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Carl R. Phillips

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Effects of job applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions and selection decisions

Phillips, Carl R., Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1992
EFFECTS OF JOB APPLICANT PAST PERFORMANCE AND INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION ON EVALUATOR ATTRIBUTIONS AND SELECTION DECISIONS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Interdepartmental Program in Business Administration

by

Carl R. Phillips
B.S., University of South Alabama, 1981
M.B.A., University of South Alabama, 1985
May, 1992
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to examine the main and interactive effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions and selection decisions; and the effects of evaluator attributions on selection decisions. One hundred seventy-two male and female students enrolled in undergraduate principles of management classes participated in the study. Subjects evaluated an application for an on-campus position and were asked to make selection decisions (i.e., rating applicant's chances of being selected for an interview and eventually receiving a job offer). The results indicated a main effect of applicant past performance (educational and work-related) on selection decisions, with good past performance applicants receiving more favorable selection decisions than those with poor past performance. Further, internal attributions for good past performance were associated with more favorable selection decisions while internal attributions for poor past performance were associated with less favorable selection decisions. One gender effect (i.e., interpersonal attraction on selection decisions) was found. Implications of these findings are discussed, and suggestions for future research presented.
INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement/Need for Study

The determinants of selection decision outcomes for job applicants have been widely researched. A number of determinants have been identified, including applicant past performance (e.g., Heneman, 1977; Mullins, 1982), age (e.g., Avolio & Barrett, 1987; Singer & Sewell, 1989), and nonverbal behavior during an interview (e.g., Burgoon, Manusov, Mireo, & Hale, 1985; Goldberg & Rosenthal, 1986). However, little research has attempted to address the processes influencing evaluators as they arrive at their decisions. (The term evaluators in this context refers to anyone interviewing, rating or screening job applicants.) For example, little is known about the processes evaluators use to evaluate younger applicants more favorably than similarly qualified older applicants (e.g., Connor, Walsh, Litzelman, & Alvarez, 1978; Raza & Carpenter, 1987). Research has not addressed the "process" question. Dipboye and Macan's (1988) process model of selection decisions suggests the need for this kind of research.

Attribution theory, formulated by Heider (1944, 1958), Jones and his colleagues (Jones & Davis 1965; Jones & McGillis, 1976), and Kelley (1972, 1973) attempts to explain how and why people assign or attribute causes of behavior. According to the theory, attributions made by an individual affect that person's behavior. For example,
supervisors tend to be more punitive when they attribute subordinates' poor performance to internal factors such as lack of effort than to external factors such as task difficulty (Mitchell & Wood, 1979). Attribution theory may be well suited to help determine how and why certain applicants are selected over others.

Attribution theory has been applied to areas such as leadership (e.g., Dobbins & Russell, 1986; Gioia & Sims, 1986; Green & Mitchell, 1979) and performance appraisal (e.g., Bannister, 1986; Dugan, 1989; Rose, 1978). In a review article, Arvey and Campion (1982) underscore the significance of attribution models to selection decisions. They suggest that evaluator judgments about applicants are based on attributions made about applicants' past accomplishments. Rowe (1984) theorized that the selection decision process consists of two stages: evaluators first make attributions about applicants and then determine whether applicants fit into the category "good worker" by comparing evaluator prototype and applicant dimensions. She contends that attribution theory is particularly well suited to understanding how applicant information gained during a selection process is selected and integrated. Only five studies have attempted to integrate attribution theory into selection decision research (i.e., Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Phillips & Dipboye, 1989; Reid, Kleiman, & Travis, 1986; Tucker & Rowe, 1979). There
appears to be a need to further integrate attribution theory into selection decision research since attributions may help explain the process by which evaluators reach decisions (e.g., Arvey & Campion, 1982; Rowe, 1984). The present study extends previous research by examining the role of interpersonal attraction in evaluators' attributional processes.

Research has indicated that a relationship exists between observer interpersonal attraction and observer attributions about an actor's past performance or accomplishments (e.g., Medway & Lowe, 1976; Regan, Strauss, & Fazio, 1974). Work in a performance context has found an interaction between interpersonal attraction and past performance, with liked others' good past performance being attributed to internal factors (ability, effort) and liked others' poor past performance being attributed to external factors (task difficulty, luck). Similarly, disliked others' poor past performance has been found to be attributed to internal factors and disliked others' good past performance to external factors (Medway & Lowe, 1976; Regan et al., 1974). These findings, along with those indicating the importance of interpersonal attraction (e.g., Graves & Powell, 1988; Orpen, 1984) and past performance (e.g., Mullins, 1982; Powell, 1986) on selection decision outcomes, suggest the need to test this interaction in a selection context. Therefore, one goal of
the present study is to examine the interaction of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions.

Also, the study examines the link between evaluator attributions and selection decisions. Past research has found that applicants receive more favorable ratings and are more likely to be hired when good prior performance is attributed to internal factors and when poor prior performance is attributed to external factors (e.g., Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981). Similarly, applicants receive less favorable ratings and are less likely to be hired when good prior performance is attributed to external factors and when poor prior performance is attributed to internal factors (Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Reid et al., 1986; Tucker & Rowe, 1979). The study extends previous research by examining the two selection decision items, likelihood of being selected for an initial interview and likelihood of eventually receiving a job offer. Further, it is the first attempt to examine the link between applicant past performance, interpersonal attraction, evaluator attributions, and selection decisions in a selection context. Also, it is the first study to propose that interpersonal attraction acts as a moderator between applicant past performance and evaluator attributions within a selection context.
Moreover, given the limited amount of research in the area, this study also tests the relationship between interpersonal attraction and selection decisions. Previous research (Graves & Powell, 1988; Griffitt & Jackson, 1970; Keenan, 1977; Orpen, 1984; Raza & Carpenter, 1987) has shown a positive relationship between interpersonal attraction and selection decision outcomes.

Further, the study attempts to replicate the established finding that applicants with good past performance receive higher evaluations than applicants with poor past performance (e.g., Heneman, 1977; Mullins, 1982). In an extension of prior research, the study examines the interactive effect of past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions.

Order of Presentation

The following sections present a review of the selection decision and attribution theory literatures. Also, research is reviewed that establishes the relationship between attribution theory and interpersonal attraction and shows applicability to selection research. Hypotheses are advanced in these areas. A methodology section is presented which includes a discussion of pilot studies, subjects, measures, procedures, experimental manipulations, dependent variables, experimental controls, and statistical analyses used in the study. Finally, a
section is presented which discusses results and limitations and makes suggestions for future research.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Selection Decision Process

The selection decision process has been widely researched during the past forty years. Selection decision outcomes based on either actual interviews or written information about applicants comprise a large portion of this research, as indicated by thirteen published literature reviews (Arvey & Campion, 1982; Eder & Buckley, 1988; Guion, 1987; Guion & Gibson, 1988; Hakel, 1982, 1986; Harris, 1989; Mayfield, 1964; Schmitt, 1976; Ulrich & Trumbo, 1965; Wagner, 1949; Webster, 1982; Wright, 1969). The research has been quite varied, including interview validity issues (Wiesner & Cronshaw, 1988), determinants of interview outcomes (Arvey, 1979), and correlations of pre- and post-interview impressions (Springbett, 1958). Generally, applicant past performance is the most important applicant variable in predicting selection decision outcomes such as applicant suitability ratings and hiring recommendations (e.g., Dipboye, Fromkin, & Wiback, 1975; Hakel, Ohnesorge, & Dunnette, 1970).

Past Performance and Selection Decision Outcomes

Past research has clearly demonstrated the importance of applicant past performance on evaluations (e.g., Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970; Heneman, 1977; Mullins,
Research has generally found that applicants with good past performance receive higher evaluations than applicants with poor past performance. In fact, performance factors such as good academic achievement, good performance in relevant previous jobs, and ability and interest in dealing with people have accounted for significant percentages of explained variance in applicant ratings, ranging (in laboratory settings) from 33% (Dipboye et al., 1975) to 78% (Hakel et al., 1970). Efforts to further understand and improve selection decisions have focused on cognitive processes involved in making selection decisions (e.g., Belec & Rowe, 1983; Phillips & Dipboye, 1989; Reid et al., 1986).

Importance of Process Research

Webster (1964) originally suggested that selection decision outcomes could be controlled if the process of reaching a decision was understood. More recently, theorists (Dipboye & Macan, 1988) have renewed Webster's call for process research, citing the complex combination of decision making and information processing involved in selection decisions. One area in the process context that has begun to receive attention is that of attributions (Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Reid et al., 1986; Tucker & Rowe, 1979). Attributions may help explain the process through which evaluators reach their decisions, since
judgments about applicants may be based on attributions made about applicants' past accomplishments.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory, originally formulated by Heider (1958), may help explain how evaluators arrive at selection decisions. It theorizes that observers attempt to discover the causes of others' behaviors; further, behavioral and affective responses toward others are dependent on these attributions. Heider theorized that the cause of a particular action was either within a person (within-person factor) or within the surrounding environment (environmental factor). More specifically, the within-person factor included a motivational and power component, while the environmental factor consisted of a task difficulty component and certain influences specific to a given situation.

Weiner (1972, 1974, 1979) refined the original attribution theory framework to include four causal attributions made in achievement situations. More specifically, he theorized that achievement behavior could be attributed to four factors: (a) ability, (b) effort, (c) task difficulty, and (d) luck. Ability was defined as the degree of past successes and failures at same or similar tasks, task difficulty as the degree of success of others on the same task, luck as resulting from a pattern
of random or variable task outcomes, and effort as persistence or muscular exertion on a particular task.

Weiner further theorized that these causal attributions could be placed on three separate dimensions: locus of the causal factor (internal or external), stability of the causal factor (stable or unstable), and controllability (controllable or uncontrollable). Ability and effort were viewed as being within a person (internal) while task difficulty and luck were seen as being outside a person (external). On the second dimension, ability and task difficulty were viewed as being relatively stable over time, while effort and luck were seen as relatively unstable. The third dimension classified effort as controllable and ability, task difficulty, and luck as uncontrollable. Taken together, ability was viewed as a stable, internal, uncontrollable factor; effort as an unstable, internal, controllable factor; task difficulty as a stable, external, uncontrollable factor; and luck as an unstable, external, uncontrollable factor.

Two additional causal attributions made in achievement situations have been identified. A third internal factor, "personality", was identified by Tucker and Rowe (1979), based on the results of a pilot study in which students made causal attributions in response to open-ended questions. A third external factor, "influence of other people", suggested by Heider (1958) and Frieze (1976), was
utilized in the Tucker and Rowe (1979) study in addition to luck and task difficulty.

Very little work has attempted to integrate attribution theory into selection decision research. This is especially surprising since selection decisions appear to represent situations in which evaluators make causal attributions and attribution theory seems to provide a promising way of explaining how evaluators arrive at decisions.

Role of Attribution Theory in the Selection Decision Process

Figure 1 presents Dipboye and Macan's (1988) process model of the selection/recruitment interview. This model suggests that in assessing applicants, interviewers make attributions about applicants' past actions and behavior. Interviewers decide whether the applicant or some external factor is responsible for these actions. According to the model, these causal attributions influence evaluations of qualifications. In turn, these evaluations are theorized to influence interviewers' selection decision outcomes. Research examining interviewer attributions in selection decisions as well as research testing Dipboye and Macan's (1988) model have been very limited.

In an early effort in this area, Tucker and Rowe (1979) conducted a study to determine how expectancies affected an evaluator's causal interpretations of an applicant's past
Figure 1

A Process Model of the Selection/Recruitment Interview

performance. Students read ten transcripts which they believed were taken from an actual interview. Half of the transcripts dealt with good past performance situations and half with poor past performance situations. Prior to receiving and reading the transcripts, each subject received a letter of recommendation: one third received a positive letter, one third a negative letter, and one third a neutral letter. Results indicated that evaluators with unfavorable expectancies were more likely to give applicants less credit for good prior performance and hold them more responsible for poor prior performance. The opposite was true for evaluators with favorable expectancies, but to a lesser degree. Further, the results indicated that the final decision to hire or not hire (accept or reject) an applicant was closely related to the causal interpretations of past outcomes. These findings suggest that causal interpretations of past performance mediate between initial expectancies and final hiring decisions.

In a related study, Phillips and Dipboye (1989) conducted a field study in which 34 evaluators interviewed 164 applicants from branch offices of a large financial services corporation. Prior to the actual interview, evaluators recorded their preinterview impressions of applicants after examining their applications and scores on a standardized test. The interviews were unstructured with
no guidelines given to evaluators regarding the questions to be asked. Evaluators' attributions for applicants' performance during the interviews were recorded after the actual interviews. Results indicated that when evaluators had favorable preinterview impressions of applicants, they were more likely to attribute good interview performance to applicant qualifications and poor performance to external factors. Thus, it appears that expectancies of applicant past performance influence both evaluator attributions of applicant past performance as well as attributions of applicant interview performance.

A third study (Reid et al., 1986) examined the influence of evaluator/applicant gender and gender-typed position on evaluator attributions. Eighty-nine male and forty-one female undergraduate students evaluated transcripts describing applicants for a high school teacher position. A pilot study was conducted to determine gender-typed positions; results indicated an English teacher position to be gender-typed feminine, a history position neutral, and a mathematics position masculine. Transcripts described applicants' successful experiences of campaigning for and winning election to the vice-presidency of a student club. A description of the applicant indicating a 3.8 GPA and a major in a subject area corresponding to the position was given to evaluators. Reid et al.'s (1986) results indicated that male evaluators were more likely to
attribute female applicants' good past performance to effort (rather than luck) when the position was male-linked. Conversely, male evaluators attributed female applicants' good past performance to luck (rather than effort) when the job was female-linked. Similarly, male evaluators were more likely to attribute male applicants' good past performance to effort (rather than luck) when the position was female-linked, and to luck (rather than effort) when the job was male-linked. Female evaluators did not make differential attributions for success as a function of applicant gender. Further, 29% of the overall rating variance was explained by the attributions. It should be noted that the results probably would have been stronger if stronger gender-typed positions (i.e., physician, nurse) had been used.

In another study relating attribution theory to the selection decision process, Belec and Rowe (1983) examined how the temporal placement of positive and negative information affected evaluators' interpretations of applicant past performance and how these affected applicant ratings. Subjects (465 undergraduate students) were told that they would be making a decision concerning acceptance or rejection of a job applicant. After receiving a job description and letter of reference from each applicant's previous employer, subjects read a series of six transcripts; some contained favorable and some contained
unfavorable information. The transcripts were arranged in three different sequences: PPPPNN, PPNNPP, NNPPPP (P = positive information, N = negative information). Subjects then recorded attributions about particular events and indicated whether they would accept or reject applicants and how they felt applicants would perform if hired. Their results indicated that evaluators made more internal attributions about applicants' positive information when it followed negative information. Further, when negative information followed positive information, evaluators made more internal attributions about poor past performance than in the negative-positive sequence. Moreover, a link was found between causal interpretations of past outcomes and final hiring decisions, ratings of suitability, and predicted performance ratings. Evaluators made more positive decisions when they attributed good past performance more to internal factors and poor past performance less to internal factors.

Lunau (1981) studied the impact of stability and locus of attributions on selection decision outcomes as well as the relationship of evaluator gender to causal attributions made by evaluators. In a methodology similar to those of Tucker and Rowe (1979) and Belec and Rowe (1983), undergraduate students, acting as evaluators, read eight transcripts. Each transcript discussed a different applicant and a single event in that applicant's employment
or educational history that was relevant to the job requirements. After reading each transcript, subjects made attributions and rated each applicant. Lunau's results showed that internal, stable attributions for favorable events and external attributions for unfavorable events were associated with favorable applicant evaluations. Conversely, applicants were more likely to be rejected when evaluators attributed unfavorable events to internal or stable factors. She also found evidence of gender differences regarding different types of causal attributions made. Female evaluators tended to make more internal attributions for favorable events while males made more external attributions for favorable events.

In summary, there has been a limited amount of research conducted which relates attribution theory to selection decision outcomes. In the studies conducted, evaluator attributions for applicant good/poor prior performance have been shown to influence evaluator ratings of applicants and decisions to hire or not hire (Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Reid et al., 1986; Tucker & Rowe, 1979). Generally, applicants receive more favorable ratings when good prior performance (favorable events) is attributed to internal and stable factors and when poor prior performance (unfavorable events) is attributed to external and unstable factors. Only one study (Phillips & Dipboye, 1989) has
examined evaluator attributions of applicant interview performance.

The range of topics covered in this context has been quite varied. Early expectancies have been found to affect evaluators' causal interpretations of applicants' past performance outcomes (Tucker & Rowe, 1979), as well as causal interpretations of applicants' interview performance (Phillips & Dipboye, 1989). Also, applicant gender and gender-type position have been examined (Lunau, 1981; Reid et al., 1986). Additionally, the impact of the temporal placement of positive and negative information on evaluators' interpretations of applicant past performance and on applicant ratings has been studied (Belec & Rowe, 1983). As can be seen, not only has there been a lack of research in the area, but also there seems to be a lack of a single focus in the research that has been done.

Attitudinal Similarity, Interpersonal Attraction, and Selection Decision Outcomes

Byrne's (e.g., 1961; 1971) social-psychological model of interpersonal attraction appears to have much applicability to selection research since interpersonal attraction has been shown to result in more favorable selection decision outcomes for applicants (e.g., Keenan, 1977; Orpen, 1984). Byrne's model theorizes a linear relationship between attitudinal similarity and interpersonal attraction, with interpersonal attraction
being a direct function of attitudinal similarity. More specifically, interpersonal interaction will be perceived as rewarding and will lead to positive feelings about a person when the person offers consensual validation by showing similarity to an observer in some way. A large amount of subsequent research across a variety of subject populations has firmly established this relationship between attitudinal similarity and interpersonal attraction (e.g., Byrne, 1971; Byrne, London & Reeves, 1968; Orpen, 1984).

**Attitudinal Similarity**

Attitudinal similarity between individuals has been shown to positively influence a number of decisions, including performance evaluations (Smith, Meadow, & Sisk, 1970; Wexley, Alexander, Greenawalt, & Couch, 1980; Zalesny & Kirsch, 1989), the choice of a group member with whom to work (Castore & DeNinno, 1977), the magnitude of a bank loan approved (Golightly, Huffman, & Byrne, 1972), and employee selection (e.g., Peters & Terborg, 1975).

To examine the influence of attitudinal similarity on an important selection decision outcome (hiring evaluations), Peters and Terborg (1975) conducted two studies using undergraduate psychology students. In the first study, subjects received a booklet with information on a hypothetical job applicant and were instructed to make decisions regarding hiring the applicant. The booklets
manipulated placement of favorable and unfavorable information. Subjects then completed an interpersonal judgment scale and filled out attitude scales for themselves. The results indicated that both temporal placement of information (where negative information before positive information resulted in higher ratings) and attitude similarity influenced hiring decisions. The second study was designed so that defining valid job-related criteria would hopefully eliminate the effects of nonjob-related factors (attitude similarity and temporal placement of information) on decision-making behavior. The design of the second study was the same as that of the first study except in the subsequent study subjects were told not only that hiring qualified people was important, but also were provided a description of successful managers. Defining valid job-related information eliminated the effects of temporal placement of unfavorable information; however, the effects of attitudinal similarity remained.

Interpersonal Attraction

Like attitudinal similarity, the degree to which evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants has been shown to influence such selection decision outcomes as hirability ratings and overall applicant evaluations (Graves & Powell, 1988; Griffitt & Jackson, 1970; Keenan, 1977; Orpen, 1984; Raza & Carpenter, 1987). Raza and
Carpenter (1987) developed a theoretical model, presented in Figure 2, which explains how attractiveness and likability influence selection decision outcomes. Their model theorized that personal liking, intelligence, and skill indirectly affect hiring decisions through employability decisions (judgments as to the type of employee one will make). The employability decision was modeled as being directly influenced by judgments of personal liking, intelligence, and skill. Also, physical attractiveness ratings were theorized to indirectly influence the employability decision through likability. Further, skill ratings were theorized to be directly influenced by judgments of an applicant's intelligence, intelligence ratings in turn by likability, and likability ratings in turn by judgments of attractiveness. In partial support for the model, Graves and Powell (1988), in a field setting, studied corporate recruiters conducting interviews at an on-campus placement facility of a large state university. They found that evaluators perceived stronger subjective qualifications (i.e., communication ability, initiative, and job-related knowledge) and were more likely to favorably evaluate applicants with strong academic records whom they liked and viewed as similar to themselves.

Interpersonal attraction has also been shown to positively influence other selection decision outcomes.
Figure 2
Model of Specific Rating Variables and Outcome Variables

Keenan (1977) found a fairly strong relationship between evaluators' liking of an applicant and evaluators' intention to offer an applicant a follow-up interview. Extending Keenan's work, Orpen's (1984) research showed that interpersonal attraction was also related to an evaluator's actual decision to accept or reject an applicant for a particular job. Further, research has indicated that salary recommendations are positively related to the degree to which evaluators are attracted to applicants (Griffitt & Jackson, 1970) and the degree of attitudinal similarity between evaluator and applicant (Baskett, 1973).

**Summary**

In summary, research has shown that applicant past performance is the variable most predictive of selection decision outcomes. Performance factors have accounted for significant percentages of explained variance in applicant ratings (e.g., Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970). Additionally, studies conducted by Byrne and his colleagues (e.g., Byrne, 1971; Byrne et al., 1968) have generally shown that there is a positive relationship between attitudinal similarity and interpersonal attraction. Also, the degree of attitudinal similarity between individuals has been shown to exert a positive influence on a number of decision outcomes, including performance evaluations (e.g., Zalesny & Kirsch, 1989), the choice of a group member with
whom to work (e.g., Castore & DeNinno, 1977), the magnitude of a bank loan approved (e.g., Golightly et al., 1972), and employee selection (e.g., Peters & Terborg, 1975). Research has indicated that both interpersonal attraction (e.g., Keenan, 1977) and attitudinal similarity (e.g., Peters & Terborg, 1975) between evaluator and applicant result in more favorable outcomes for applicants, including higher or more favorable ratings (e.g., Graves & Powell, 1988), second interview invitations (e.g., Keenan, 1977), likelihood of employment offers (e.g., Graves & Powell, 1988), and higher salary offers (e.g., Baskett, 1973).

Although the independent effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction in evaluations are relatively clear, research to date has not examined their combined effects on evaluator attributions and selection decision outcomes in a selection decision context within the same study. In the following section research is reviewed providing ample justification to indicate that interpersonal attraction and applicant past performance interact to influence evaluator attributions, and that interpersonal attraction and applicant past performance both uniquely and jointly influence selection decision outcomes.
Past Performance, Interpersonal Attraction, and Evaluator Attributions

Research (i.e., Medway & Lowe, 1976; Regan et al., 1974) has examined the relationship between attributions for liked and disliked others' performance and performance quality in general contexts. Regan et al. (1974), in a work performance context, studied the relationship between liking for a stranger and attributions made concerning the stranger's performance on a skilled task. The study was conducted in a laboratory setting using undergraduate students as subjects. Subjects observed a confederate on closed-circuit television. Liking was manipulated in two ways in order to achieve a more powerful effect. First, the confederate's behavior was modified to appear as likeable or unlikeable to an observer. Likeable behaviors included responding nicely to an experimenter's initial instructions, indicating that the confederate had seen the subject in the next room and asking whether the subject was the partner, and smiling affirmatively when the experimenter responded affirmatively; unlikeable behaviors included riffling through papers, drumming fingers, and looking bored and annoyed. The second part of the liking manipulation was modeled after the work of Byrne (1961). After administering attitude scales to the subjects, bogus attitude surveys were given to the subjects to help ensure that likeability had been manipulated. In the like
condition, surveys were designed so that the confederate's responses were similar to the subject's, while in the dislike condition, the confederate's responses were made to appear dissimilar to the subject's. Finally, performance was manipulated with the confederate scoring high or low on a rolling metal ballgame, the object of which was to knock a small rolling metal ball from a chute by hitting it with a metal weight fastened to a string.

Results indicated that actions which were consistent with affect for actors (good performance by liked actors, poor performance by disliked actors) were attributed to internal actor characteristics while actions inconsistent with affect for actors (good performance by disliked actors, poor performance by liked actors) were attributed to situational (external) factors. Thus, observers viewed performance as being caused by actors when they viewed liked actors performing well or disliked actors performing poorly. However, when observers viewed performance as out of character, they could not view it as being internally caused and therefore attributed it to external factors.

In a related study, Medway and Lowe (1976) found similar results. They administered the intellectual achievement responsibility questionnaire (Crandall, Katkovsky, & Crandall, 1965) to 45 male and 67 female psychology students. The questionnaire was equally divided, with half the items describing positive and half
negative achievement-related outcomes. Subjects were asked to put the name of a liked or disliked person in the blank beside the question and to select the most likely cause for that person's performance (i.e., ability, effort, task difficulty, luck). Their results indicated that liked others' good performance was attributed more to internal factors (effort, ability) while liked others' poor performance was attributed more to external factors (task difficulty, luck).

**Evaluator Attributions and Selection Decision Outcomes**

Four studies (Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Reid et al., 1986; Tucker & Rowe, 1979) have found a relationship between evaluator attributions and selection decision outcomes (i.e., hiring recommendations, applicant ratings). Applicants had more positive selection decision outcomes when good prior performance was attributed to internal factors and when poor prior performance was attributed to external factors. Similarly, applicants had less positive selection decision outcomes when good past performance was attributed to external factors and poor past performance was attributed to internal factors.

**Summary**

Research on the selection decision process has begun to focus on how evaluators arrive at decisions about applicants (e.g., Dipboye & Macan, 1988). Attribution
theory (Heider, 1958) may help explain how evaluators reach these decisions (e.g., Belec & Rowe, 1983; Reid et al., 1986). Research that integrates attribution theory into the selection decision process, however, is only beginning, and is still quite limited. Thus far, research has examined evaluator attributions as a function of early expectancies (Tucker & Rowe, 1979), preinterview impressions (Phillips & Dipboye, 1989), evaluator/applicant gender and gender-typed position (Lunau, 1981, Reid et al., 1986), and temporal placement of positive and negative information (Belec & Rowe, 1983). However, the combined effect of performance quality and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions has never been examined.

Research in a general performance context (Regan et al., 1974) has found that performance and interpersonal attraction interact in their effects on attributions. It is unknown whether this relationship operates in a selection decision context. Thus, a major purpose of the present research is to examine the interactive effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions. Further, the interactive effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions will be determined. Another goal of the study is to examine the impact of evaluator attributions on selection decisions. The study will examine the variable selection decisions. It is composed
of two items (i.e., likelihood of being selected for an initial interview and likelihood of eventually receiving a job offer) which have not been previously studied in this context. An additional objective of the study is to assess the impact of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions.

This study represents a unique contribution to the selection decision literature in several ways. First, it proposes that evaluator attributions mediate the effects of applicant past performance on selection decisions. Also, it proposes that interpersonal attraction interacts with applicant past performance to influence evaluator attributions. Further, it proposes that interpersonal attraction interacts with applicant past performance to influence selection decisions. Determining the interactive effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions and selection decisions, as well as the main effect of evaluator attributions on selection decisions, will shed new light on selection decision processes.

Hypotheses

**Past Performance, Interpersonal Attraction, and Evaluator Attributions**

Research in a performance context has found that past performance and interpersonal attraction interact such that liked others' good performance is attributed to internal
factors (ability, effort) and liked others' poor performance is attributed to external factors (task difficulty, luck). Similarly, disliked others' poor performance is attributed to internal factors while disliked others' good performance is attributed to external factors (Medway & Lowe, 1976; Regan et al., 1974). Since performance and interpersonal attraction interact in affecting attributions in a general performance context, it seems appropriate to test this relationship in a selection decision context. Taken together with the established finding (Jones & Nisbett, 1972) that observers tend to attribute others' past performance (good and poor) to internal factors, applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction are hypothesized to interact such that:

**Hypothesis 1:** When evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants, they will be more likely to attribute applicants' good past performance to internal factors, but poor past performance will more likely be attributed to external factors. When evaluators are not interpersonally attracted to applicants, they will be less likely to attribute applicants' good past performance to internal factors, but poor past
performance will more likely be attributed to internal factors.

**Evaluator Attributions and Selection Decisions**

Research has found a relationship between evaluator attributions and selection decision outcomes. Applicants receive more favorable ratings and are more likely to be hired when good prior performance is attributed to internal factors and when poor prior performance is attributed to external factors. Similarly, applicants receive less favorable ratings and are less likely to be hired when good prior performance is attributed to external factors and when poor prior performance is attributed to internal factors (Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Reid et al., 1986; Tucker & Rowe, 1979). Since other outcomes are important in the employee selection process, there is a need to examine the relationship between evaluator attributions and other selection decisions (e.g., likelihood of being selected for an initial interview). This study will examine the variable selection decisions, which is made up of two items, likelihood of being selected for an initial interview and likelihood of eventually receiving a job offer. Additionally, the link between interpersonal attraction/evaluator attributions/selection decisions needs to be examined given that it has never been studied in a selection decision context. Therefore, the following hypothesis is advanced:
Hypothesis 2: Applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when good past performance is attributed to internal factors than when it is attributed to external factors but will receive less favorable selection decisions when poor past performance is attributed to internal factors than when it is attributed to external factors.

Past Performance and Selection Decisions
Past research (e.g., Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970; Heneman, 1977; Mullins, 1982; Oliphant & Alexander, 1982; Powell, 1986) has generally found that applicants with good past performance receive higher evaluations (e.g., hiring recommendations) than applicants with poor past performance. It seems likely that applicants with good past performance will also be more likely to be selected for an initial interview and have a greater chance of eventually receiving a job offer (the two items comprising the variable selection decisions). Therefore, the following main effect hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 3: Applicants with good past performance will receive more favorable selection decisions than applicants with poor past performance.
Interpersonal Attraction and Selection Decisions

Previous research has shown that interpersonal attraction between evaluator and applicant influences applicant ratings. It has been shown that applicants receive higher job ratings and more job offers when evaluators are attracted to them interpersonally (Graves & Powell, 1988; Griffitt & Jackson, 1970; Keenan, 1977; Orpen, 1984; Raza & Carpenter, 1987). Based on previous research, the following main effect hypothesis is advanced:

Hypothesis 4: Applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when evaluators are attracted to them interpersonally.

Past Performance, Interpersonal Attraction, and Selection Decisions

Past performance and interpersonal attraction are not hypothesized to interact disordinally in their effects on selection decisions. For such an interaction to exist, evaluators would have to recommend more positive outcomes for applicants with poor past performance to whom they are not attracted than for those to whom they are attracted. This expectation is untenable based on previous research. However, an ordinal interaction can be hypothesized. Specifically, interpersonal attraction has been hypothesized to only change the degree to which evaluators make internal attributions about applicant good past
performance (interpersonal attraction results in greater internal attributions). It is likely that when applicant past performance is good, there will not be a significant difference in selection decisions, regardless of whether evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants. However, interpersonal attraction has been hypothesized to change evaluator attributions about applicant poor past performance from internal to external. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that when applicant past performance is poor, interpersonal attraction will result in a significant difference in selection decisions. Specifically, selection decisions should be significantly less unfavorable when evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants. Applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction are thus hypothesized to interact on selection decisions as follows:

Hypothesis 5: When applicant past performance is good, there will not be a significant difference in selection decisions, regardless of whether evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants. When past performance is poor, applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants.
Five hypotheses have been presented which examine the main effects of applicant past performance, interpersonal attraction, and evaluator attributions on selection decisions; and the interactive effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions and on selection decisions. A model of the hypothesized relationships is presented in Figure 3.

METHODOLOGY

This section presents a summary of the pilot studies, an overview of the experiment and a discussion of the subjects, instruments used, procedures, experimental manipulations, manipulation checks, dependent variables, experimental controls, and analyses conducted. A summary of the pilot studies is presented in the section that immediately follows.

Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted. Pilot study 1 was conducted to assess the strength of the past performance manipulation while pilot study 2 was conducted to assess the strength of the interpersonal attraction manipulation. The results of the pilot studies indicated significant main effects for both the past performance and interpersonal attraction manipulations (see Appendix A). Based on these results, it was decided to use these manipulations in the
Figure 3
Model of the Hypothesized Relationships

Applicant
Past Performance

H3

Applicant
Past Performance
x
Evaluator
Interpersonal
Attributions

H1

Evaluator
Interpersonal
Attraction

H5

Selection
Decisions

Interpersonal
Attraction

H4

Applicant
Past Performance
x
Evaluator
Attributions

H2

Selection
Decisions
study. The following section presents an overview of the experiment.

**Experiment Overview**

Subjects evaluated an application for an on-campus position. Half evaluated an application that described good past performance while half evaluated an application that described poor past performance (see "Experimental Manipulations" section below for operationalization of past performance). Subjects were led to believe that the applicant was either attitudinally similar or dissimilar to themselves. Subsequently, subjects recorded their attributions for applicant past performance and made recommendations regarding selection decision outcomes.

**Subjects**

Subjects were 88 male and 84 female students enrolled in undergraduate principles of management classes. Students were randomly assigned to experimental conditions with a total of 43 students per cell. Participation was voluntary and students were given extra class credit for participation.

**Experimental Materials**

A job description (see Appendix B) described a graduate assistant position in Computer User Services, with the candidate being responsible for answering user questions regarding computer operation and assisting users in writing programs and solving errors. Successful job applicants
were described as having a working knowledge of computers and computer languages, an ability to work effectively with other people, an undergraduate degree, and some work experience.

**Procedures**

Subjects reported to a laboratory individually and were randomly assigned to one of four conditions (i.e., good performance/attracted; good performance/not attracted; poor performance/attracted; poor performance/not attracted). They were asked to sign an informed consent document. The following cover story was given to the subjects. Subjects were told that they were participating in a program designed to increase the efficiency of selecting applicants for a graduate assistant position in Computer User Services (see Appendix B). Specifically, they were told that they would be evaluating an application that had been received for this position.

Interpersonal attraction was manipulated in the following manner. Subjects were asked to complete an 8-item attitude scale (see Appendix C) "since we like to get normative data on all subjects, job applicants -- everybody" (based on Regan et al., 1974). After the subject had completed the attitude scale, the experimenter leafed through materials on a clipboard and stated, "Well, I forgot the other materials" (based on Griffeth, Vecchio, & Logan, 1989). "Please complete this background
information form while I go get them." The brief background information form included name, major, classification (e.g., junior, senior, etc.), and GPA (see Appendix D). While absent from the room, the experimenter completed a bogus attitude scale, supposedly that of the applicant, in accordance with the Byrne (1971) attraction paradigm manipulation. The constant discrepancy method (Griffitt & Byrne, 1970) was used to induce interpersonal attraction or no interpersonal attraction. The experimenter returned to the room and gave the bogus attitude scale to the subject, saying "As long as you're going to be evaluating this applicant, I thought it would be helpful for you to know something about his views" (based on Regan et al., 1974). After examining the bogus scale, subjects completed Byrne's (1971) Interpersonal Judgment Scale. The last two items on this scale constituted a manipulation check for interpersonal attraction (see Appendix E).

Subjects were given an instruction sheet (see Appendix F) detailing procedures for the rest of the study. They were given a job description for a computer user assistant position and were asked to read it and keep it in mind while reviewing the application. Subjects in the good performance condition reviewed an application that described good past performance while subjects in the poor
performance condition reviewed an application that described poor past performance.

After subjects reviewed the application, they completed attribution scales, and were asked the chance they would select the applicant for an initial interview and the applicant's chances of eventually receiving a job offer. After this, a manipulation check was administered to determine the effectiveness of the past performance manipulation (see Appendix G). Following the experiment, subjects were debriefed and asked to sign a pledge form agreeing not to divulge information about the study.

Experimental Manipulations

Interpersonal attraction. Interpersonal attraction was manipulated using eight six-point items from Byrne's (1971) attitude scale (see Appendix C) as described above. This questionnaire asked subjects to give their opinions on issues of general interest such as divorce and college education. The six alternative responses for each topic ranged from very affirmative (e.g., "I am very much in favor of divorce") to very negative (e.g., "I am very much opposed to divorce"). The constant discrepancy method (Griffitt & Byrne, 1970) was used to induce interpersonal attraction or no interpersonal attraction. For similar items the "applicant's" response to Likert-type items reflected the same general opinion (i.e., affirmative or negative) as that of the subject and was one position away
from the subject's. For dissimilar items the "applicant's" response was three positions from the subject's, thereby reflecting an opposite opinion.

**Past performance.** Applicant past performance was manipulated using two applications (one describing good past performance and one describing poor past performance (see Appendix H). Each application contained work-related and education outcomes from the applicant's past. Similar information has been presented in dialogue form as written interview transcripts (cf. Belec & Rowe, 1983). Application one discussed the applicant's high college grades (As and Bs) and work-related successes. Application two was identical to application one except that it described poor college grades (Cs and Ds) and work-related failures.

**Manipulation Checks**

**Manipulation check for past performance.** Subjects indicated their responses to two items on five-point scales ranging from "very poor" (1) to "very good" (5) and "far above average" (1) to "far below average" (5) (see Appendix G). The first item asked subjects to evaluate, on an overall basis, the applicant's past performance as described in the application. The second item asked subjects' opinions of the applicant's past performance. The second item was reverse-scored, and the two items averaged to yield a score for past performance, with higher
scores indicative of good past performance. Cronbach's alpha was .91.

**Manipulation check for interpersonal attraction.** Interpersonal attraction was measured by the last two items in Byrne's (1971) Interpersonal Judgment Scale (see Appendix E). The first item asked subjects to indicate the extent to which they felt they would like the individual, while the second item asked them to indicate how they felt they would enjoy working with the individual. Alternative responses were assigned point values ranging from one (least attractive) to seven (most attractive). Scores were computed by averaging both items, with higher scores indicative of interpersonal attraction. Cronbach's alpha was .90.

**Dependent Variables**

**Evaluator attributions.** Using attribution measures similar to Russell (1982), subjects indicated the extent to which they believed different factors (ability, effort, personality aspects, degree of task difficulty, degree of luck, influence of other people) contributed to the applicant's performance described in the application. Subjects responded to five items, each of which had response alternatives ranging from internal to external (see Appendix I). The second and third items were reverse-scored, and the five items averaged to yield a score for
attributions, with higher scores indicative of greater internal attributions. Cronbach's alpha was .73.

Selection decisions. Similar to Graves and Powell (1988), subjects indicated the chance they would select the applicant for an initial interview and indicated the applicant's chances of eventually receiving a job offer on an eleven-point scale ranging from 0 to 100% in increments of 10% (see Appendix J). Since the two items were highly correlated ($r = .88$, $p < .01$), they were averaged to yield a score for selection decisions, with higher scores representing more favorable decisions.

Experimental Controls

Several potential confounds were controlled for in the study. First, subject GPA information was collected (see Appendix D) and controlled for since GPA differences may have affected subjects' evaluations of the applicant. Subjects with GPAs similar to that of the confederate may have been more likely to attribute the applicant's good past performance to internal factors and poor past performance to external factors. Moreover, GPA similarity may have resulted in more favorable applicant selection decision outcomes. Second, the experimenter used uniform instructions when interacting with applicants to control for possible experimenter expectancy effects. Finally, homogeneous subjects (subjects were college juniors and seniors and about the same age) were used to reduce error
variance and thus increase statistical power to detect differences between treatment groups (Cook & Campbell, 1979, p. 44).

**Statistical Analyses**

To determine the effectiveness of the manipulations, the effects of past performance and interpersonal attraction on subjects' perceptions were assessed using independent samples t-tests.

Hypothesis 1, which examined the proposed interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions, was tested using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). To test Hypothesis 2, correlation and hierarchical regression analyses were used to assess the relationship between evaluator attributions and selection decisions under different performance conditions. Hypotheses 3 and 4, which examined the effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction, respectively, on selection decisions, were tested using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Also, ANOVA was used to test Hypothesis 5, the proposed interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions.

Initially, the analyses for hypotheses 1, 3, 4, and 5 were conducted using evaluator GPA as a covariate. In most cases, the covariate was not significant and was dropped
from the analyses. Therefore, only Hypothesis 1 utilized the covariate data.

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Variable means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations. Variable means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for the entire sample are found in Table 1, while those for each treatment condition are found in Appendix K.

Manipulation check for past performance. An independent samples t-test showed a significant effect for the past performance manipulation, t = 25.74, p < .01. Subjects rated good past performance higher (M = 4.28) than poor past performance (M = 2.26).

Manipulation check for interpersonal attraction. An independent samples t-test indicated a significant main effect for the interpersonal attraction manipulation, t = 16.86, p < .01. Subjects in the attracted condition rated the applicant as being more interpersonally attractive (M = 5.74) than subjects in the not attracted condition (M = 3.35).

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 predicted an interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions. Specifically, it was hypothesized that when
Table 1
Variable Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations (N = 172)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator GPA (1)</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance (2)</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.87*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attraction (3)</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal attributions (4)</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection decisions (5)</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator gender (6)</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Males coded 1; females coded 0.

**p < .01.
evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants, they will be more likely to attribute applicants' good past performance to internal factors, but poor past performance will more likely be attributed to external factors. When evaluators are not interpersonally attracted to applicants, they will be less likely to attribute applicants' good past performance to internal factors but more likely to attribute poor past performance to internal factors. An ANCOVA was performed to examine the effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions. The results of this analysis and cell means and standard deviations are shown in Table 2. The results indicated that the covariate evaluator GPA had a significant effect on evaluator attributions, $F(1,167) = 9.29$, $p < .01$. Subjects with higher GPAs (as compared to those with lower GPAs) made more internal attributions for both good and poor applicant past performance. Applicant past performance (as manipulated) did not have a significant main effect on evaluator attributions, $F(1,167) = .03$, $p > .05$. Likewise, interpersonal attraction (as manipulated) did not have a significant main effect on evaluator attributions, $F(1,167) = 1.79$, $p > .05$. Further, applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction (both as manipulated) did not interact in their effect on evaluator attributions, $F(1,167) = .01$, $p > .05$. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.
Table 2

Analysis of Covariance of Effects of Applicant Past Performance and Interpersonal Attraction on Evaluator Attributions (N = 172)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator GPA (covariate)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.89</td>
<td>9.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant past performance (P)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal attraction (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within</strong></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>171</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01.

Cell Means and Standard Deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant past performance</th>
<th>Interpersonal attraction</th>
<th>Evaluator attributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>6.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>6.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>6.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when good past performance is attributed to internal factors than when it is attributed to external factors and less favorable selection decisions when poor past performance is attributed to internal factors than when it is attributed to external factors. In the good past performance condition, the correlation between attributions and selection decisions ($r = .20, p < .05$; one-tailed) was significant and in the predicted direction. In the poor past performance condition, the correlation between attributions and selection decisions ($r = -.44, p < .01$) was significant and in the predicted direction. Consistent with the prediction, greater internal attributions for applicant good past performance (as perceived) were associated with more favorable selection decisions and greater internal attributions for applicant poor past performance (as perceived) were associated with less favorable selection decisions.

To help clarify the relationship between these variables, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. At the first step of the analysis, past performance was regressed on selection decisions. Attributions and a past performance/attributions interaction were added as predictors at the second and
third steps, respectively. The results are presented in Table 3. They indicate that the interaction of past performance and evaluator attributions resulted in a significant increase in the prediction of selection decisions beyond that explained by evaluator attributions alone. When considered with the correlation results discussed earlier, these results indicate that applicant past performance moderates the relationship between internal attributions and selection decisions. These results are depicted in Figure 4, which shows that selection decisions will be more favorable when evaluators make internal attributions about applicant good past performance but will be less favorable when evaluators make internal attributions about applicant poor past performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted that applicants with good past performance, in contrast to those with poor past performance, will receive more favorable selection decisions. An ANOVA was performed to examine the effect of applicant past performance on selection decisions. The results of this analysis and cell means and standard deviations are shown in Table 4. The results indicated a significant main effect for applicant past performance (as manipulated) on selection decisions, $F(1,168) = 423.38$, $p < .01$. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.
Table 3
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Selection Decisions (N = 172)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant past performance (P)</td>
<td>-.277</td>
<td>.713</td>
<td>426.551**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator attributions (A)</td>
<td>-.258**</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>224.810**</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>7.289**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P x A</td>
<td>1.153**</td>
<td>.752</td>
<td>174.248**</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>20.703**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** $p < .01$. 
Figure 4

Interaction of Applicant Past Performance and Attributions on Selection Decisions

Selection Decisions

Favorable

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

Unfavorable

0

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

External Attributions Internal

Good Past Performance

Poor Past Performance
Table 4

Analysis of Variance of Effects of Applicant Past Performance and Interpersonal Attraction on Selection Decisions (N = 172)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant past performance (P)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1339.54</td>
<td>423.38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal attraction (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attraction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01.

Cell Means and Standard Deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant past performance</th>
<th>Interpersonal attraction</th>
<th>Selection Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>8.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>8.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 43)</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M  SD
---  ---
8.30  1.49
8.06  1.29
2.71  2.44
2.49  1.68
**Hypothesis 4**

Hypothesis 4 predicted that applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when evaluators are attracted to them interpersonally. An ANOVA was performed to examine the effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions. The results of this analysis and cell means and standard deviations are shown in Table 4. The results indicated lack of support for a main effect of interpersonal attraction (as manipulated) on selection decisions, $F(1, 168) = .74, p > .05$. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

**Hypothesis 5**

Hypothesis 5 proposed an interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions. Specifically, it was predicted that when past performance is good, there will not be a significant difference in selection decisions, regardless of whether evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants. However, when past performance is poor, applicants will be more likely to be favorably evaluated when evaluators are interpersonally attracted to them. An ANOVA was performed to examine the effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions. The results of this analysis and cell means and standard deviations are shown in Table 4. The results indicated that applicant past performance and interpersonal
attraction (both as manipulated) did not interact in their effect on selection decisions. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Analyses by Gender

This section examines whether evaluator gender differences existed in the manipulation checks and hypothesized relationships in the study. To explore whether gender differences existed, each analysis was rerun including evaluator gender as an additional variable.

ANOVA was performed to examine the effect of evaluator gender on the past performance and interpersonal attraction manipulations. The results indicated that there was not a significant gender difference in the effectiveness of the two manipulations (for past performance, $F(1,168) = .282, p > .05$; for interpersonal attraction, $F(1,168) = .05, p > .05$). Thus, the two manipulations appear to be equally effective for male and female subjects.

An ANCOVA was performed to examine the effect of evaluator gender, applicant past performance, and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions. The results of this analysis and cell means and standard deviations are shown in Table 5. The results indicated that there was not a significant gender difference in the effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal
Table 5  

**Analysis of Covariance of Effects of Evaluator Gender, Applicant Past Performance, and Interpersonal Attraction on Evaluator Attributions (N = 172)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator GPA (covariate)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.89</td>
<td>9.27**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator gender (G)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant past performance (P)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal attraction (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x P</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x P x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** P < .01.

*(table continues)*
Table 5 (continued)

Cell Means and Standard Deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluator gender</th>
<th>Applicant past performance</th>
<th>Interpersonal attraction</th>
<th>Evaluator attributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td>6.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td>6.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td>6.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td>6.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td>6.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td>6.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td>6.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
attraction on evaluator attributions, $F(1, 163) = 1.48$, $p > .05$. Therefore, no gender difference was found for Hypothesis 1. For Hypothesis 2, selection decisions were regressed on the independent variables in the following order: step 1, evaluator gender; step 2, applicant past performance; step 3, evaluator attributions; step 4, applicant past performance/evaluator attributions interaction; and step 5, evaluator gender/applicant past performance/evaluator attributions interaction. Hierarchical regression results shown in Table 6 indicate that the interaction of evaluator gender, applicant past performance, and evaluator attributions did not result in a significant increase in the prediction of selection decisions beyond that explained by the past performance/attribution interaction. Thus, no gender difference was found for Hypothesis 2. An ANOVA was performed to examine the effect of evaluator gender, applicant past performance, and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions (Hypotheses 3, 4, and 5, respectively). The results of this analysis and cell means and standard deviations are shown in Table 7. The results indicated that there was no gender difference in the effect of applicant past performance on selection decisions, $F(1, 164) = 2.09$, $p > .05$. Additionally, no gender difference was found in the interaction of applicant past performance and interpersonal
Table 6

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Selection Decisions (N = 172)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender (G)</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past performance (P)</td>
<td>.599*</td>
<td>.750</td>
<td>263.963**</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>527.901**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator attributions (A)</td>
<td>-.190</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>179.123**</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>3.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P x A</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>134.524**</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x P x A</td>
<td>-.205</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td>109.852**</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>3.408</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** $p < .01$.

* $p < .05$. 
Table 7

Analysis of Variance of Effects of Evaluator Gender, Applicant Past Performance, and Interpersonal Attraction on Selection Decisions (N = 172)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator gender (G)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant past performance (P)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1339.54</td>
<td>438.08**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal attraction (A)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17.26</td>
<td>5.64*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x P</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G x P x A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>171</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01.
*p < .05.

(table continues)
Table 7 (continued)

Cell Means and Standard Deviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluator gender</th>
<th>Applicant past performance</th>
<th>Interpersonal attraction</th>
<th>Selection decisions</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.64</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.39</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 22)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>1.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Not attracted (n = 21)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
attraction on selection decisions (Hypotheses 3 and 4, respectively), $F(1,164) = 2.08, p > .05$. However, there was a significant gender difference in the effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions (Hypothesis 5), $F(1,164) = 5.64, p < .05$. A simple main effects analysis indicated that interpersonal attraction had a significant impact on female evaluators' selection decisions, $F(1,82) = 5.33, p < .05$, but not on those of male evaluators, $F(1,86) = 1.07, p > .05$. Specifically, for female subjects, attracted evaluators made more positive selection decisions ($M = 5.81$) than non-attracted evaluators ($M = 4.93$). However, for male subjects, selection decisions of attracted evaluators ($M = 5.22$) did not significantly differ from those of non-attracted evaluators ($M = 5.60$). This interaction is depicted in Figure 5.

**Summary**

The hypotheses received limited support. Hypothesis 1, which predicted an interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions, was not supported. Hypothesis 2, which predicted that applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when good past performance is attributed to internal factors (as opposed to external factors) and less favorable selection decisions when poor past performance is attributed to internal factors (as
Figure 5
Interaction of Evaluator Gender and Interpersonal Attraction on Selection Decisions
opposed to external factors), was supported. Also, the third hypothesis, which predicted a main effect of applicant past performance on selection decisions, was supported. However, Hypothesis 4, which predicted a main effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions, was not supported. Additionally, Hypothesis 5, which examined the interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions, was not supported.

One gender difference was found in the hypothesized relationships. Interpersonal attraction had a significant effect on female evaluators' selection decisions, but not on those of male evaluators.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to examine the interactive effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions and selection decisions; and the main effects of applicant past performance, interpersonal attraction, and evaluator attributions on selection decisions. Results indicated mixed support for the hypothesized relationships.

No support was found for Hypothesis 1, which predicted an interaction between applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions. An examination of the interpersonal attraction manipulation
used in the present study may suggest one possible explanation for the nonsignificant results. Although the manipulation check indicated that the manipulation was effective, the interpersonal attraction created may not have lasted. Alternately, it may have lasted but not been strong enough (at the time subjects were asked to make attributions) to elicit the hypothesized effects. That is, while evaluators may have felt attracted or not attracted to the applicant based on the manipulation, these feelings may not have been strong enough to persist once they were given the strong performance data. The current study used a single interpersonal attraction manipulation. This manipulation could most likely have been made stronger with a two-part manipulation, similar to the one used by Regan et al. (1974). In their study, liking was manipulated in two ways to make it more powerful. First, the confederate's behavior was modified to appear as likeable or unlikeable to an observer. Likeable behaviors included responding nicely to an experimenter's initial instructions, indicating that the confederate had seen the subject in the next room and asking whether the subject was the partner, and smiling affirmatively when the experimenter responded affirmatively. Unlikeable behaviors included riffling through papers, drumming fingers, and looking bored and annoyed. The second part of the liking manipulation utilized Byrne's (1961) attraction paradigm,
which was used in the present study. Further, the utilization of an interactive setting, such as an employment interview, would have probably enhanced the interpersonal attraction manipulation since interpersonal attraction can most likely be more strongly manipulated using a non-paper person format. That is, subjects would probably have stronger feelings for an "applicant" whom they have seen and interacted with than for one they have merely read about.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when good past performance is attributed to internal factors and will receive less favorable selection decisions when poor past performance is attributed to internal factors. Results for this hypothesis indicated support similar to that of other studies (Belec & Rowe, 1983; Lunau, 1981; Tucker & Rowe, 1979) in the area, although the correlations were smaller in the present study. (In the present study, in the good past performance condition, the correlation between internal attributions and selection decisions was .20; the other studies reported correlations of .52, .39, and .42, respectively. In the poor past performance condition, the present study's correlation between internal attributions and selection decisions was -.44, compared to -.52, -.53, and -.51, respectively.)
Hypothesis 3, which predicted that applicants with good past performance, in contrast to those with poor past performance, will receive more favorable selection decisions, was supported. This finding agrees with that of previous research (e.g., Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970; Heneman, 1977; Mullins, 1982; Oliphant & Alexander, 1982; Powell, 1986). As evidenced by the present study, applicant past performance continues to be a major criterion used by evaluators in making selection decisions.

Hypothesis 4, which predicted that applicants will receive more favorable selection decisions when evaluators are attracted to them interpersonally, was not supported in the current study. These results conflict with those of past studies that have found a relationship between interpersonal attraction and more favorable selection decisions (e.g., Graves & Powell, 1988; Keenan, 1977; Peters & Terborg, 1975). Two possible explanations may be given. First, as discussed earlier, a more powerful interpersonal attraction manipulation may be necessary to accurately assess the relationship between interpersonal attraction and selection decisions. A two-part manipulation or the use of an interactive setting would probably have helped strengthen evaluators' feelings of interpersonal attraction or nonattraction. Second, applicant qualifications (good or poor) may have influenced
evaluators' liking or disliking of applicants. In studies which found a relationship between these variables (e.g., Graves, & Powell, 1988; Keenan, 1977; Peters & Terborg, 1975), evaluators either interviewed applicants or examined written past performance information and then completed interpersonal attraction and rating measures. To assess the independent effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions, interpersonal attraction in the present study was manipulated before subjects reviewed past performance information contained in the application. Taken together, these results may indicate that interpersonal attraction in selection decision contexts is influenced by both attitudinal similarity and applicant past performance information.

No support was found for Hypothesis 5. This hypothesis predicted that when past performance is good, there will not be a significant difference in selection decisions, regardless of whether evaluators are interpersonally attracted to applicants. However, when past performance is poor, applicants will be more likely to be favorably evaluated when evaluators are interpersonally attracted to them. Several factors may account for this lack of support. First, as discussed earlier, there may have been an interpersonal attraction/applicant past performance interaction if the interpersonal attraction manipulation had been made stronger by using a two-part manipulation or
by using an interactive setting, such as an employment interview. A second explanation for the nonsignificant results for Hypothesis 5 is that subjects may have viewed the objective performance information presented as relatively more salient than their feelings of interpersonal attraction and thus primarily used this information in making selection decisions. In the present study, there was a significant main effect of applicant past performance on selection decisions. This agrees with the general finding that objective performance criteria account for the greatest variance in selection decisions (e.g., Heneman, 1977; Mullins, 1982; Powell, 1986).

In summary, Hypotheses 2 and 3 were supported while 1, 4, and 5 were not. All analyses (except for the correlation analyses used to test Hypothesis 2, which used perceived values) were originally conducted using manipulated values for applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction. For the hypotheses which were not supported (Hypotheses 1, 4, and 5), analyses were subsequently rerun using perceived instead of manipulated values for applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction. No change in the reported results occurred.

The possibility of gender differences in the hypothesized relationships was explored. One gender difference was found. Interpersonal attraction affected male and female evaluators' selection decisions differently
(although there was not a significant gender difference in the effectiveness of the interpersonal attraction manipulation). Specifically, female subjects made more favorable selection decisions for interpersonally attractive applicants than for non-attractive applicants. In contrast, interpersonal attraction did not significantly affect the selection decisions of male subjects. Thus, it appears that females' selection decisions were more influenced by interpersonal attraction. This pattern may originate from pervasive differences in sex-role socialization. That is, males are taught to suppress or ignore feelings, whereas women typically respond to their feelings and emotions (Forisha, 1978, p. 24; Jourard, 1974). Moreover, males are more adept at relating to others impersonally (Jourard, 1974). In the present study, it appears that males may have placed greater emphasis on objective performance data than on the interpersonal attractiveness of the applicant in making selection decisions. One other empirical study has demonstrated a similar relationship. Raza and Carpenter (1987) found that liking and hirability ratings were more strongly correlated for female evaluators than for males. However, some may argue that the present study's findings might have been different had a female applicant been used instead of a male applicant. Specifically, they might contend that
interpersonal attraction would have affected male subjects' selection decisions (but not females') in this situation.

No other gender differences in the hypothesized relationships were found. These findings indicate that gender does not differentially affect the relationship of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions. This agrees with previous research conducted in general performance contexts (Medway & Lowe, 1976; Regan et al., 1974). Additionally, no gender differences were found in the effect of evaluator attributions on selections decisions or in the effect of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on selection decisions. These relationships have not previously been examined. Finally, no gender differences were found in the effects of applicant past performance on selection decisions. This relationship is still unclear, however, since some studies have reported that female evaluators are more lenient in assessing applicants (e.g., Oliphant & Alexander, 1982; Rose & Andiappan, 1978).

In summary, gender differences were found in the effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions. Female evaluators made more favorable selection decisions for interpersonally attractive applicants and less favorable selection decisions for interpersonally unattractive applicants. No other gender differences were found in the hypothesized relationships.
Conclusion

The present study attempted to more fully explicate the process by which evaluators make selection decisions. Specifically it sought to integrate attribution theory and interpersonal attraction research into the selection decision process. Limited support was found for the hypothesized relationships. The study's findings indicated that internal attributions for applicant good past performance were associated with more favorable selection decisions while internal attributions for applicant poor past performance were associated with less favorable selection decisions. Also, applicant past performance had a significant effect on selection decisions, with good past performance having a favorable effect and poor past performance an unfavorable one. Additionally, interpersonal attraction did not significantly affect selection decisions for the sample as a whole. There was a significant gender difference in the effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions, with female evaluators being more influenced by interpersonal attraction. No other gender differences were found in the hypothesized relationships.

From a practical perspective, applicant past performance continues to play a major role in helping evaluators assess applicants, with good past performance being assessed more favorably than poor past performance.
Also, the type of attribution (internal or external) an evaluator makes for applicant past performance (good or poor) appears to be related to the favorableness of the selection decision made. Specifically, internal (as opposed to external) attributions made about applicant good past performance result in more favorable selection decisions while internal attributions about applicant poor past performance result in less favorable selection decisions. Applicants may be able to influence the favorableness of their selection decisions by influencing the type of attribution an evaluator makes for their past performance. For example, a poor-performing applicant might be able to favorably influence a selection decision by offering a valid excuse for the poor performance (i.e., family death, long work hours). An evaluator thus influenced may be more likely to make external attributions for poor performance and thus make a more favorable (less unfavorable) selection decision. Conversely, a good-performing applicant might be able to favorably influence a selection decision by pointing out strengths, such as ambition and good study habits. In this case, an evaluator may make more internal attributions for good performance and thus make a more favorable selection decision.

One significant gender difference (i.e., the effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions) was found in the hypothesized relationships. From a practical
perspective, this means that male and female evaluators generally assess applicants' past performance similarly. However, it appears that when male applicants are being evaluated, interpersonal attraction influences female evaluators' selection decisions but not those of males. It should be noted that the opposite effect (interpersonal attraction may have affected male subjects' selection decisions but not females') may have occurred if a female applicant had been used in the study instead of a male applicant. Given the results of the study and this other possibility, organizations may wish to make both male and female evaluators aware of this potential problem when evaluating applicants and train them to use only objective performance criteria in making selection decisions.

Hypotheses predicting interaction effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on evaluator attributions and on selection decisions were not supported. As discussed earlier, these hypotheses probably would have been supported if subjects had evaluated more than one applicant; if a two-part interpersonal attraction manipulation had been used; or if an interactive setting, such as an employment interview had been used. Additionally, the hypothesis predicting a main effect of interpersonal attraction on selection decisions (for the total sample) probably would have been supported if these conditions had been implemented.
This study was therefore limited in that subjects assessed only one applicant. It would be more realistic to have evaluators assess the qualifications of several applicants, since evaluators generally select job candidates from a number of applicants. Another limitation of the present study was the interpersonal attraction manipulation. Although it was effective (as indicated by the manipulation check), it may not have been strong enough to help induce main or interaction effects. A two-part manipulation or the use of an interactive setting, such as an employment interview, might help strengthen the interaction effects. An additional limitation of the study was that it did not take into consideration applicant information that may be learned during an interview nor applicant performance during an interview. It included only information available prior to a selection interview from sources such as an application.

Another limitation of the present study was that it used a "paper people" approach, in which subjects' only exposure to a hypothetical applicant was a completed application form. The use of paper people in selection decision research has been criticized by some researchers. For example, Gorman, Clover, and Doherty (1978) found that evaluators' decisions differed depending on whether information was presented in written form or in an interview setting.
Likewise, Okanes and Tschirgi (1978) found large discrepancies in evaluations based on interviews versus reviews of written material (e.g., grades and references). Evaluators tended to make more negative decisions following actual interviews. In the similar area of performance appraisal, Murphy, Herr, Lockhart, and Maguire's (1986) meta-analysis found that effect sizes were generally larger in studies using paper people. However, the authors noted that this difference was not uniform across all research areas.

Other researchers (e.g., Ferris & Gilmore, 1977) have found that mode of presentation did not produce significant differences in perceptions of applicants. In summary, there is conflicting evidence regarding the use of paper people. As stated earlier, the use of an interactive setting (e.g., an interview) probably would have enhanced the interpersonal attraction manipulation in the present study. Feelings of interpersonal attraction or nonattraction probably would have been stronger and lasted longer in an interactive setting such as an interview.

Some may contend that the use of students limits the generalizability of the present study. However, the majority of research that has integrated attribution theory into the selection decision process (four of the five studies conducted) has used students as subjects. The only study that used professional evaluators was the Phillips
and Dipboye (1989) study. Several researchers have argued that using college student samples is appropriate in selection research. Three studies directly compared results from student and professional evaluator samples (Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970; Mullins, 1982). Regarding ratings, students and professional evaluators made similar decisions in terms of both direction and magnitude (Hakel et al., 1970; Mullins, 1982). Further, in research examining the effects of multiple dimensions (i.e., applicant scholastic standing, gender, and physical attractiveness), both professional evaluators and students rated applicants on all three dimensions (Dipboye et al., 1975). The only difference noted was students' tendency to rate more leniently (Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970). Bernstein, Hakel, and Harlan (1975) reviewed several studies that compared student and professional evaluator results. While acknowledging that students tend to be more lenient in their ratings relative to professional evaluators, they concluded that both groups had similar decision-making processes. Variances, intercorrelations, and reliabilities were unrelated to group membership (student or professional evaluator). Further, the two groups were similar in processing information, forming impressions, and impression accuracy. The authors concluded that there were no findings that
would limit generalizability of selection decision research using student subjects.

Other researchers disagree that results obtained using student subjects are generalizable to professional evaluators (e.g., Barr & Hitt, 1986; Landy & Bates, 1973; Schultz, 1969). Most of their arguments, however, are not empirically-based. For example, Schultz (1969) presents a lengthy essay detailing the differences between students and the general population in terms of characteristics such as socio-economic class and race. However, he offers no direct empirical evidence that these differences translate to differences in making decisions.

Landy and Bates (1973) compared student and professional evaluator decisions to hire based on applicant qualifications presented in résumé form. There were no significant differences in hiring decisions made by the two groups. However, the authors concluded that using students is inappropriate because of different reactions to experimental materials. Specifically, while more than 60% of the professional evaluators spontaneously remarked that hiring decisions were never made on the basis of a résumé alone, none of the students voiced any concern for this issue. Since opinions about experimental materials were not the study's focus, the researchers' conclusion regarding student subjects seems premature, especially in view of similar empirical results.
The only empirical study to conclude that students and professional evaluators make different decisions was conducted by Barr and Hitt (1986). In line with previous research (e.g., Dipboye et al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970), they found students to give more lenient ratings. They also found that, given different types and amounts of applicant information, students used more and different information in making decisions, relative to professional evaluators. The authors concluded that results using students are not generalizable to professional evaluators. Several aspects of the Barr and Hitt study, however, differ from much selection decision research using students. First, applicants were being rated for middle- and upper-level management positions. Much selection decision research involves entry-level positions. Second, subjects were allowed to select information to use in making their decisions. It is not surprising that professionals, experienced in making selection decisions, would use less information than inexperienced students. Moreover, most selection decision research deliberately controls information amount and type. If a study involves rating applicants for middle- or upper-level positions, or if information selection is being examined, Barr and Hitt's results indicate that professional evaluators are more appropriate than students as subjects. These results, however, do not refute substantial evidence from other
studies (Bernstein et al., 1975; Dipboye at al., 1975; Hakel et al., 1970; Mullins, 1982) that indicates students are appropriate subjects for other selection decision research.

Future research should examine the effects of applicant past performance and interpersonal attraction on attributions and selection decisions where interpersonal attraction is manipulated using a two-part process (as previously described). An employment interview setting could be considered as one possibility to help strengthen the relative power of the interpersonal attraction manipulation, since interpersonal attraction can probably be manipulated more strongly using an interactive setting than a paper person format. Also, future research should have evaluators assess more than one applicant. Evaluators are probably more likely to make attributions about an applicant's past performance when they are assessing a number of applicants; these attributions may help them in differentiating between applicants and ultimately making selection decisions. Additionally, it would be interesting to see if applicants can favorably influence selection decisions by prompting evaluators to make internal attributions for good past performance and external attributions for poor past performance. If they can, then this would have important practical implications for applicants. Further, future research should examine
attributions made by evaluators about actual interview performance.
REFERENCES


Byrne, D., London, O., & Reeves, K. (1968). The effects of physical attractiveness, sex, and attitude
similarity on interpersonal attraction. *Journal of Personality, 36*, 259-271.


Pilot Study One

Purpose. A pilot study was conducted to assess the strength of the past performance manipulation. Since past performance is a key variable in the study, it was essential that the manipulation be effective.

Procedures. Thirty-two undergraduate student volunteers participated in this pilot study. Subjects were told that they would be reviewing an application that had been received for a graduate assistant position, and then answering two questions related to the applicant's educational and work-related achievements. Half reviewed an application that described good past performance while half reviewed an application that described poor past performance (see Appendix H). They then completed the manipulation check for past performance (see Appendix G). The two items, developed for the present study, asked subjects their opinion of the applicant's past performance. Cronbach's alpha was .92.

Results. An independent samples t-test indicated a significant main effect for the past performance manipulation ($t = 10.94, p < .01$). Subjects rated good past performance higher ($M = 4.15$) than poor past performance ($M = 2.06$).
APPENDIX A (continued)

Based on the positive result of this pilot study, it was decided to use the past performance manipulation in the study.

Pilot Study Two

Purpose. A pilot study was conducted to assess the strength of the interpersonal attraction manipulation. Since interpersonal attraction is a key variable in the study, it was essential that the manipulation be effective.

Procedures. Twenty-two undergraduate student volunteers participated in this pilot study. Subjects were told that they would be participating in a study to screen applicants for a graduate assistant position. They completed an attitude survey (Byrne, 1971; see Appendix C). They were then given a bogus attitude scale, allegedly that of an applicant for a graduate assistant position. Half were given a bogus attitude scale that was filled out similarly to their own, and half were given a dissimilar scale. The constant discrepancy method (Griffitt & Byrne, 1970) was used to induce interpersonal attraction or no interpersonal attraction. For similar items the "applicant's" response to Likert-type items reflected the same general opinion (i.e., affirmative or negative) as
APPENDIX A (continued)

that of the subject and was one position away from the subject's. For dissimilar items the "applicant's" response was three positions from the subject's, thereby reflecting an opposite opinion. They were then asked to complete the Interpersonal Judgment Scale (see Appendix E). Cronbach's alpha was .86.

Results. An independent samples $t$-test indicated a significant main effect for the interpersonal attraction manipulation ($t = 9.25, p < .01$). Subjects in the attracted condition rated the applicant as being more interpersonally attractive ($M = 5.95$) than subjects in the not attracted condition ($M = 2.86$).

Based upon the positive result of this pilot study, a decision was made to use the interpersonal attraction manipulation in the study.
APPENDIX B

Position Description and Specifications

Job Title: Graduate Assistant - Computer User Services

Hours of work: Twenty hours per week, flexible (depending on student's schedule)

Salary: $6,000 per academic year ($666.67 per month)

Duties: 1. Answer user questions regarding computer operation.
        2. Assist users in writing programs and solving program errors.

Job Requirements:

1. A working knowledge of computers and computer languages.
2. Ability to work effectively with other people.

Minimum Qualifications:

1. An undergraduate degree.
2. Some work experience.
APPENDIX C

Survey of Attitudes

Listed below are eight general topics, each of which is followed by several attitudinal statements. For each topic, please indicate which statement corresponds most closely to your opinion.

1. War (check one)
   - I strongly feel that war is sometimes necessary to solve world problems.
   - I feel that war is sometimes necessary to solve world problems.
   - I feel that perhaps war is sometimes necessary to solve world problems.
   - I feel that perhaps war is never necessary to solve world problems.
   - I feel that war is never necessary to solve world problems.
   - I strongly feel that war is never necessary to solve world problems.

2. College Education (check one)
   - I strongly believe it is very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   - I believe it is very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   - I believe that perhaps it is very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   - I believe that perhaps it is not very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   - I believe that it is not very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
   - I strongly believe that perhaps it is not very important for a person to have a college education in order to be successful.
APPENDIX C (continued)

3. American Way of Life (check one)
   ____ I strongly believe that the American way of life is not the best.
   ____ I believe that the American way of life is not the best.
   ____ I feel that perhaps the American way of life is not the best.
   ____ I feel that perhaps the American way of life is the best.
   ____ I feel that the American way of life is the best.
   ____ I strongly believe that the American way of life is the best.

4. Premarital Sex Relations (check one)
   ____ In general, I am very much opposed to premarital sex relations.
   ____ In general, I am opposed to premarital sex relations.
   ____ In general, I am mildly opposed to premarital sex relations.
   ____ In general, I am mildly in favor of premarital sex relations.
   ____ In general, I am in favor of premarital sex relations.
   ____ In general, I am very much in favor of premarital sex relations.

5. Preparedness for War (check one)
   ____ I strongly believe that preparedness for war will not tend to precipitate war.
   ____ I believe that preparedness for war will not tend to precipitate war.
   ____ I feel that perhaps preparedness for war will not tend to precipitate war.
   ____ I feel that perhaps preparedness for war will tend to precipitate war.
   ____ I believe that preparedness for war will tend to precipitate war.
   ____ I strongly believe that preparedness for war will tend to precipitate war.
APPENDIX C (continued)

6. Nuclear Arms Race (check one)
   ____ I am very much opposed to the federal government's buildup of nuclear arms.
   ____ I am opposed to the federal government's buildup of nuclear arms.
   ____ I am mildly opposed to the federal government's buildup of nuclear arms.
   ____ I am mildly in favor of the federal government's buildup of nuclear arms.
   ____ I am in favor of the federal government's buildup of nuclear arms.
   ____ I am very much in favor of the federal government's buildup of nuclear arms.

7. Professors and Student Needs (check one)
   ____ I feel that university professors are completely indifferent to student needs.
   ____ I feel that university professors are indifferent to student needs.
   ____ I feel that university professors are slightly indifferent to student needs.
   ____ I feel that university professors are slightly concerned about student needs.
   ____ I feel that university professors are concerned about student needs.
   ____ I feel that university professors are very much concerned about student needs.

8. Divorce (check one)
   ____ I am very much opposed to divorce.
   ____ I am opposed to divorce.
   ____ I am mildly opposed to divorce.
   ____ I am mildly in favor of divorce.
   ____ I am in favor of divorce.
   ____ I am very much in favor of divorce.
APPENDIX D

Subject Background Information Form

General Information

Please fill in the blank or indicate the correct response for each of the following items.

Name _______________________________________________

Major _______________________________________________

Classification _____ Freshman _____ Sophomore

_____ Junior _____ Senior

_____ Other (explain) ______________

What is your current GPA (overall)? ______________
APPENDIX E
Interpersonal Judgment Scale

Directions: For each item below, please indicate which statement corresponds most closely to your opinion of the person you will be evaluating.

1. Intelligence (check one)
   ____ I believe that this person is very much above average in intelligence.
   ____ I believe that this person is above average in intelligence.
   ____ I believe that this person is slightly above average in intelligence.
   ____ I believe that this person is average in intelligence.
   ____ I believe that this person is slightly below average in intelligence.
   ____ I believe that this person is below average in intelligence.
   ____ I believe that this person is very much below average in intelligence.

2. Knowledge of Current Events (check one)
   ____ I believe that this person is very much below average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
   ____ I believe that this person is below average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
   ____ I believe that this person is slightly below average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
   ____ I believe that this person is average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
   ____ I believe that this person is slightly above average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
   ____ I believe that this person is above average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
   ____ I believe that this person is very much above average in his (her) knowledge of current events.
APPENDIX E (continued)

3. Morality (check one)
   _____ This person impresses me as being extremely moral.
   _____ This person impresses me as being moral.
   _____ This person impresses me as being moral to a slight degree.
   _____ This person impresses me as being neither particularly moral nor particularly immoral.
   _____ This person impresses me as being immoral to a slight degree.
   _____ This person impresses me as being immoral.
   _____ This person impresses me as being extremely immoral.

4. Adjustment (check one)
   _____ I believe that this person is extremely maladjusted.
   _____ I believe that this person is maladjusted.
   _____ I believe that this person is maladjusted to a slight degree.
   _____ I believe that this person is neither particularly maladjusted nor particularly well adjusted.
   _____ I believe that this person is well adjusted to a slight degree.
   _____ I believe that this person is well adjusted.
   _____ I believe that this person is extremely well adjusted.

5. Personal Feelings (check one)
   _____ I feel that I would probably like this person very much.
   _____ I feel that I would probably like this person.
   _____ I feel that I would probably like this person to a slight degree.
   _____ I feel that I would probably neither particularly like nor particularly dislike this person.
   _____ I feel that I would probably dislike this person to a slight degree.
   _____ I feel that I would probably dislike this person.
   _____ I feel that I would probably dislike this person very much.
APPENDIX E (continued)

6. Working Together in an Experiment (check one)
   ____ I believe that I would very much dislike working
         with this person in an experiment.
   ____ I believe that I would dislike working with this
         person in an experiment.
   ____ I believe that I would dislike working with this
         person in an experiment to a slight degree.
   ____ I believe that I would neither particularly
         dislike nor particularly enjoy working with this
         person in an experiment.
   ____ I believe that I would enjoy working with this
         person in an experiment to a slight degree.
   ____ I believe that I would enjoy working with this
         person in an experiment.
   ____ I believe that I would very much enjoy working
         with this person in an experiment.
APPENDIX F

Instructions to Participants in Selection Study

As you have been told, you are participating in a program designed to increase the efficiency of selecting applicants for a graduate assistant position in Computer User Services.

You have been given a packet containing a) a position description and specifications for the graduate assistant job; b) an application form that has been received for this position; and c) three brief questionnaires which ask about your evaluation of this applicant.

Please read the position description and specifications carefully. Since it is important that an applicant's qualifications match job requirements, keep these in mind as you review the application and answer the questions. Pay close attention to educational and work-related achievement information.

Please read the position description and review the application before proceeding to complete the questionnaires.
APPENDIX G

Manipulation Check for Past Performance

Directions: The following questions ask you to evaluate the applicant's past performance - any information given or past events described in the application (for example, academic achievement, job achievement, etc.).

Please read each of the following questions and circle the number that corresponds most closely to your answer.

1. Overall, was the applicant's past performance as described in the application:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. In my opinion, this applicant's past performance was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Far Above</td>
<td>Above Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Far Below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far Above</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
<td>Far Average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H

Applications

Computer User Services
Application for Graduate Assistant Position

Name  David A. Martin

Date of Application  September 6, 1990

Address  10121 Windmill Lakes Blvd. Apt. 821
          Houston, Texas 77075

Telephone  (713) 941-9260

Graduate program  Master's in Business Administration

check one:   ____ currently enrolled
           x  accepted for Spring semester, 1991

status (check one)  x  admitted unconditionally
           ____ admitted on probation

Education

College/University  Location  Major  Degree/Date

Stephen F. Austin Univ.  Nacogdoches, TX  Industrial Technology  B.S./ 6/87

What was your G.P.A.?  3.70  overall  3.74  major

List all computer courses taken in college and grades received.

course  grade

Basic  A
Cobol  A
Computer Graphics  B
Fortran  B+


### Employment History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Dates Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seaforth, Inc.</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
<td>Product Designer</td>
<td>6/87 - present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max's Restaurant</td>
<td>Nacogdoches, TX</td>
<td>Waiter</td>
<td>8/85 - 6/87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(part-time while in school)

List any computer courses taken in connection with your work and grades received (if applicable).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>course</th>
<th>grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spreadsheets</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics for Product Design</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Briefly describe your most positive work experience:**

I had the opportunity to be involved in developing a new product at Seaforth -- a different type container for use in shipping small products. It was very rewarding to work with the project team. Shortly after that, I was promoted to assistant department head.

**Briefly describe your most negative work experience:**

The only negative aspect of my work experience is not having enough time to be involved in all the projects I am interested in.
APPENDIX H (continued)

Computer User Services
Application for Graduate Assistant Position

Name: David A. Martin

Date of Application: September 6, 1990

Address: 10121 Windmill Lakes Blvd. Apt. 821
            Houston, Texas  77075

Telephone: (913) 941-9260

Graduate program: Master's in Business Administration

check one:  __ currently enrolled
           __ accepted for Spring 1991 semester

status (check one) __ admitted unconditionally
           __ admitted on probation

Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College/University</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Degree/Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stephen F. Austin Univ.</td>
<td>Nacogdoches, TX</td>
<td>Industrial Technology</td>
<td>B.S./ 6/87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What was your G.P.A.?  2.23  overall  2.26  major

List all computer courses taken in college and grades received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>course</th>
<th>grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobol</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Graphics</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortran</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H (continued)

Employment History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Dates Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seaforth, Inc.</td>
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<td>Product Designer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max's Restaurant</td>
<td>Nacogdoches, TX</td>
<td>Waiter</td>
<td>8/85 - 6/87 (part-time while in school)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List any computer courses taken in connection with your work and grades received (if applicable).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>course</th>
<th>grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spreadsheets</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics for Product Design</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Briefly describe your most positive work experience:
I have liked working on new products at Seaforth, only sometimes I have had to work with people who weren't very interesting.

Briefly describe your most negative work experience:
On one project I worked on, I missed a deadline by about a week. Because this was written on my evaluation, I did not get a raise.
APPENDIX I

Attribution Measure for Past Performance

Directions: The following questions ask your opinion about causes for the applicant's past performance - any information given or past events described by the applicant in the application (for example, academic achievement, job achievement, etc.). Please read each of the following items and circle the number that corresponds most closely to your answer.

1. To what extent was the applicant's past performance due to personal characteristics such as ability, personality, attitude, effort or other internal factors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Very little |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
Moderately |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
Very much |

2. To what extent was the applicant's past performance due to external factors such as degree of task difficulty, degree of luck, influence of other people, or other external factors?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Very little |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
Moderately |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
Very much |

3. Is the cause of the applicant's level of past performance something that reflects an aspect of the:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Applicant |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
Situation |

4. Is the cause of the applicant's level of past performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Outside |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
Inside |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
of the applicant |
   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
APPENDIX I (continued)

5. Is the cause of the applicant's level of past performance:

<p>| | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Something about the situation

Something about the applicant
APPENDIX J

Selection Decisions Measure

Directions: The following questions ask you to consider the information you learned about the applicant from reviewing the application and indicate the chance that you would offer this applicant an interview and the chance this applicant would eventually receive a job offer. Please read each of the following items and circle the number that corresponds most closely to your answer.

1. Given how you feel now, what are the chances that you would offer this applicant an interview? (Please circle your response.)

   0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

2. Given how you feel now, what are the chances that this applicant would eventually receive a job offer? (Please circle your response.)

   0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
APPENDIX K

Variable Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations
by Treatment Condition

Good Past Performance/Attracted Condition (n = 43)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluator GPA (1)</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance (2)</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
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** p < .01.
* p < .10.

(appendix continues)
APPENDIX K (continued)

Poor Past Performance/Attracted Condition (n = 43)

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* p < .10.

(appendix continues)
### APPENDIX K (continued)

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(appendix continues)
APPENDIX K (continued)

Poor Past Performance/Not Attracted Condition (n = 43)

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* p < .10.
VITA

Carl R. Phillips is currently a faculty member in the Department of Management at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana. Prior to beginning his doctoral studies, he taught for two years at the University of Houston. Additionally, he worked for three years as a CPA for an international accounting firm. His research interests include employee recruitment and selection and career-related issues. His research has appeared in the Journal of Career Planning and Employment, the International Journal of Social Economics, and the Journal of Socio-Economics.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Carl R. Phillips

Major Field: Business Administration

Title of Dissertation: Effects of Job Applicant Past Performance and Interpersonal Attraction on Evaluator Attributions and Selection Decisions

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

December 11, 1991