that the prospective office workers had had a considerable amount of vocational counseling. Table 15 contains the answers to questions concerning the opinions of the employers with respect to the counseling services provided by the high schools to prospective office workers.

The table shows that 79 per cent of the employers felt their beginning workers had had a planned educational program leading to completion of training in the jobs they entered. In addition, 71 per cent of the employers believed that the beginning workers had had help through individual or group counseling concerning job areas and job requirements.

At the same time, two-thirds of the employers expressed the view that the beginning workers had received no instruction concerning the important success factors and personal qualities necessary for job success.

TABLE 15

REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING  
 VOCATIONAL COUNSELING OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
In preparing for future work while in high school do beginning workers generally seem to have had		
a planned educational program leading to completion of training in the jobs they enter?	79	21
help through individual or group counseling concerning job areas and job requirements?	71	29
instruction concerning the important success factors and personal qualities necessary for job success?	33	67

#### Orientation to The Job

Some of the problems of beginning office workers may be related to the job orientation designed to prepare them for their new duties. Table 16 shows the various means the employers used to orientate their beginning office workers as they entered new jobs.

As the table shows, less than one-fifth of the employers indicated that their beginning workers were orientated by the office manager, through use of a company manual of instruction, or by attending formal training classes provided by the company. Most of the orientation was given by a supervisor or by a fellow worker.

The efficiency of the company orientation program for beginning workers seemed to be satisfactory to the employers. Table 17 gives



their replies to questions concerning the efficiency of their orientation training for the beginning workers.

TABLE 16

PROCEDURES USED BY COMPANIES IN THEIR  
JOB ORIENTATION OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Question	Per Cent of Replies
Who teaches your beginning office workers what is expected of them on their jobs?	
Office manager	16
Supervisor	36
Fellow employee	33
Manual of instructions	6
Formal training classes	9

The table shows that every one of the employers felt that the right person taught their beginning workers the details of their position; and only 7 per cent thought that their beginning workers were not given adequate time, information, orientation, and training for their new jobs.

Though most of the employers said the company continued to provide helpful supervision because the employers felt the beginning workers needed additional help, it is important to notice that 14 per cent did not provide this aid. All of the employers said that the supervisor provided continuous help, and 69 per cent said that continuous help is also provided by fellow employees. Fifty-four per cent of the employers

provided company-paid tuition for further training. A few of the employers gave help through special classes on various company procedures, but none of the employers hired outside specialists to conduct classes during or after working hours.

TABLE 17

REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE  
EFFICIENCY OF THEIR ORIENTATION FOR BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Do you think the right persons teach your beginning office workers the details of their positions?	100	0
Do you think your beginning workers are given adequate time, information, orientation, and training for their new job?	93	7
After completion of early orientation or training, does the company continue to provide helpful supervision?	86	14
If so, in what way do you continue to provide helpful supervision:		
Continuous help by supervisor?	69	31
Special classes on various company procedures?	15	85
Company-paid tuition for further training?	54	46
Special classes by an outside specialist after or during working hours?	0	100
Do you feel the beginning worker needs this kind of additional help?	93	7



### Job Skills

While employers sometimes indicated that beginning workers experienced problems in certain skill areas, they generally said that the high school training of these beginning workers had been sufficient. Table 18 shows the replies of the employers concerning questions of skill problems of their beginning workers. The table also shows the extent to which employers thought their beginning workers had been given enough training in skills for the performance of their office duties.

Eighty-six per cent of the employers said their beginners had difficulty with spelling, and more than half of them indicated their beginners encountered problems in typewriting accuracy, English grammar, punctuation, composing letters, and arithmetic. Approximately one-third of the employers pointed out that beginning workers were weak in shorthand dictation and transcription, typewriting speed, filing, and using the telephone. Only one-fifth of the employers thought their beginning employees had difficulty doing bookkeeping, with even less indicating that their employees had difficulty operating the various machines. Less than one-third of the employers, however, thought the high school training of their beginning workers in the skills mentioned was insufficient, except for the areas of filing, where 62 per cent saw a weakness, and in the use of the telephone, where 38 per cent felt that the training was insufficient.

### Attitude Toward Work

Because certain problems of beginning office workers may be connected with their attitude toward their work, Table 19 gives the

TABLE 18

REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING SKILL  
PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS AND TRAINING FOR SKILLS

Skills	Do beginners have problems in these skills?		Was their high school training geared to meet their needs in these skills?	
	Per Cent of Replies Yes	Per Cent of Replies No	Per Cent of Replies Yes	Per Cent of Replies No
In their office positions are beginners generally having any problems with				
<b>Shorthand</b>				
Taking dictation	31	69	100	0
Transcription	38	62	100	0
<b>Typewriting</b>				
Speed	36	64	93	7
Accuracy	54	46	71	29
<b>Spelling</b>	86	14	67	33
<b>English</b>				
Grammar	58	42	69	31
Punctuation	64	36	75	25
Composing letters	64	36	75	25
<b>Filing</b>	31	69	38	62
<b>Use of telephone</b>	42	58	62	38
<b>Arithmetic</b>	55	45	73	27
<b>Bookkeeping</b>	20	80	100	0
<b>Machines</b>				
Ten-key adding	11	89	100	0
Full-key adding	20	80	100	0
Rotary calculator	13	87	100	0
Printing calculator	13	87	100	0
Key-driven calculator	13	87	100	0
Key punch	13	87	100	0
Bookkeeping	11	89	100	0
Dictation/Transcription	27	73	90	10
Copying	22	78	89	11
Duplicating	10	90	80	20
Fluid	9	91	82	18
Stencil	18	82	73	27
Offset	20	80	70	30



replies of the employers to questions concerning the beginning office workers attitude toward his work as seen by the employer.

TABLE 19

REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE  
BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS' ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS WORK

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Is the work of the beginning office worker generally		
Too difficult?	17	83
Too easy?	0	100
A happy medium between being too easy or too difficult?	83	17
Interesting?	93	7
Uninteresting?	7	93
Too much to do?	22	78
Not enough to do?	14	86
A happy medium between too much and not enough to do?	64	36
Monotonous?	9	91

Only 17 per cent of the employers thought the work of their beginning office workers was too difficult, and none said it was too easy. Eighty-six per cent of them believed the beginner's work was a happy medium between being easy or difficult.

Only 7 per cent thought the beginner's work was uninteresting, and 9 per cent mentioned that the work of the beginning office workers was monotonous.

With respect to work burden, 14 per cent of the employers took the view that beginning workers did not have enough to do, but

22 per cent of them said the beginners had too much to do. Almost two-thirds of the employers, though, pointed out that the work burden was about right--neither too little nor too much.

From Table 20, it can be seen that all of the employers said that their beginning office workers were generally happy and satisfied with their jobs. However, only 40 per cent of the employers indicated that those who wished to change jobs wanted other jobs within the company. Seventeen per cent of the employers pointed out that their employees wanted to work for another company.

TABLE 20

REPLIES OF EMPLOYERS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING  
WORK SATISFACTION OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Are the beginning office workers generally happy and satisfied with their position?	100	0
Do they generally indicate that they would like to change jobs		
within your company?	40	60
for one with another company?	17	83

Personal Relationships

Information gathered from interviewing the employers shows that beginning workers encountered a number of personal relationship problems on their new jobs. Table 21 shows some of the relationship problems in which beginning office workers were involved.



TABLE 21

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS  
INVOLVING BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Have any of the following been cause of friction, problems, or difficulties for beginning workers generally in your office?		
Jealousy	67	33
Resentment to superiors	33	67
Borrowing work tools	8	92
Personality clashes	53	47
Borrowing money	14	86
Leaving work for others to do	21	79
Inconsideration	21	79
Office cliques	36	64
Non-cooperation	7	93
Unauthorized supervision by fellow employees	31	69

More than half of the employers thought that jealousy and personality clashes caused friction and some problems for beginning office workers. Approximately one-third mentioned that resentment to superiors, office cliques, and unauthorized supervision by fellow employees also caused problems. Twenty-one per cent of the employers indicated that leaving work for others to do and lack of consideration were other causes for friction. Borrowing money was pointed out by only 14 per cent of the employers as a problem, and only a few mentioned

that borrowing work tools and non-cooperation were the causes of relationship problems in their offices.

### Personal Qualities

A few employers asserted that personal appearance was a detriment and cause of some of the difficulties of the beginning office worker. Table 22 identifies some items of personal appearance and gives the replies of employers concerning appearance problems of beginning workers.

Twenty per cent or more of the employers criticized beginning office workers for body odor, inappropriate hairstyling, untidiness about clothing or self, and too much makeup. A few employers mentioned poor grooming, low-cut clothing, short skirts, sweaters, and posture as causes for problems of the beginning workers. None of the employers mentioned either sheer blouses or a lack of enough makeup as being causes for problems.

Personal qualities of beginning workers were mentioned by many employers as causes for problems within the office. Table 23 presents some work qualities and percentages of employers who indicated that these qualities caused problems or friction involving beginning office workers.

At least 40 per cent of the employers mentioned lack of self-confidence, hyper-sensitivity to criticism, lack of initiative, and carelessness as personal qualities which are often causes of problems for beginning office workers.

More than one-fifth of the employers declared that tactlessness, lack of common sense, inadaptability, laziness, and insincerity were other personal qualities which often cause friction in the office.



TABLE 22

PROBLEMS OF PERSONAL APPEARANCE  
INVOLVING BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Have any of the following personal appearance items been cause for friction, problems or difficulties for beginning workers generally in your office?		
Grooming	13	87
Low-cut clothing	7	93
Sheer blouses	0	100
Short skirts	13	87
Sweaters	7	93
Body odor	20	80
Posture	13	87
Inappropriate hairstyling	27	73
Untidiness about clothing or self	29	71
Makeup	27	73
Too much	20	80
Not enough	0	100

A few employers also said that beginning workers were sometimes discourteous and disloyal, and lack of sociability was also mentioned as a source of friction in the office. None of the employers felt that dishonesty on the part of beginning office workers was a problem.

In addition to personal qualities, many employers pointed out that some personal-work qualities were sometimes the cause of problems

TABLE 23

PROBLEMS OF PERSONAL QUALITIES INVOLVING  
BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Have any of the following personal qualities been cause of friction, problems, or difficulties for beginning workers generally in your office?		
Lack of self-confidence	40	60
Tactlessness	27	73
Lack of common sense	33	67
Discourteousness	7	93
Hyper-sensitive to criticism	40	60
Inadaptability	27	73
Dishonesty	0	100
Disloyalty	7	93
Lack of initiative	50	50
Lack of sociability	13	87
Carelessness	40	60
Laziness	33	67
Insincerity	20	80

for the beginning office workers. Table 24 presents the replies of the employers to questions concerning personal-work qualities from which problems resulted for the beginning workers.

The table shows that inaccuracy, lack of interest in work, and personal telephone calls were pointed out by at least 40 per cent of the employers as characteristics of some beginning office workers.



One-third of the employers mentioned excessive absences as well as being unable to organize work and to meet people as other causes of problems.

Twenty per cent or more of the employers pointed out that some beginning workers experienced problems because of the following personal-work deficiencies: lack of dependability, poor speaking voice, inability to follow instructions, lack of office etiquette, excessive tardiness, attention to outside things, not doing a day's work for a day's pay, not doing important things first, and inability to keep confidences.

Only a few employers pointed out flirting, clock watching, and bad language as being sources of problems for the beginning workers, and none felt that frequent visits to the washroom was a problem in their company.

#### Office Environment

A few employers felt that some problems of the beginning office workers stemmed from the company's office equipment, working hours, and the physical set-up of the office. Table 25 points out these items and also shows the replies of the employers concerning the problems beginning office workers experience as a result of these items.

Only a few employers admitted that their equipment was old and out of date, insufficient, too complicated, or not in good repair.

With respect to working hours, only 7 per cent of the employers said that the starting time caused some problems, while 20 per cent

TABLE 24

PROBLEMS OF PERSONAL-WORK QUALITIES INVOLVING  
BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Have any of the following personal-work qualities been cause of friction, problems, or difficulties for beginning workers generally in your office?		
Not dependable	29	71
Inaccurate	40	60
Unable to organize work	33	67
Unable to meet people	33	67
Poor speaking voice	20	80
Inability to follow instructions	27	73
Lack of interest in work	40	60
Flirting	13	87
Lack of office etiquette	27	73
Excessive tardiness	27	73
Excessive absences	33	67
Clock watching	13	87
Attention to outside things	20	80
Personal telephone calls	47	53
Frequent visits to the washroom	0	100
Bad language	7	93
Not doing a day's work for a day's pay	20	80
Not doing important things first	27	73
Inability to keep confidences	27	73



felt that the lunch hour was a source of difficulty for the beginning office worker. None of the employers said that overtime policy, Saturday work, or quitting time was a source of friction in their office.

Thirteen per cent of the employers indicated that their arrangement of files was a work problem for beginning workers, while 7 per cent mentioned that beginning workers were sometimes handicapped by the office lighting, the desk arrangement, the telephone arrangement, acoustics, and ventilation.

In this chapter, the problems of beginning office workers in obtaining and holding jobs as seen by 15 employers were listed and discussed. Tables which showed the responses of the employers to questions asked during the interview were prepared for the various problem areas. The following chapter will include a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations as determined by the researcher.

TABLE 25

OFFICE ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIPS  
INVOLVING BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Questions	Per Cent of Replies	
	Yes	No
Have any of the following been cause for friction, problems or difficulties for beginning workers generally in your office?		
Equipment		
Old and out-of-date	7	93
Insufficient	13	87
Too complicated to use	7	93
Satisfactory	33	67
Not in good repair	7	93
Working hours		
Starting time	7	93
Lunch hour	20	80
Overtime policy	0	100
Saturday work	0	100
Quitting time	0	100
Physical setup		
Lighting	7	93
Desk arrangement	7	93
Telephone	7	93
Files	13	87
Acoustics	7	93
Ventilation	7	93



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The purpose of this survey was to determine the nature of the problems of beginning office workers as seen by employers in selected business firms employing Roxana High School graduates. As a result, this study will be used to implement the secretarial-clerical courses at Roxana High School, Roxana, Illinois.

Employers were selected on the basis of a tally kept on the follow-up questionnaires which were returned by business graduates of Roxana High School. Through personal interviews with employers, data and information concerning the problems of beginning office workers were collected.

On the basis of this survey, the principal findings were as follows:

1. One-third of the employers indicated that beginning employees did not know the kind of job for which to look. Over one-fourth said that beginning workers did not know how to obtain job leads.
2. All of the employers interviewed mentioned that two sources their beginning office workers used for obtaining job leads were friends already working with the company and direct application to the employment department of the company on their own initiative. In addition, eighty-five per cent indicated that relatives helped the worker to locate his job.

3. Because of the beginning worker's inability to assess his qualifications and skills in relation to the demands of the job, employers felt that beginning office workers often chose jobs for which they were unsuited temperamentally or for which there was little employment demand.
4. Two-fifths of the employers did not feel that the beginning workers were well orientated with respect to completing application blanks. Almost half of the employers thought the beginners had not studied application blanks prior to their job interviews. Over one-third said their beginning workers did not know the type of information the typical application blank asks and the same fraction declared that their workers found parts of the application especially difficult to understand.
5. Before selecting an applicant, a considerable number of companies gave more than one job interview for each applicant.
6. With the possible exception of the personal data sheet, most of the employers felt that graduates were adequately prepared to supply the information desired by the interviewer. There was wide diversity among employers as to the kind of information which they sought during the job interview.
7. All of the employers required references. More employers were interested in part-time employers of the graduates as references than in any of the others listed. However, 92 per cent were also interested in the high school principal as a reference.
8. Seventy-three per cent of the employers revealed that they asked their beginning applicants what they had to offer the company, but half of the employers felt the high school graduates could not answer this question because they had not made an inventory of what they had to offer the company.
9. Four-fifths of the employers asked the beginning applicants why they wanted to work for the company; 65 per cent of the employers stated that the beginning workers had not considered this question before the interview.
10. Employers felt that the high school graduate aims too high in applying for a job.



11. Three-fourths of the employers gave tests in letter dictation, typewriting, and spelling. Seventy-seven per cent of the employers indicated the graduates had insufficient training in spelling. Seventy per cent indicated a lack of training in English.
12. Almost all of the employers felt that high school graduates were not confronted by serious problems with respect to test situations.
13. Almost half were critical of the high school graduates' instruction in locating job openings and in using interview techniques. Employers were generally satisfied with the instruction the graduates had had with respect to information to have at the interview, how to dress for the interview, and in providing references.
14. Responses of the employers show that they felt that the prospective office workers had had a considerable amount of vocational counseling. However, two-thirds of the employers expressed the view that beginning workers had received no instruction concerning the important success factors and personal qualities necessary for job success.
15. Most of the orientation to the job was given by a supervisor or by a fellow worker.
16. While employers indicated that beginning workers experienced problems in certain skill areas, English, spelling, arithmetic, typewriting accuracy, telephone, they generally said that the high-school training of these beginning workers had been sufficient.
17. Information gathered shows that beginning workers encounter a number of personal relationship problems on their new jobs. More than half of the employers thought that jealousy and personality clashes caused friction.
18. In general, the employers felt that personal appearance was not a problem.
19. At least 40 per cent of the employers mentioned lack of self-confidence, hyper-sensitivity to criticism, lack of initiative, and carelessness as personal qualities which are often causes of problems for beginning office workers.

20. Inaccuracy, lack of interest in work, and personal telephone calls were pointed out by at least 40 per cent of the employers as characteristics of some beginning office workers. One-third of the employers mentioned excessive absences as well as being unable to organize work and to meet people.

### Conclusions

As a result of this study, the following conclusions have been drawn on the basis of the opinions expressed by the fifteen employers employing most of Roxana High School graduates.

1. Inadequate vocational counseling concerning the important success factors and personal qualities (self-confidence, common sense, acceptance of criticism, initiative, tact, adaptability, carefulness) necessary for job success was received by beginning office workers.

In addition, counseling in the area of aiding the student to assess his qualifications, skills, and temperament in relation to job demands was inadequate.

2. Vocational counseling on assessing the applicant's job aspirations in terms of what business has to offer a beginning office worker was weak.
3. Beginning office workers were uninformed as to what to say at the interview.
4. In the skill areas of accuracy, grammar, filing, spelling, and use of the telephone beginning office workers experienced problems.
5. Office machines training was not as vital as the business teacher thinks.
6. Graduates were adequately prepared to supply information desired by the interviewer.
7. Personal appearance of the applicant seemed not to be a problem, thereby indicating adequate information on the part of the applicant.



8. Communication between business and education with respect to what each is doing was lacking.
9. Beginning office workers were not well orientated with respect to obtaining job leads and filling out application blanks.
10. Beginning office workers were not able to state why they wanted to work for a company.
11. Beginning office workers had not taken an inventory of what they had to offer a company before applying for their first position.
12. Beginning office workers encountered a number of personal relationship problems on their new jobs.
13. Lack of self-confidence, hyper-sensitivity to criticism, lack of initiative, and carelessness were personal qualities which often caused problems for beginning office workers.
14. Characteristics of beginning office workers included inaccuracy, lack of interest in work, excessive personal telephone calls and absences as well as inability to organize work and to meet people.

### Recommendations

#### Vocational Counseling

In counseling, students need to be aided in developing the ability to assess their

1. personal qualities in relation to job success.
2. skills in relation to job demands.
3. job demands in relation to their temperament.
4. their aspirations in terms of what business has to offer a beginning office worker.

#### Pre-employment Instruction

Provision should be made in the instructional program to include information about the

1. kind of job for which to look.
2. way to obtain job leads.
3. functions of public and private employment agencies.
4. selection of those jobs for which there is an employment demand.
5. drawing up a personal data sheet.
6. proper method of filling out an application blank.
  - a. knowing the type of information which is called for.
  - b. understanding difficult parts; for example, meaning of "Have you ever been bonded?"
7. selection of a job in which there is personal interest.
8. need for providing complete names and addresses of references.
9. way to give information during the interview such as
  - a. answering questions concerning minimum salary.
  - b. telling own story about fitness for the job in question.
  - c. telling what he has to offer the company.
  - d. stating why he wants to work for the company-- not just, "It is a place out of the rain."
  - e. need to relax and talk freely to the interviewer.
  - f. logically organizing his assets to present to the interviewer.
10. importance of the first impression upon the initial contact with an organization.
11. importance of correct spelling.
12. way to write effective letters of application.
13. importance of knowing about school records and about exact skills.

Since the study shows a definite need for something to be done about pre-employment counseling and instruction, I would recommend

1. that the business department assume responsibility for counseling as many students as it can rather than waiting for the guidance department or some other George to meet the needs of the students.



We in business education must not be afraid to take the lead in calling upon the help of the entire school to meet this need. Emphasis should be upon "students" as well as "business students" since students within the student body, who are not business students, will apply for jobs.

2. that all graduating seniors be called together for a two-week training session on "The Importance of and Techniques of Applying for a Job." Attendance at this session should be strictly voluntary. The character of the session should be short, intensive, and highly motivational so that students will attend of their own accord.
3. that someone in the business department write an article concerning the training session. To encourage other business departments to do the same for their students, the article should be published in a widely read periodical.

#### Business Machines Training

Only one week of training on each business machine should be given.

Although business machines training may be "sacred" to many business teachers, this training is not so considered to the businessman who believes training on the acquaintanceship level only is necessary.

#### Telephone Training

More instruction on the use of the telephone needs to be included in the secretarial-clerical courses. This does not necessarily mean more "book" learning. I would suggest practical experience in the use of the telephone which goes beyond the techniques involved in using the switchboard. Such experiences should include answering the telephone, recording information, placing long-distance calls, transferring calls, and handling difficult callers.

### Other Job Skills

More emphasis needs to be given to spelling; accuracy, particularly typewriting accuracy; filing; punctuation; letter composition; arithmetic; and English grammar in those courses in the business curriculum where these areas fall.

### Freedom of Expression

Students need to have more freedom and experience in expressing their thoughts, desires, and ambitions while still in high school. They need to have their assets in mind so that they can present them during the interview, not in rapid fire, but at least logically; so that they should be able to say, "These are my assets and this is what I can do."

Students need to be shown when they make a mistake and helped to avoid another mistake rather than to be criticized. In other words, teachers need to look at themselves, their relationship to their students, and the students' position as an adequate human being.

### Business Department Objectives

A definite examination needs to be made of the ultimate objectives of the Business Education Department.

1. Is training being given for the size and type of office in which the student will be employed? Perhaps students are trained for entry into the large office while the majority of students will work in the small office.
2. Specific consideration should be given to the type of bookkeeping training needed. Are we training for the large or small office? The objective of bookkeeping and its place in the business curriculum is quite important as not a single employer out of those surveyed indicated that he would place a beginning



office worker in a bookkeeping position. All employers who stated an opinion said they used only college graduates in bookkeeping work.

#### School-Business Relationship

Businessmen mentioned that Roxana had not called upon them in recent years. Therefore, I would suggest a closer working relationship with the business community. As a step toward a closer relationship, the findings of this study should be sent to all fifteen employers who made the survey possible.

#### Follow-up Study

A second study of employers hiring Roxana graduates who work in offices with less than twenty-five employees needs to be made as this study included only those offices with more than twenty-five employees. The results of both Niemeier's study and this study indicate that most Roxana graduates are employed in the small business.

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#### SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I

LETTERS TO AND FROM LIGUORI

125 Hickory  
Wood River, Ill.  
July 15, 1965

Dr. Frank Liguori  
University of Cincinnati  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Dr. Liguori:

I am currently working on my master's thesis at Southern Illinois University, Alton Campus, under the direction of Dr. Mary M. Brady, with whose consent I am writing this letter.

I plan to do research similar to the part in your doctoral thesis where you consider problems of beginning office workers in obtaining and holding jobs as reported by the employers.

The question is, therefore: Would it be possible for me to use your employer's interview guide exactly as it is, or perhaps modified, if I would give you credit for having developed the questionnaire? You may send your reply to the address given above.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Karol George



NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN

July 20, 1965

Mrs. Karol George  
125 Hickory  
Wood River, Illinois

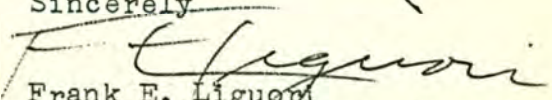
Dear Mrs. George

Yes, you have my permission to use my employer's interview guide as it is. I should think you might want to make a few changes--but go ahead and use it.

I am a visiting professor here this summer--and your special delivery letter reached me this morning; so that is the reason for the delay.

Good luck to you in your study--and feel free to write me if I can help you.

Sincerely

  
Frank E. Liguori  
Professor, Business Education

crl

APPENDIX II

LETTER TO EMPLOYERS OF ROXANA GRADUATES

August, 1965

Name of Person Receiving  
Questionnaire  
Name of Company  
Address of Company  
City and State

Salutation:

In an effort to keep the work in the business education classes at Roxana High School in tune with changing job requirements, I should like to have an opportunity to talk to you about what you consider to be desirable qualifications for beginning office workers. Your opinion will be helpful in determining the content of the clerical-secretarial program at Roxana High School.

The findings based on interviews with you and other employers hiring most of Roxana High School graduates will be used as a part of a research project at Southern Illinois University where I am currently working on my M.S. in Education. Any information which you give me will not be identified with your name or the company name. Thus, the study has a two-fold purpose.

Will you give me an opportunity to obtain this information by granting me an interview? About an hour of your time should be adequate for me to obtain the information needed. I shall be calling you sometime during the next two or three days to make a more definite appointment.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Rickey George



### APPENDIX III

A SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS IN SELECTED BUSINESS FIRMS  
EMPLOYING GRADUATES OF ROXANA HIGH SCHOOL TO  
DETERMINE THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING  
OFFICE WORKERS AS SEEN BY THESE EMPLOYERS IN ORDER  
TO IMPLEMENT THE SECRETARIAL-CLERICAL COURSES AT  
ROXANA HIGH SCHOOL, ROXANA, ILLINOIS

Employer's Interview Guide\*

Karol George, Interviewer  
Roxana High School  
August, 1965

\*This guide is based on one developed by Frank E. Liguori,  
"Problems of Beginning Office Workers" (unpublished Ph.D.  
dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1955), pp. 174-195.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Interview No. \_\_\_\_\_

PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING OFFICE WORKERS

Employer's Interview Guide

1. Name of Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_
2. Company Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Type of Business \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_
4. Number of Office Employees \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number hired within the last year \_\_\_\_\_ Men \_\_\_\_\_ Women \_\_\_\_\_
6. Percentage of:
  - a. High school graduates \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Business school graduates \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. College graduates \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Interview Completed: Yes No Return? \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Interview \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

8. Comments on Interview:



EMPLOYER'S INTERVIEW GUIDE

Per Cent  
Yes No

I. Problems the Employee Experiences in Getting the Job.

A. Applying for the Job

1. In looking for a job, does the prospective employee generally know		
a. the kind of job for which to look?	33	67
b. how to obtain job leads?	27	73
c. how to make the initial contact?	36	64
(1) Is it by a telephone call?	7	93
(2) By letter of application?	7	93
(3) In person?	86	14
d. the name of the person she has to see?	54	46
2. Does this create any problem?	0	100
3. Do you hire through employment agencies (public-private)?	67	33
4. Does the prospective employee generally seem to have any problems concerning the manner in obtaining job leads?	54	46
a. Does she generally obtain her job lead from		
(1) the high school?	69	31
(2) an advertisement in the local paper?	38	62
(3) a relative?	85	15
(4) a neighbor?	69	31
(5) a friend already working with the company?	100	0
(6) direct application to employment department of the company?	100	0
(7) a friend of the family?	79	21
(8) private-public employment agency?	62	38
(9) purely by accident?	62	38
5. Does she generally come alone for the interview?	92	8
6. In seeking work, does she generally seek the kind of job		
a. for which she had been trained?	79	21
b. in which she is interested?	79	21
c. for which she is suited temperamentally?	58	42
d. for which there is an employment demand?	46	54

PROBLEMS:

B. The Interview

1. Before her interview, does the prospective employee generally seem to have had any information drawn from any of the following?		
a. A demonstration interview?	<u>14</u>	<u>86</u>
b. A film on taking an interview?	<u>14</u>	<u>86</u>
c. A practice interview?	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
2. Does she generally seem well orientated with respect to completing application blanks?	<u>60</u>	<u>40</u>
a. Had she studied a sample application blank recently?	<u>54</u>	<u>46</u>
b. Did she know the type of information the typical application blank asks?	<u>64</u>	<u>36</u>
c. Did she find any parts of the application blank especially difficult to understand?	<u>36</u>	<u>64</u>
d. Did she think the application blank asked too many irrelevant questions?	<u>15</u>	<u>85</u>
e. Was the application blank used as a basis for information during the principal interview?	<u>87</u>	<u>13</u>

## COMMENTS:

3. Do you ask the applicant for the following?		
a. Social Security card	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
b. References	<u>73</u>	<u>27</u>
c. Extra-curricular activities	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
d. Names and addresses of persons for whom she did part-time work	<u>80</u>	<u>20</u>
e. School record (marks)	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
f. Record of skill accomplishments (speed, accuracy, and quality of work)	<u>73</u>	<u>27</u>
g. Personal data sheet	<u>47</u>	<u>53</u>
h. Hobbies	<u>64</u>	<u>36</u>
i. Home background	<u>53</u>	<u>47</u>
j. Attendance record	<u>64</u>	<u>36</u>
k. Personal habits	<u>43</u>	<u>57</u>
l. Ability to drive a car (whether or not she has a driver's license)	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
4. Is the applicant usually prepared to give you the following?		
a. Social Security card	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
b. References	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
c. Extra-curricular activities	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
d. Names and addresses of persons for whom she did part-time work	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
e. School record (marks)	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
f. Record of skill accomplishments (speed, accuracy, and quality of work)	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>



g. Personal data sheet	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
h. Hobbies	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
i. Home background	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
j. Attendance record	<u>80</u>	<u>20</u>
k. Personal habits	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>
l. Ability to drive a car (whether or not she has a driver's license)	<u>91</u>	<u>9</u>
5. Do you require references?	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
a. If so, in which are you mostly interested?		
(1) High school principal	<u>92</u>	<u>8</u>
(2) High school guidance counselor	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
(3) Business teacher	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
(4) Person for whom applicant does baby sitting	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
(5) Minister or Priest	<u>38</u>	<u>62</u>
(6) Part-time employer	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>

## COMMENTS:

b. Does she usually have the names and addresses of each?	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>
c. Did she usually ask permission of the references before she used their names?	<u>18</u>	<u>82</u>
d. Are the references furnished you ever used?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
6. Are you interested in the casual employment experience of prospective employees, such as		
a. summer vacation?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
b. after school?	<u>80</u>	<u>20</u>
c. Christmas vacation?	<u>73</u>	<u>27</u>
7. Does she usually have available date of employment and full names and addresses of employers?	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>
8. Which type of interview do you have?		
a. One general interview	<u>92</u>	<u>8</u>
b. Screening interview	<u>91</u>	<u>9</u>
c. Placement interview	<u>75</u>	<u>25</u>
d. Supervisor's interview	<u>90</u>	<u>10</u>
e.		
f. Total number of interviews:		
(1) One	<u>24</u>	
(2) Two	<u>29</u>	
(3) Three	<u>33</u>	
(4) Four	<u>14</u>	

## COMMENTS:



9. Does she usually seem to have had instruction with respect to		
a. locating job opening?	<u>53</u>	<u>47</u>
b. interview techniques?	<u>58</u>	<u>47</u>
c. application blanks?	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
d. information to have at interview?	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>
e. references?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
f. what to say at the interview?	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
g. how to dress for the interview?	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
h. letter of application?	<u>43</u>	<u>57</u>
i. what to say concerning minimum or maximum salary?	<u>22</u>	<u>78</u>

## COMMENTS:

10. What is the nature of your interviews?		
a. Question-answer discussion	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
b. You do most of the talking	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
(1) Do you use a written list of questions for interviewing?	<u>14</u>	<u>86</u>
c. Does the prospective employee carry the burden of the conversation?	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>

## PROBLEMS:

11. What problems does she usually encounter concerning the answering of questions of the interviewer?		
a. Does she usually know the kind of information you want during the interview?	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
b. Do you ask the minimum salary expected?	<u>43</u>	<u>57</u>
c. Is the question of salary a difficult item during the interview?	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
(1) If so, does she generally have a specific figure in mind?	<u>14</u>	<u>86</u>
d. Do you use "trick" questions to see if the prospective employee is alert?	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
e. Do you use "leading or suggestive" questions she may answer inaccurately if she does not give careful thought to her answers?	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
f. Do you encourage her to tell her own story about her qualifications and her fitness for the job in question?	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
(1) Do you have her write her story about herself?	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
g. Are you frank about her chances of being employed?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
12. Before the interview does she usually seem to have made an inventory of		
a. what she has to offer the company?	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
b. why she wanted to work with the company?	<u>36</u>	<u>64</u>

- |   |           |           |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| 13. Do you ask her                          |           |           |
| a. what she has to offer the company?       | <u>73</u> | <u>27</u> |
| b. why she wanted to work with the company? | <u>80</u> | <u>20</u> |

## COMMENTS:

C. Selection (being hired)

- |   |            |           |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1. What job is the prospective employee usually after?  |            |           |
| a. Stenography  | <u>16</u>  |           |
| b. Typing   | <u>20</u>  |           |
| c. Filing   | <u>7</u>   |           |
| d. General clerical   | <u>22</u>  |           |
| e. Messenger  | <u>2</u>   |           |
| f. Secretarial  | <u>15</u>  |           |
| g. Key punch  | <u>7</u>   |           |
| h. Receptionist   | <u>11</u>  |           |
| i. _____  |            |           |
| 2. What job does she get?   |            |           |
| a. Stenography  | <u>14</u>  |           |
| b. Typing   | <u>25</u>  |           |
| c. Filing   | <u>14</u>  |           |
| d. General clerical   | <u>30</u>  |           |
| e. Messenger  | <u>5</u>   |           |
| f. Secretarial  | <u>5</u>   |           |
| g. Key punch  | <u>7</u>   |           |
| h. Receptionist   | <u>2</u>   |           |
| i. _____  |            |           |
| 3. Are you concerned about the distance she has to travel to work?  | <u>100</u> | <u>0</u>  |
| a. In school does she generally seem to have been given any information about the importance of living not too far from the place of employment with respect to cost, convenience and satisfaction to herself and the employer? | <u>29</u>  | <u>71</u> |
| 4. In the interview, do you orientate with respect to health and physical requirements for the kind of job in which she is interested?  | <u>80</u>  | <u>20</u> |
| a. Before applying, does she generally seem to have made a self-analysis with respect to her ability to meet health requirements?   | <u>42</u>  | <u>58</u> |
| b. If so, is it for:  |            |           |
| (1) Eyes  | <u>42</u>  | <u>58</u> |
| (2) Ears  | <u>42</u>  | <u>58</u> |
| (3) Height  | <u>33</u>  | <u>67</u> |
| (4) Weight  | <u>33</u>  | <u>67</u> |
| (5) _____   | <u>--</u>  | <u>--</u> |



c.	What requirements, if any, do you specify with respect to		
	(1) Eyes		
	(2) Ears		
	(3) Height		
	(4) Weight		
d.	Is a physical examination required?	<u>80</u>	<u>20</u>
	(1) Do any problems develop as a result of the examination?	<u>42</u>	<u>58</u>

## COMMENTS:

5.	Do you give job applicants a test in any of the following skill areas to determine their qualifications for the job?		
a.	Subject		
	(1) Shorthand	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
	(a) Letter dictation	<u>80</u>	<u>20</u>
	(b) _____	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
	(2) Typewriting	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
	(a) Straight copy	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
	(b) Tabulation	<u>28</u>	<u>72</u>
	(c) Rough draft	<u>36</u>	<u>64</u>
	(d) Letters	<u>43</u>	<u>57</u>
	(3) Transcription	<u>60</u>	<u>40</u>
	(4) English	<u>60</u>	<u>40</u>
	(5) Spelling	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
	(6) Bookkeeping	<u>23</u>	<u>77</u>
	(7) Office machines	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
	(8) Arithmetic	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
	(9) Penmanship	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
	(10) Intelligence	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
	(11) Aptitude	<u>47</u>	<u>53</u>
	(12) Personality	<u>22</u>	<u>78</u>
	(13) Adaptability	<u>36</u>	<u>64</u>
	(14) _____	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
b.	For the test do you believe she usually has had enough training in the following:		
	(1) Shorthand	<u>77</u>	<u>23</u>
	(a) Letter dictation	<u>82</u>	<u>18</u>
	(b) _____	<u>82</u>	<u>18</u>
	(2) Typewriting	<u>92</u>	<u>8</u>
	(a) Straight copy	<u>82</u>	<u>18</u>
	(b) Tabulation	<u>62</u>	<u>38</u>
	(c) Rough draft	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
	(d) Letters	<u>60</u>	<u>40</u>
	(3) Transcription	<u>57</u>	<u>43</u>
	(4) English	<u>30</u>	<u>70</u>
	(5) Spelling	<u>23</u>	<u>77</u>

(6)	Bookkeeping	50	50
(7)	Office machines	<del>33</del>	<del>67</del>
(8)	Arithmetic	<del>44</del>	<del>56</del>
(9)	Penmanship	<del>50</del>	<del>50</del>
(10)	Personality	<del>60</del>	<del>40</del>
(11)	Adaptability	<del>57</del>	<del>43</del>
(12)	_____		

## PROBLEMS:

6.	Does she seem to have had any previous test experience similar to the above?	<u>83</u>	<u>17</u>
7.	Does she have knowledge in advance that she will have to take such tests?	<u>77</u>	<u>23</u>
8.	Is the testing situation arranged so that she is at ease while taking tests? a. If not, why?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
9.	Is the room quiet and comfortable and conducive to good testing?	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>
10.	Do the tests appear to fit the requirements of the job for which she is applying?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>

## COMMENTS:

II. Problems of the Employee in Holding the Job.

A.	In preparing for future work while in high school, do you feel the prospective employee generally		
1.	has had a planned educational program leading to completion of training in the job she has entered?	<u>79</u>	<u>21</u>
2.	has been given help through individual or group counseling concerning job areas for job requirements?	<u>71</u>	<u>29</u>
3.	has been given instruction concerning the important job habits and personal qualities necessary for job success?	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>

## COMMENTS:



B. Orientation or Instruction for the New Position

1. Who teaches the new employee what is expected of her on her job?		
a. Office manager	16	
b. Supervisor	<u>36</u>	
c. Fellow employee	<u>33</u>	
d. Manual of instruction	6	
e. Formal training classes	<u>9</u>	
2. Do you think the right person teaches her the details of her new position?	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
a. If not, why?		
3. Do you feel she is given adequate time, information, orientation and training for her new job?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
4. After completion of early orientation or training, does the company continue to provide helpful supervision?	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>
a. In what way?		
(1) Special classes on various company procedures?	<u>15</u>	
(2) Special classes by an outside specialist after or during work hours?	0	
(3) Company-paid tuition for further training?	<u>54</u>	
(4) Continuous help by fellow employees?	<u>59</u>	
(5) Continuous help by supervisor?	<u>100</u>	
5. Do you feel she needs this kind of additional help?	<u>93</u>	<u>7</u>
6. Does the beginning worker have to undergo a probationary period?	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>

## COMMENTS:

C. Skills

1. In her office position is she generally experiencing any problem with any of the following?		
a. Shorthand		
(1) Taking dictation	31	69
(2) Transcription	<u>38</u>	<u>62</u>
b. Typewriting	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
(1) Speed	<u>36</u>	<u>64</u>
(2) Accuracy	<u>54</u>	<u>46</u>
c. Spelling	<u>86</u>	<u>14</u>

	Per Cent	
	Yes	No
d. English	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
(1) Grammar	<u>58</u>	<u>42</u>
(2) Punctuation	<u>64</u>	<u>36</u>
(3) Composing letters	<u>64</u>	<u>36</u>
e. Filing	<u>31</u>	<u>69</u>
f. Use of telephone	<u>42</u>	<u>58</u>
g. Arithmetic	<u>55</u>	<u>45</u>
h. Bookkeeping	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
i. Machines	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(1) Ten-key adding	<u>11</u>	<u>89</u>
(2) Full-key adding	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
(3) Rotary calculator	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(4) Printing calculator	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(5) Key-driven calculator	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(6) Key punch	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(7) Bookkeeping	<u>11</u>	<u>89</u>
(8) Dictation and Transcription	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
(9) Copying	<u>22</u>	<u>78</u>
(10) Duplicating	<u>10</u>	<u>90</u>
(a) Fluid	<u>9</u>	<u>91</u>
(b) Stencil	<u>18</u>	<u>82</u>
(c) Offset	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
(11) _____		

2. Was her high school training generally geared to meet her needs in the following?

a. Shorthand	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(1) Taking dictation	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(2) Transcription	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
b. Typewriting	<u>91</u>	<u>9</u>
(1) Speed	<u>95</u>	<u>5</u>
(2) Accuracy	<u>71</u>	<u>29</u>
c. Spelling	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
d. English	<u>75</u>	<u>25</u>
(1) Grammar	<u>69</u>	<u>31</u>
(2) Punctuation	<u>75</u>	<u>25</u>
(3) Composing letters	<u>75</u>	<u>25</u>
e. Filing	<u>38</u>	<u>62</u>
f. Use of telephone	<u>62</u>	<u>38</u>
g. Arithmetic	<u>73</u>	<u>27</u>
h. Bookkeeping	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
i. Machines	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(1) Ten-key adding	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(2) Full-key adding	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(3) Rotary calculator	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(4) Printing calculator	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(5) Key-driven calculator	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(6) Key punch	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>
(7) Bookkeeping	<u>100</u>	<u>0</u>



(8)	Dictation and Transcription	<del>86</del>	<del>16</del>
(9)	Copying	<del>86</del>	<del>11</del>
(10)	Duplicating	<del>89</del>	<del>20</del>
	(a) Fluid	<del>82</del>	<del>18</del>
	(b) Stencil	<del>73</del>	<del>17</del>
	(c) Offset	<del>70</del>	<del>9</del>
(11)	_____		

## COMMENTS:

3.	Does the beginning worker generally indicate that the work she is now doing is		
	a. too difficult?	<del>14</del>	<del>86</del>
	b. too easy?	<del>0</del>	<del>100</del>
	c. a happy medium between being easy or difficult?	<del>83</del>	<del>17</del>
	d. interesting?	<del>93</del>	<del>7</del>
	e. uninteresting?	<del>89</del>	<del>2</del>
	f. too much for her to do?	<del>27</del>	<del>73</del>
	g. not enough for her to do?	<del>20</del>	<del>80</del>
	h. a happy medium between too much and not enough to do?	<del>75</del>	<del>25</del>
	i. monotonous?	<del>9</del>	<del>91</del>
4.	Does she generally indicate that she would like to change positions?		
	a. within the same company?	<del>40</del>	<del>60</del>
	b. for one with another company?	<del>17</del>	<del>83</del>
5.	Does she seem to be happy and satisfied with her present position?	<del>100</del>	<del>0</del>

## COMMENTS:

6.	What makes her		
	a. satisfied with her position?		
	b. dissatisfied?		
7.	What would she like to do about her dissatisfaction?		
8.	Is a progress report made on the beginning worker?	<del>86</del>	<del>14</del>
	a. If so, how is it used?		
	(1) To determine merit rating for promotions	<del>88</del>	
	(2) To determine problems	<del>88</del>	
	(3) To improve quality of work	<del>88</del>	

## COMMENTS:

D. Relationships

1. Have you noticed any of the following as cause of friction, problems or difficulty in your office?		
a. Jealousy	<u>67</u>	<u>33</u>
b. Resentment to superiors	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
c. Borrowing work tools	<u>8</u>	<u>92</u>
d. Personality clashes	<u>53</u>	<u>47</u>
e. Borrowing money	<u>14</u>	<u>86</u>
f. Leaving work for others to do	<u>21</u>	<u>79</u>
g. Inconsideration	<u>21</u>	<u>79</u>
h. Office cliques	<u>30</u>	<u>64</u>
i. Non-cooperation	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
j. Unauthorized supervision of fellow employee	<u>31</u>	<u>69</u>

COMMENTS:

2. Have any of the following items been cause for problems or friction in your office generally for beginning workers?		
a. Grooming		
(1) Sheer blouses	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(2) Low cut clothing	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
(3) Short skirts	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(4) Sweaters	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(5) Body odor	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(6) Posture	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
b. Inappropriate hairstyle	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
c. Untidiness about clothing and self	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
d. Makeup	<u>29</u>	<u>71</u>
(1) Too much	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
(2) Not enough	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
e. _____	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>

COMMENTS:

3. Have any of the following personal qualities of beginning workers generally been cause for problems or friction in your office?		
a. Lack of self-confidence	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
b. Tactlessness	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
c. Lack of common sense	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
d. Discourteousness	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
e. Hyper-sensitive to criticism	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
f. Inadaptability	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
g. Dishonesty	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
h. Disloyalty	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
i. Lack of initiative	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
j. Lack of sociability	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>



k. Carelessness	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
l. Laziness	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
m. Insincerity	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
n. _____		

## COMMENTS:

4. Have any of the following personal-work qualities of beginning workers generally been cause for problems or friction in your office?		
a. Not dependable	<u>29</u>	<u>71</u>
b. Inaccurate	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
c. Unable to organize work	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
d. Unable to meet people	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
e. Poor speaking voice	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
f. Inability to follow instructions	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
g. Lack of interest in work	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
h. Lack of office etiquette	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
i. Flirting	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
j. Excessive tardiness	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
k. Excessive absences	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
l. Clock watching	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
m. Attention to outside things	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
n. Personal telephone calls	<u>47</u>	<u>53</u>
o. Frequent visits to washroom	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
p. Bad language	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
q. Not doing a day's work for a day's pay	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
r. Not doing important things first	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>
s. Inability to keep confidences	<u>27</u>	<u>73</u>

## COMMENTS:

5. Have any of the following been cause for problems or friction for beginning workers generally in your office?		
a. Equipment		
(1) Old and out-of-date	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(2) Insufficient	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(3) Too complicated to use	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(4) Satisfactory	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>
(5) Not in good repair	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
b. Working hours	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>
(1) Starting time	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(2) Lunch hour	<u>20</u>	<u>80</u>
(3) Overtime policy	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
(4) Saturday work	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
(5) Quitting time	<u>0</u>	<u>100</u>
(6) _____		
c. Physical setup		
(1) Lighting	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(2) Desk arrangement	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(3) Telephone	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(4) Files	<u>13</u>	<u>87</u>
(5) Acoustics	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>
(6) Ventilation	<u>7</u>	<u>93</u>

## COMMENTS:





## APPENDIX IV

### COMMENTS RECORDED DURING EMPLOYER INTERVIEWS

The following comments were recorded verbatim during the interviews with employers.

#### Problems of Beginning Office Workers in Obtaining Jobs

##### Why High School Graduates Were Hired

1. No particular reason. Mainly depends on requirements of the job.
2. This is the only source. Not many college graduates apply. We recruit college graduates. We may hire some with work experience or some advanced business training.
3. Only sources for this type and nature of work.
4. We hire only high school graduates because college graduates go into our management program. Some of our high school graduates are going to college part-time.
5. We prefer older people who are more settled who realize what a day's work means.
6. We can't hire anyone with less than a high-school diploma.
7. We hire most high school graduates because they start on the low end of the totem pole, and we bring them in and train them.
8. Due to the nature of our business, we do not require college graduates.
9. We cannot hire anything less than a high school graduate.

##### Reasons for Problems in Locating Jobs

1. We screen 250 applications to get 20 people and this is because better people are going on to college.

2. Some students are unrealistic about their ability. For example in typing, say they had one semester and they could type 50 wam; but they did not keep up on their skill; and now they type 20 wam with 7 or 8 errors. Students who do not have skills will not take jobs in areas where skills are not needed. Big problem is trying to make them realistic about their capabilities.
3. We try to recruit the top ten per cent of the class. Then we take the rest of the students.
4. In recent years, more high school graduates are going to college; this leaves the lower ranking graduates to seek employment. We in business are asking more of high school graduates these days than we did five years ago. In other words, we are trying to get more from people with lower ability and this could be part of the problem.
5. It seems that we reject many on attendance alone.
6. We try to get high school students to work for us during the summer; then they return to school; and then we try to get them to return the next summer. Then we have had them the better part of the year.
7. Today it doesn't make a difference where they work; it is getting a job that counts.
8. In spite of the answers I have given, we have kids who do not know how to apply for a job. The high school should have at least a few hours with these kids to tell them we have trained you and you are ready to look for a job. All high schools should train them on how to apply, how to dress, how to approach the interviewer. Somebody should tell them not to come in groups and how to be themselves. Too many try to put on an act. We realize they are nervous; we expect this and they should not try to act like they are not. They should have a self-appraisal of their abilities and realize that they have nothing to offer except what they have learned in school. They should have in mind what clubs they belonged to and what offices they held. So many don't know how to use what they know; they have to impress quickly. Generally speaking the young person out of high school needs more experience in what the employer expects, and this involves common sense. Some seem to forget that thousands are graduating, and they think that work is waiting for them. Being good is what is expected.
9. Applicant wise there is a definite lack of true interest. Too frequently they have been getting no answers. They are



afraid you will say yes, and they really don't want to work here. Over all, too many people graduating for jobs that are available.

10. I don't know what we are going to do with all the people graduating from high school; this really worries me. Common sense is a prime requisite in our business.

#### Interviews, References, and Application Blanks

1. The prospective employee should never make an initial contact by telephone.
2. The name of the person the prospective employee has to see in looking for a job is not important.
3. We prefer private employment agencies, when we use employment agencies, because they screen prospective employees.
4. The worst thing a person can do is to come with a group for an interview.
5. The prospective employee generally doesn't know what job she is interested in obtaining.
6. There is a great need for a demonstration interview.
7. Even though students have studied application blanks this does not seem to help when applying for a job.
8. Names and addresses of person for whom the applicant did part-time work are not used unless related to job for which person is applying. Baby sitting is not considered.
9. Students do not know about their school record (marks). They do not know the courses they have taken nor the grades they made in courses. They do seem to remember the business courses they took and the grades they made; but they did not seem to remember their typing speed, for example, or the standards that were expected of them in typing.
10. We consider the reference of a minister, priest or other personal reference as worthless because the applicant selects those people who will give a favorable picture of the applicant.
11. We are not interested in casual employment experience unless it is related to the job for which the applicant is applying. The only reason we would take note of this is that it is a sign of motivation on the part of the applicant.
12. We cooperate with teachers in sending them sample application blanks. However, we feel very few of them make any use of them.

13. "A fat no" in answer to the question, 'Does she usually seem to have had instruction with respect to interview techniques?'"
14. Only the top five per cent approximately are selective in the type of job they are after; the rest are not selective.
15. Many high school graduates seek jobs as key punch operators and receptionists. We never hire high school graduates for these positions. We feel it is a waste of money for high school graduates to go to a special school for key punch training.
16. I try to be frank about the applicant's chances of being employed. My frankness is usually based on qualifications rather than personal factors; never personal factors.
17. I do not ask what the applicant has to offer the company or why she wanted to work with the company because I have found this usually brings a halt to conversation.
18. If we are looking for a person with some unusual talent, we call the Illinois State Employment Service.
19. Colored applicants usually come with another person for an interview, but you can understand this--they need moral support.
20. The applicant does not select the kind of job because we put people in stenographic pool; we want people who can do shorthand and typing.
21. We want to know about extra-curricular activities because this shows how much of a leader they are.
22. We want to know if they drive a car, if they are coming a far distance, or if they are applying for the job of mail boy.
23. We check all references.
24. We want people in our office who will talk, so during the interview we ask only enough questions to get them to talk.
25. We do not ask the minimum salary expected because we usually have a set figure in mind for beginning workers. If we were talking to an experienced applicant, we might mention salary.



26. We do not use trick questions. In talking to people, we try to do everything we can to put them at ease; and we recognize that this is very difficult for them. We found some of our girls ill at ease and not too confident; but after they are hired, they turn out real well.
27. In addition to asking a student if they can drive a car, we ask them if they have access to a car.
28. The poorest references are from a minister or a priest; however, we do check these.
29. We require two of three references which we stipulate; these are counselor, principal, or favorite teacher.
30. We have what you might call a come-back interview where the applicant comes back to be rescreened if they don't make the second interview.
31. Students need to act a little more mature and to be in a more relaxed state. I try to put them at ease. Need to be more concerned how they are dressed during the interview.
32. I think we need to give more preliminary instruction on how to go about seeking employment. Employers would rather have kids referred by the school. How to seek employment and have an interview is important.
33. Students need to have more freedom in expressing themselves and need to feel free in expressing their thoughts, desires, and ambitions. This would help them during the interview.
34. Students need to logically have the assets they have in their mind so that they can present them, not in rapid fire, but so they know these are my assets and what I can do. You are selling yourself. Know also liabilities and be convinced of your assets. If they don't know about themselves who does.
35. We are very much concerned about the distance she has to travel to work.
36. We do not require a physical, but I think it is most favorable to have a physical for the protection of the individual and the company concerned.
37. Bulk of rejected applicants are those who make direct application to employment department of the company.



38. We have actually had some girls come chewing gum, wearing pants, and eating ice cream cones. This is, however, not the general rule.
39. We send a letter to the school getting the applicant's school records.
40. We are very definitely interested in the applicant's attendance record. We have no place in our business for people who are absent. Some people have said we are too strict on attendance but in our business you just can't have people who are absent. Fifteen to twenty absences a year are too many and we reject those applicants.
41. We are mostly interested in the high school counselor and past employers.
42. They, applicants, always have no idea what to say concerning minimum or maximum salary. One of the things that impressed me occurred when one girl asked how much money will I make now and what will I make when I become a supervisor.
43. We try not to do most of the talking, just in the informative area. We try to get applicant to tell as much about herself as she will.
44. When asking the applicant why she wanted to work with the company some of the standard replies are security, heard from her friend it was a good place to work, or opportunity for advancement.
45. We do use trick questions when we find that we have no one to promote from within and we go outside to find someone; then we give her an oral test to see if she acts in a certain way.
46. Generally the people are well dressed and the initial approach is good. Because of the security involved in our situation, the applicant is at a disadvantage to get her foot in the door. This, the security problem, is something we, the company, need to work on. I feel we owe it to the public to provide a proper place where applicants can apply for a job.
47. There seems to be more concern about the distance she has to travel to work in this area as opposed to the Chicago or Joliet area for example.
48. If they don't meet physical qualifications we do not hire them; but if they correct the physical defects, then we hire them.



49. I think the schools should have various application blanks and show them how to fill them out and teach them how to spell the church they attend--especially Presbyterian.
50. We ask for only three references; we check at least one part-time reference.
51. Any employment experience is good.
52. I think they know what salary they would like to make but they don't tell us and don't have any conception of what a \$100 is.
53. Instead of just saying they want to apply for a job, applicants should say they are high school trained in clerical work and they are interested in this type of work.
54. We do hire through the public employment agency but seldom through a private employment agency.
55. During the interview the applicant is very sketchy about what they are able to do; for example in typing they say they can type between 40 and 60 words a minute.
56. Ministers and priests as references are not too reliable because they always say they are lovely children.
57. We do not consider baby sitting because it is a pastime.
58. We have to pull out information during the interview; they know what to say if the teacher has told them.
59. What they have to say about minimum or maximum salary depends on how desperate they are.
60. I don't think too many high school graduates consider transportation to and from work. When I ask them about it, they say dad will let me use his car or mom will bring me to work and pick me up after work, but I know that dad and mom will get tired of this.
61. Most of them want to call over the telephone.
62. Tell them not to come in a group or a flock to apply. If it were me, I would want to come alone and fight for the job.
63. We hire through public employment agency because we pay taxes so we use it.
64. We have a set minimum salary.
65. We get letters of application from people out of town.

66. Decision is made on basis of skills and background related to the opening.
67. We usually check with the school for attendance record and school marks.
68. We check one personal reference and former employers.
69. We have to keep asking questions; very few start talking and keep talking during the interview.
70. We have a set minimum salary which is \$275 a month.
71. Applicants often do not know what a "surety bond" is. This is on the application.
72. We require five personal references.
73. Students usually know where they rank in their class rather than know their over-all grade-point average.
74. College people usually have a personal data sheet but not the high school graduate.
75. In locating job openings, the beginning worker generally just applies every place. I doubt if they know how to locate job openings.
76. Sometimes when I ask about their family during the interview this comes as a surprise.
77. We use to have them write something about themselves but they seldom did this so we do not do it anymore.
78. We try to base "on frankness of being employed" on qualifications rather than personality.
79. We do not feel it is necessary if they know how to operate these machines because we train them ourselves. But anything you can do to operate a machine will help you get the job.
80. Because of our location, we do not attract the number of workers or graduates necessary so we do use employment agencies.
81. We use two forms of interview applications. One is a very short form which we use just to have a person introduce himself to us; the large application, we use when we find something on the initial interview in which we want to proceed.



82. We find references of little value because applicants use references which will benefit them. We do not generally use them. We definitely would use previous employers but not personal references.
83. We are not allowed to ask about what father does for an occupation.
84. Most female applicants do not have personal data sheets. Most male applicants do.
85. Applicants should carry the burden of the conversation. If we talk 25 per cent of the time we talk too much. With male college graduates we attempt not to talk but 5 to 10 per cent of the time.
86. Very few know why they want to work with the company.
87. The distance she has to travel to work is a big question because it adds to our turnover.
88. We are interested in their height and weight but we do not specify any particular requirements. We do specify a particular height for filing.
89. We do not require a physical until the girl reaches age 26 or unless she has a medical history.
90. We pay a great deal of attention to the way they fill out application blanks. This tells us a good deal.
91. The other day a girl came in here with a very high bee hive hairstyle. I noticed the people in the office whispering about her so you can see why she wasn't hired.
92. At the end of the interview, thank them for their interview and tell them you are hopeful; and if you are not interested, tell them you would not be interested because.
93. There are two important things to remember: (1) be alert and neat in appearance and not extreme in the visual picture; (2) have some idea of what they want to do, not in a demanding way, but try to indicate quickly I feel my best field is in this area and this is why I would like to have the job. They should indicate that they have an interest in working with this company and this is why I am here.
94. The individual should in all cases come alone for the interview. She should be able to sell herself.
95. I prefer to check the part-time employer because he has a better opportunity to observe her as a worker rather than a student.



96. The first impression is important. Talk freely and remember we are not here to scare them.
97. I prefer that the applicant be honest and they should feel at home; therefore, I do not use trick questions.
98. Making an inventory of what one has to offer is important and is often neglected. The honored thing when you ask the applicant what they want to do they will say "anything." This indicates person has not thought much about what he can do. We do not want a jack of all trades.
99. Why she wanted to work with the company is important to me and always has been. This is not just a job and a place out of the rain. The applicant should reply I know some of the people who work here, the business is close to home, etc.
100. The biggest problem is that they are told one thing in school on how to apply for a job, and they find it is not so. They are told you should call an employer for an interview. They should get out and file applications in as many places as it is humanly possible to do so.
101. They don't know what the employment demand is because they are only 17 or 18 years old.
102. Many schools have personal data sheets made but students don't bring them along with them.
103. I would rather phone the school and find out about them rather than ask them about their school record.
104. People who have not applied for their Social Security number or do not have the number with them do not get an interview. Sometimes they say I left my Social Security card in my other purse.
105. We screen applicants from the application form and the way it is filled out. We also screen on the appearance of the applicant. We have a code for this. (He meant she was screened by the receptionist.)
106. The personnel office calls in applicant after screening (through application blank, see 116); and we do not take too many from one school; and they are screened and tested; and then the supervisor interviews the applicant; and then the personnel manager has final say.
107. Some who want to work say he would be happy to take a minimum wage and they don't even know what the minimum



wage is. Others who have been coached will say I wouldn't work for less than . . . . Some have never heard of the minimum wage law.

108. When discussing their abilities, they usually say they can do shorthand and typing and they usually think they are ready to be a secretary and they never tell how many words they can transcribe. This is a fallacy of the school. They say they can take it at 120 wpm and later they say they can't read their notes. We feel shorthand is a waste of time and should use dictating machines. Too much emphasis on the secretary.

### Skill Problems

1. They do not seem to be able to think logically in arithmetic.
2. Most take shorthand from 80 to 100 wpm and have had two years of shorthand. They can get it down but sometimes their typing is not as good as their shorthand. Accuracy in typing is always a problem.
3. Filing causes us problems. They file under the first name and for a name like "J. C. Penny" they file under "J."
4. Accuracy should be stressed, but I feel that young people have things coming much too easy for them.

### Employment Tests

1. In addition to giving shorthand and typewriting tests, we also give one-hour clerical aptitude test which covers English, spelling, arithmetic, aptitudes, intelligence, personality and adaptability.
2. We have a training department which gives tests. We employ a full-time psychologist who examines our tests and makes changes in them from time to time; he also tries to validate them.
3. When testing, we give letter dictation; but we do not time them on the transcription of the letter.
4. We recognize that our testing may not be too good, and sometimes we retest if situation was not conducive to good testing. If we think a person did not do their best on the test, we may retest.

5. We give the SRA test; and in addition, we give a test that our staff has made up. We use the ACT as an intelligence test.
6. We give the Wonderlic test.
7. As far as penmanship, we check the application.
8. We give an aptitude test first; and then if they don't pass this, they don't take the rest of the tests.
9. The kind of typing test I give depends on the mood I am in. Some days I will give straight copy; other days I will give rough draft letters.
10. We have an initial screening test; and if the applicant passes this, then they come back for the rest of the tests.
11. We develop our own tests in the head office. We use the Wonderlic also.
12. We do two things--we give a test; then we get references.
13. We give the Wonderlic.
14. We determine the applicant's penmanship from the application blank.
15. We give a three-part test--vocabulary, arithmetic and ability to follow directions--for typing, stenography, or clerical work.
16. We look at the application for penmanship.
17. We give the Thurston.
18. We give the SRA test which takes 15 minutes.
19. We use an open area for testing because this is the type of area in which they will work.
20. I believe at your school you have a fairly good supervisor and so on and the faculty has dealt with them for three or four years and we take your word. Testing costs money and the test we give is over-all test for learnability. If in their grades in school and in talking with a teacher, I take it at face value. We will soon find out if they don't tell the truth. We use a test for college graduates.
21. Sometimes changing typewriters causes jitters, but this is not a problem.



### Skill Abilities on Employment Tests

1. There is a greater need for accuracy and speed in type-writing. The student needs more training in arithmetic and vocabulary.
2. If a student has had two years of shorthand, we feel she has had adequate training.
3. The thing they do worst on is the simple little filing test we give.
4. As far as book learning goes the applicant does all right on the test. But as far as practicability of the instruction I think you could pair the students and one student dictate and another student transcribe. Let them play a little more. Give them more office style dictation with interruptions and everything which are more realistic than reading from a book. Have other faculty members come in. In book learning they are fine; but in being out of school office procedures are frightening at times.

### Problems of Beginning Office Workers in Holding Jobs

#### Vocational Counseling and Training

1. Our primary interest is in people who can turn out work; that is not to say job habits and personal qualities are not important.
2. We would not refuse to hire a high school graduate because she did not know how to operate the machines listed here. We have a training course where we can train them in an hour. Arithmetic and aptitude are more important. Trainability is very important. We want someone who is adaptable to change. A week's instruction in school on each machine would be sufficient. Students should know where to put the decimal point on the machine.

The beginning office workers do not use same machines as the ones in the school, and we don't mind training them on our machines. Schools spend money for equipment and never ask what business wants. Schools are interested in what requirements should be and not what business wants.

4. Biggest need is for intelligent girls with typing and shorthand.
5. Since data processing, not much need for calculating machines.

6. Needs to have acquaintanceship with 10-key adding machine, and copying machines. We would hire high school graduate with a skill level of training on the comptometer. We usually train our girls on the comptometer. We have a lot of comptometer operators.
7. Not much need for training in duplicating; we send our work to a centralized location where trained people do this.
8. Students need in general more briefing on job habits and qualities necessary for success. Too many have idea that job owes them a living.
9. The school is doing a better job in counseling these days; sometimes I think some of the students didn't listen the day instruction was given concerning job habits and personal qualities necessary for job success.
10. In the training programs, we don't specifically stress the difference between industry and private enterprise and commercial enterprise. The tempo is different in large vs small offices. Retail stores have to stay open six days out of a week and some of them don't realize this.
11. Hospital work is entirely different from any other kind of work.
12. The students are picking up this information given by counselors.
13. Tell your shorthand students that the man is going to be more considerate than they think he is going to be and do not be afraid of shorthand.
14. I feel your questionnaire is out of date because the trend is toward de-emphasis on the secretary and emphasis on liberal education. Introduction to business should be an important course on how business operates. Schools should feel free to call on us.

#### Job Orientation

1. We have formal company orientation as well as company training. This is taken care of by a person from personnel.
2. We vary our break in with the person's ability.
3. We rate them at the end of three months and at that time stipulate whether they should be retained. At the end



of nine months, and this is particularly critical time, we rate them; and if there is a question, we look at it in twelve months; and if she is not satisfactory, then we take some action.

4. We have found a two week's probationary period satisfactory.
5. We have had a formal training session which consisted of testing in the morning and a panel discussion in the afternoon. The panel consisted of Dr. Mary Brady, and Miss Dorothy Kelley, and someone from our office.
6. For a service representative, we give six weeks of initial training.
7. Initial training for an operator is given and then subsequent training.
8. We use programed instruction or auto instruction and self-pacing.
9. Concerning the probationary period, we say if the person has chosen the wrong field or if we feel she has chosen the wrong field we do not recommend that she remain.
10. We have a 90-day probationary period.
11. We make a progress report after 30 days, 90 days, 6 months, and once a year from there on out.
12. Satisfying a request promptly and efficiently over the telephone is very important. They should be able to spell better and do better in arithmetic. A lot of people do not know the alphabet.
13. Qualifications are based on accuracy and ability to see a job through. We want dealing with people to be correct.

#### Attitude Toward Work

1. I have heard the girls mention that key punch sometimes is monotonous, but I can't remember any other work being monotonous.
2. Beginning workers do not always tell you their problems. It would be better if they did tell someone who can help them do something about the problem rather than talking to a fellow employee.

3. You should tell the student that if a job is uninteresting to make their feeling known so that the supervisor can help the worker so that they will be happy.

#### Work Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction

1. The beginning worker is satisfied with her work because of the challenge; the feeling of being part of the team and having responsibilities.
2. The beginning worker is dissatisfied with her work because she is immature; immature meaning no goals, a fight with her boy friend and parents who are too protective or do not care enough. Also dissatisfied because of poor supervision and inadequate selection procedures.
3. We try not to misrepresent the job and usually try to undersell the job so applicant won't become dissatisfied.
4. The beginning worker usually doesn't know what to do about her dissatisfaction. She asks for a transfer and not a promotion.
5. Every year we have a job performance discussion in which we analyze her work, her outstanding traits, and her weak points.
6. The beginning worker is satisfied with her position because of success.
7. The beginning worker is dissatisfied due to lack of success, lack of preparation and knowledge for the job.
8. Some of the beginning workers who are dissatisfied would like to prepare and gain more knowledge for the job; others don't give a hoot.
9. She is satisfied with her position, because she enjoys doing it. They enjoy working with people.
10. If she is dissatisfied, she wouldn't be here too long because if this is during probationary period then we would get rid of her.
11. She usually wants to improve if she is dissatisfied and if we don't get rid of her.
12. Good working conditions make her satisfied with her position.
13. The only thing that might make her dissatisfied is when the union contract is to be renewed and she wants more money.



14. If she is dissatisfied, we suggest she find another job.
15. Usually in three weeks we can tell if the girls are going to work out, but our probationary period lasts six months. We then evaluate them at the end of one year and then annually thereafter.
16. She is satisfied with her position because of the supervisor and the hours she works and the salary she is making, in that order.
17. Her dissatisfaction is for the same reasons. (Refers to 16.)
18. If the problem is the supervisor she usually asks for a transfer. If it is the salary, she asks when the next raise occurs.
19. We have a probationary period of three months.
20. Our company tries to keep her happy.
21. If she is dissatisfied, we suggest that she might find something better some place else.
22. The work with the company and the money make for satisfaction.
23. There is no one single factor for dissatisfaction.
24. If a worker is dissatisfied, they ask for a transfer before giving notice.
25. During the probationary period, they are watched carefully and if they take to this training this is making an impression on their supervisor and fellow workers.
26. We have a probationary period in the sense of attendance. We do not pay for any days missed during the first 90 days.
27. Short hours, downtown location, free lunch, nice atmosphere, and competitive price makes her satisfied.
28. Transportation problems make her dissatisfied.
29. She usually would like to get a job in her own hometown when she becomes dissatisfied.
30. She is satisfied with her position because of the friendly atmosphere. This is what they tell me during the exit interview.

31. She is dissatisfied because she wants more money and wants to be closer to home.
32. The reasons for dissatisfaction are job interest, salary, fellow employees, and supervisor.
33. She is usually dissatisfied because of the distance she has to travel to work and she would like 10 per cent more on salary.
34. She usually gripes or finds another job if dissatisfied.
35. We do an annual evaluation on each employee. It is not really a progress report. The evaluation would be from the supervisor in the form of an oral report.
36. She is satisfied with her position due to a feeling of progress on the job. She is often dissatisfied because of frustration. If she is dissatisfied she would like to talk to her supervisor in hopes of finding an answer.

#### Relationship Problems

1. We do not have many problems in this area in our office. People must be able to work with other people here because they work with one another as a team. If they do not get along, after being counseled, they are dismissed.
2. We screen very carefully for the items listed under grooming; therefore, we do not have many problems in this area.
3. There is jealousy in our office between older female workers versus the new young chick.
4. Too many people allow their personal pride and prejudice to interfere with their job performance; this can work both ways you know.
5. We have to have people around here that can get along with one another; that is all there is to it.
6. We have a set policy against borrowing money.

#### Problems of Personal Qualities

1. After they are around for a little bit they seem to fall in with others. In fact, I have been quite pleasantly surprised with our colored girls with their dress--it has been good.



2. The girls lack initiative in good constructive things to do.
3. Under "inability to keep confidences," for example, the girls keep talking about their increases in salary and this is confidential information.
4. More time should be devoted to suggesting better grooming habits. Grooming could mean advancement or being put in a corner. I have seen some girls with several runs in their hose, etc.
5. They need to develop some kind of rules of ethics; some suggestions on how to be a little more tactful; and above all, some way to build up self-confidence in the individual. Many are afraid to take chances or make a mistake. Those that do things and make mistakes profit; the non-doer is not going to do anything. Show students where they make mistakes and help them avoid another mistake rather than criticize.
6. One of the big factors is a lot of our work is telephone work and I have found that you have to maintain surveillance over telephones when you have permissive use of the telephone.
7. Posture is very important. Sometimes when they come to us they fold up in a chair.
8. We very definitely want somebody who is not absent. We check their dependability, and we say how is there 'presenteeism' here in the office.
9. We try to screen these, personal work qualities, carefully. Problems are usually caused by person who is around awhile, not the beginning office worker.
10. Some high school girls have hairstyles which are too mature for them, and this makes them look hard and not 18 years old. At age 30, this type of hairstyle might be all right. Biggest thing is untidy hair.
11. We do not have problems concerning personal telephone calls because our switchboard cuts them off.
12. We are always looking for people who can move up.
13. Leaving work for others to do is always a sore point.
14. They seem to be disloyal when leaving because they only give two or three day's notice. There is no excuse for this.

15. When they are careless or lazy, we find we made a mistake in employing them.
16. Short skirts are an accepted thing and not a problem.
17. Too many young people are lax about clothing and self. Hairstyle is more of a concern to the supervisor rather than fellow employees.
18. We have to help build self-confidence in new people.

#### Office Environment Relationships

1. Both management and office help realize that our offices are crowded.
2. Kind of equipment depends on availability of funds. We have one typewriter that is six years old; the rest are newer.
3. Usually the beginning worker will not know if our equipment is old, due to the nature of the equipment, until she talks to the older worker over coffee.
4. Holidays do cause some problems, because the office worker asks if he can be absent before or after the holiday.
5. They know what the working hours will be when they accept the job. The employee has no control over such things as equipment. They should learn to adjust to it.





## ABSTRACT

George, Karol Ann. "A Survey of Employers to Determine the Nature of the Problems of Beginning Office Workers," M.S., Southern Illinois University (Edwardsville, Illinois), 1966, 106 pages.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this survey was to determine the nature of the problems of beginning office workers as seen by employers in selected business firms employing Roxana High School graduates in order to implement the secretarial-clerical courses at Roxana High School.

**PROCEDURE:** (a) Two major tasks were involved: First, the development of an interview guide; second, selecting and interviewing employers. (b) Since an interview guide developed by Frank Liguori was found suitable for the purposes of this study, permission was secured from him to use his guide with modifications if these became necessary. (c) Employers were selected on the basis of a tally kept on the follow-up questionnaires which were returned by business graduates to Roxana High School. Through personal interviews with employers, data concerning the problems of beginning office workers were collected.

**SUMMARY:** (a) One-third of the employers indicated that beginning employees did not know the kind of job for which to look. (b) Because of the beginning worker's inability to assess his qualifications and skills in relation to the demands of the job, employers felt that beginning office workers often chose jobs for which they



were unsuited temperamentally or for which there was little employment demand. (c) Employers felt that the high school graduate aims too high in applying for a job. (d) Two-thirds of the employers expressed the view that beginning workers had received no instruction concerning the important success factors and personal qualities necessary for job success.

CONCLUSIONS: (a) Beginning office workers were uninformed as to what to say at the interview. (b) Inadequate vocational counseling concerning the important success factors and personal qualities necessary for job success was received by beginning office workers. (c) Office machines training was not as vital as the business teacher thinks. (d) Communication between business and education with respect to what each is doing was lacking.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (a) More vocational counseling is needed in the area of helping the student to assess his personal qualities in relation to job success, skills in relation to job demands, job demands in relation to his temperament, and his aspirations in terms of what business has to offer a beginning office worker. (b) Pre-employment instruction should include information about the kind of job for which to look, selection of those jobs for which there is an employment demand, selection of a job in which there is personal interest, way to give information during the interview, importance of knowing about school records and about exact skills. Therefore, (1) the business department must assume responsibility for counseling as many students as it can rather than waiting for the guidance department

to meet the needs of the students and (2) call together all graduating senior for a two-week training session on "The Importance of and Techniques of Applying for a Job."