

AN ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCE PROGRAMS
PROVIDED BY SELECTED COMPANIES
IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA DURING
DECLINING ECONOMIC
ACTIVITY

By

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PREFACE

This paper examines what current human resources development programs or compensations have been discontinued in Tulsa, Oklahoma during times of declining economic activity.

I wish to express my thanks to all the people who assisted me in this study and during my courses in the Occupational and Adult Education program at Oklahoma State University. In particular, I thank my major advisor Dr. Garry R. Bice, for his guidance on this project. Throughout my program, his obvious dedication to teaching and his enthusiasm for helping others learn and grow has been quite inspiring.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the early 1980's many significant changes took place in the personnel and labor relations functions within business and business organizations. Many have renamed their personnel, industrial relations or employee relations departments to Human Resource Departments (Foulkes, 1986 p. 100). As organizations have become more complex and the demand for technical personnel has changed in response to new state legislation and federal regulations, increased employer concern for quality of work life, and emphasis on productivity, people truly have become the organizations most important resource. Organizations are entering an era in which effective training and development for employees mark the difference between successful and unsuccessful attainment of the organization's mission.

To encourage employees to perform more effectively, the work and work related rewards must be made attractive. As Gordon (1986) explains, good human resource practices could result in the increased ability of an organization to attract and retain the best employees. Good human resource practices can also encourage worker commitment to and involvement in the work and the organization. Gordon

stressed that continuing efforts should be made to increase worker satisfaction through training and development programs. Gordon further emphasizes the positive effect compensation benefits can have when offered to the employees (1986 p. 5-6).

Goods and services are produced through the work performed within society. Work also provides a source of income for employees thereby enabling them to purchase goods and services. This cyclic effect is the main component of success in industry. Fluctuations in the business cycle affect customer demand for goods and services, as well as the profit margins for the businesses. Changes in economic conditions within the state and nation will have an effect upon private and public sectors of business as well as on the number of human resources development programs being provided by these businesses.

Statement of Problem

Employees have human resource development needs regardless of whether or not employers provide for these needs. Human resource development needs unmet by employers are often met by area vocational technical schools, institutions of higher education or community agencies. The problem is that information is not available to permit area schools or others to effectively plan for human resource development needs of employees during times of declining economic activity.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the study was to determine the human resource development programs or compensation benefits that might be discontinued by companies in Tulsa, Oklahoma during times of declining economic activity.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the factors used by companies in Tulsa, Oklahoma in considering which compensations, benefits, or training and development programs will be discontinued in times of declining economic activity;

2. To identify the types of programs or compensation benefits, if any, companies in Tulsa, Oklahoma have reduced or discontinued during times of declining economic activity;

3. To determine the types of compensation benefits or training and development programs are currently being offered to employees in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Scope

The population for the study consisted of 70 companies with employees who are members of the Green Country Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was thought that most companies who are members of that organization would have staff assigned

to human resource development departments.

Limitations and Assumptions

The following were limitations of the study:

1. Staff personnel might have been reluctant to discuss their training and development programs or compensation benefits for their employees with someone outside the company.

2. Most questions on the questionnaire were objective rather than subjective because of the analysis factor. More detailed information might have been obtained had open-ended questions been used.

Assumptions included the following:

1. Staff personnel will respond to the questionnaire and give an accurate picture of the compensation benefit package offered to employees.

Definitions

The following definitions were developed to guide the study:

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD): an organization whose purpose is to meet the needs for the technical and professional competence of its membership in the area of management and employee training, both technical and non-technical, organizational development, general business and personnel issues (ASTD, 1986-1987).

Training: is a set of activities designed to increase an individual's skills, knowledge or experience, or change an individual's attitudes (Gordon, 1986 p. 264).

Development: refers to preparing individuals to assume higher-level or different responsibilities within the organizational structure. Both training and development can occur in two situations: when a job requires an individual to have skills, knowledge, or attitudes different from, or in addition to, those he or she currently has; and when advancement within the organization requires an individual to have different or new skills, knowledge or attitudes (Gordon, 1986, p. 264).

Human Resource Management (HRM): is the function that assists organizations in achieving goals by obtaining and maintaining effective employee work forces (Myers, 1986 p. 5).

Human Resource Development (HRD): is the process of preparing employees to maximize both their utility to the

organization and their job satisfaction. HRD involves both education and training. HRD involved preparing employees in the skills, abilities and knowledge needed in a job. HRD also includes assisting employees in acquiring the experiences needed to perform a job (Myers, 1986 p. 874).

Business Cycle: fluctuation in the general level of economic activity as measured by such variables as the rate of unemployment and changes in real gross national product (Gwartney, 1980 p. 138).

Gross National Product (GNP): is a measure of the market value of goods and services that were produced during a specific time period. It is typically measured in terms of an annual rate. Similarly, GNP is a device designed to measure the market value of production that "flows" through the economy's factories and shops each year (Gwartney, 1980 p. 112).

Small Sized Company: companies of one to 100 employees.

Medium Sized Company: companies of 101 to 500 employees.

Large Sized Company: companies of 501 or more employees.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The researcher reviewed the literature addressing the function of human resource management and other means of meeting the needs of employees which contribute to the effectiveness of the organization. A relatively large amount of literature on the subject was written in the past ten years.

The review of literature examined the background of the subject by looking briefly at the growth of human resources management and the relationship it has to employees. Second, it examined the importance of the emerging and changing role of human resource development in business organizations. Third, it summarized the costs that the human resource manager must consider when developing training programs and budgeting. Fourth, it looked at the types of compensation benefits that are available to employees and how decisions to continue or discontinue those benefits were made in times of declining economic conditions.

The Growth of Human Resource Management

The Human Resource Management (HRM) department, formerly referred to as the Personnel Department, has grown from a traditional clerical and record keeping function to a department with diverse responsibilities (Gordon, 1986). Since the computer revolution of the late 1970's, staff specialists spend less time on routine record keeping matters. The human resource department has become more involved in the quality of work life, productivity, training and development. The department also has an active role in preparing for organizational change.

The human resource department encompasses a broad range of activities such as recruitment, selection, performance appraisal, job analysis, employee benefits, pay administration, safety, collective bargaining, employee relations, and communication and human resource development (Myers, 1986). The human resource department must perform diverse activities that range from setting policy to offering advice. They provide information to prospective employees, and are active in the recruitment process, including interviews, testing, and selection (Donaldson, 1986 p. 2). The area of labor relations is one of the most rapidly growing areas of responsibility for human resource development departments. In some instances, the department may actually perform certain personnel functions for other departments as a service. In most instances, their role is to train, coach,

and assist managers and supervisors in performing those functions more effectively.

One of the most important contributions that members of the human resource department can render is serving as in-house consultants to the other department managers and employees. In this capacity they have a responsibility to keep aware of current developments within the field and to make other operating managers abreast of the newer developments.

To be effective, human resource management must emphasize the interaction between the top professional managers and the mid-level managers of the organization. Top management and human resource professionals should jointly diagnose problems related to human resources that influence decisions throughout the entire organization. Managers should determine the problems in their own area and analyze the needs of the workers and supervisors to determine how well the organization meets those needs in each situation. The managers and the human resource professionals should assess the value of current practices and procedures to former and current employees, and accomplishment of organizational goals (Baird, 1985).

The human resource professional can assist managers in adapting and integrating new policies throughout the organization. Top management can develop general policies and practices while at the operational level, human resource professionals identify and select specific alternatives.

With the support of top management, human resource professionals can implement new policies and then monitor these policies to assist the organization to maximize development and use of their resources (Gordon, 1986).

The Importance of Human Resource Development

The Human Resource Development Department is a familiar subgroup in many organizations. This department has the responsibility to assist employees to adequately fill their positions, and the organization to fulfill its mission.

Myers stated that the two major purposes of Human Resources Development (HRD) are to maximize employee utility to the organization and to increase their job satisfaction. HRD is used to improve employee performance in such areas as attendance, conduct, productivity, work quality and safety. The improved performance increases the employees utility to the organization through increased productivity, reduction in waste of human and material resources, and an improvement in the quality of the product. This improved performance results in increased employee satisfaction. Increased job performance assists employees realize their full potentials as they assume greater responsibilities and accept increasingly challenging job assignments (Myers, 1986 p. 874).

While HRD has the responsibility of preparing employees, learning is the act of employees acquiring the knowledge, skills, and abilities through education, training,

and experience. Thus, learning is the outcome of HRD efforts.

Lazer (1980) explained that to create a good learning environment, the following traditional training criteria should be met:

- a. provide active involvement and participation for trainees;
- b. provide feedback on the learning progress;
- c. facilitate transfer of learning back to the workplace;
- d. reinforce desired behavior or correct responses;
- e. provide time to practice and repeat the new behavior; and
- f. create an atmosphere where trainees are motivated to learn.

HRD personnel are responsible for the design, development and implementation of employee training programs. The knowledge, expertise, and available resource information to conduct a successful program is found within this department (Lazer, 1980 p. 95).

Nadler (1986) felt that top management should review the cost associated with the design and implementation of training activities as an expense attributable to the cost of doing business. He stated,

The results of learning activities can help ensure that there will always be employees and managers in the organization who will be able to cope with whatever future changes may occur within the enterprise (Nadler, 1986 p. 5).

Cost of Human Resource Development Programs

Laird (1985) felt that analyzing cost was important to ensure the cost benefit of the proposed system and to strengthen management's commitment to it's implementation. He asserted that training was expensive because the cost must include such items as employee salary cost, program production, trainee cost, conducting the program evaluation cost, and material cost during the design phase.

Although training is assessed in the first place in people, the objective to be met is an operational or financial one in almost every instance. The benefits, in the form of cost savings, sale increases, plant improvements, and systems development, will be expressed in terms other than the salaries of those involved in procuring these benefits.

Cost effectiveness of human resource practices includes comparing the cost to the benefits derived. If cost effectiveness is high, the data collected can help human resource professionals or managers to sell the value of training programs to top management. If cost effectiveness is low, human resource professionals can use the data collected to stimulate and refocus the design of training programs and systems (Pepper, 1984).

Importance of Compensation to Employees

For most employees, salary has a direct bearing upon their standard of living and upon the status and recognition they are able to gain within their community. Salary also constitutes a measure of self worth in comparison with fellow employees. Since compensation is a major operating cost for the employer, it is essential that every organization develop a formal program to ensure that the amount of compensation each employee receives is fair and equitable.

Klatt (1985) reported that the majority of companies use some form of performance appraisal in the determination of the individual's specific salary within the range determined for his or her position. Performance appraisal is in itself a highly technical procedure and a major responsibility of every manager. The most common job evaluation practice is to base advancement to the midpoint of the range on the basis of seniority, with advancement beyond the midpoint being determined by individual performance.

Klatt (1985) also suggested that in many organizations, one portion of the employee's salary increase is determined by his or her manager on the basis of performance, while another portion of the increase is determined by such matters as the cost of living and changes in the structure of the compensation system. It is probably desirable for most organizations to conduct surveys and internal reviews in the compensation and benefits maintenance system. The

annual survey does not imply a change in the organization's wage structure, rather it provides a basis for decision making.

Current Compensation Options

Compensation options which may or may not be available to employees. Participation in a flexible compensation system, according to the 1985 Employee Benefit Research Institute, includes the following:

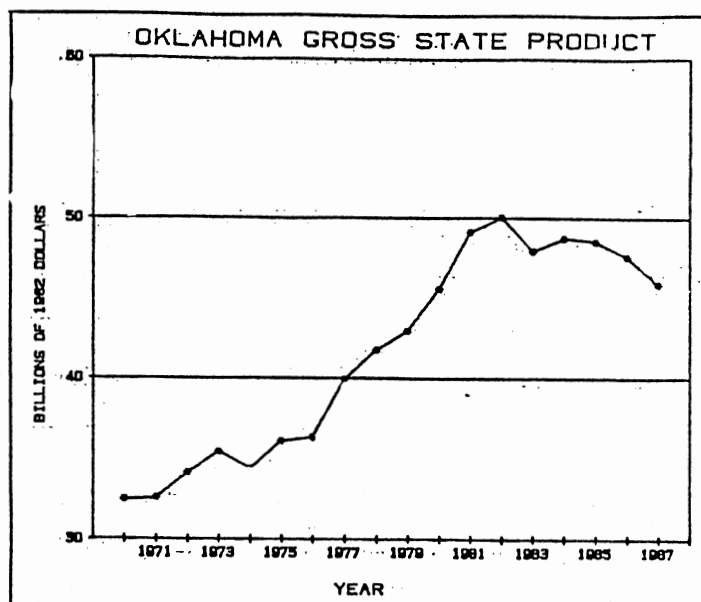
- a. Pension plans
- b. Profit sharing
- c. Retirement plan
- d. Company stock investment plan
- e. Workers Compensation
- f. Medical Insurance
- g. Long-term disability insurance
- h. Life insurance
- i. Vacation time
- j. Dental Care plans
- k. Prescription drug plans
- l. Legal services plan
- m. Child care programs
- n. Education assistance benefits
- o. Vision care plans

Employee benefits are payments and services that protect and supplement base salaries and wages. Employers pay for all or part of these benefits offered to employees.

An organization will use benefits to improve employee morale, motivate employees, increase job satisfaction, attract good employees, reduce employee turnover, enhance employee security and maintain a favorable competitive position within industry (Dunn, 1971). Flexible compensation programs are attracting the interest of employees and employers. Many companies have recently implemented programs that are flexible. Other companies are anticipating implementing them, but they are waiting for the development of final federal regulations before revising their current benefit programs. The growth and flexibility compensation plans will depend on future employee and employer experience under these programs and on future legislation (Employee Benefit Research Institute p. 233).

Oklahoma's Economy in Perspective (1982-1987)

Economists define a recession as two or more successive business quarters, of negative or no growth in gross product. Oklahoma has been in a recession since 1982.

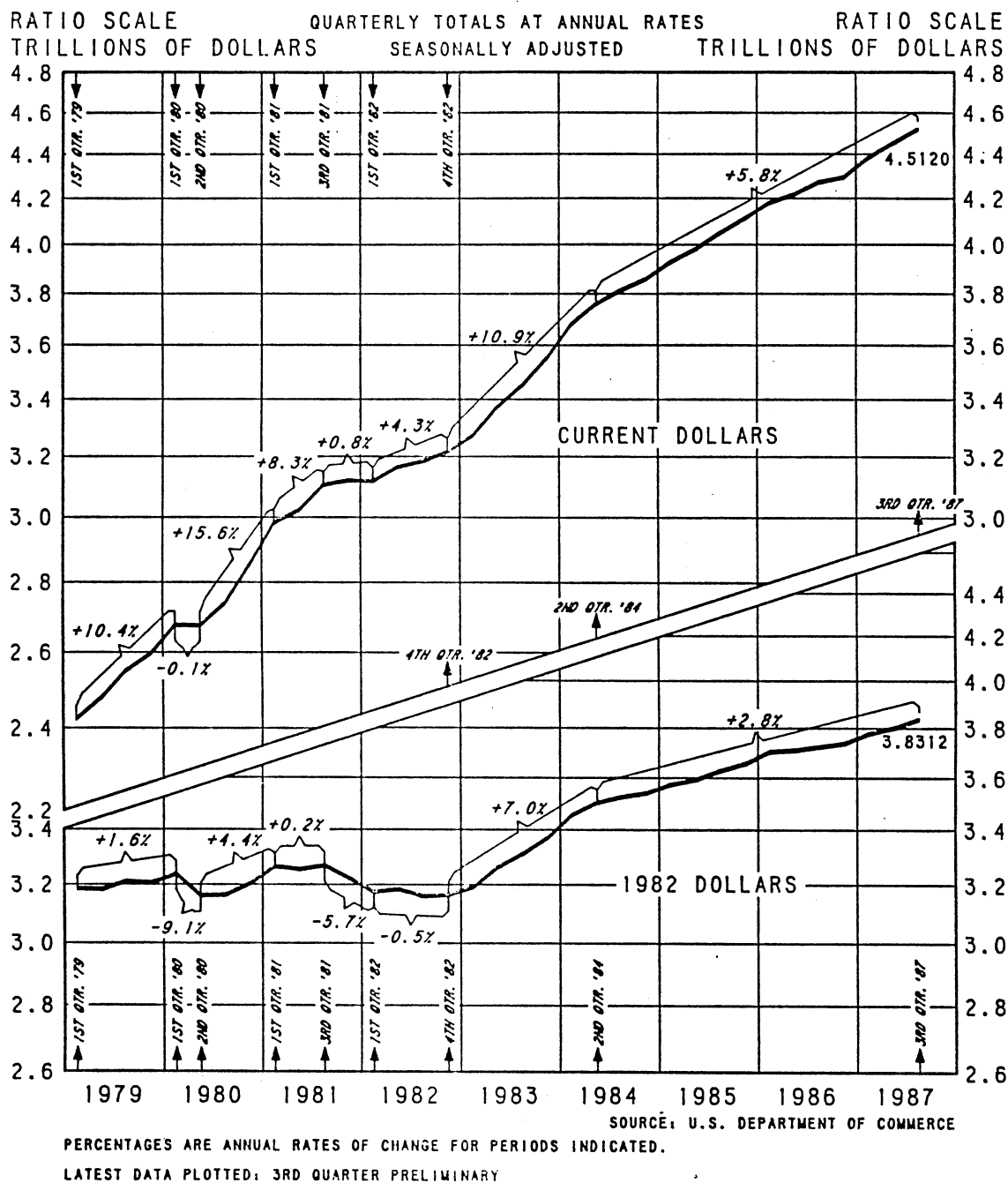


Source: Oklahoma State University, Office of Business and Economic Research, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 1987

Figure 1. An Overview of Oklahoma Gross State Product Since 1970

The United States economy suffered a mild recession in 1982, as gross national product declined less than 1%.

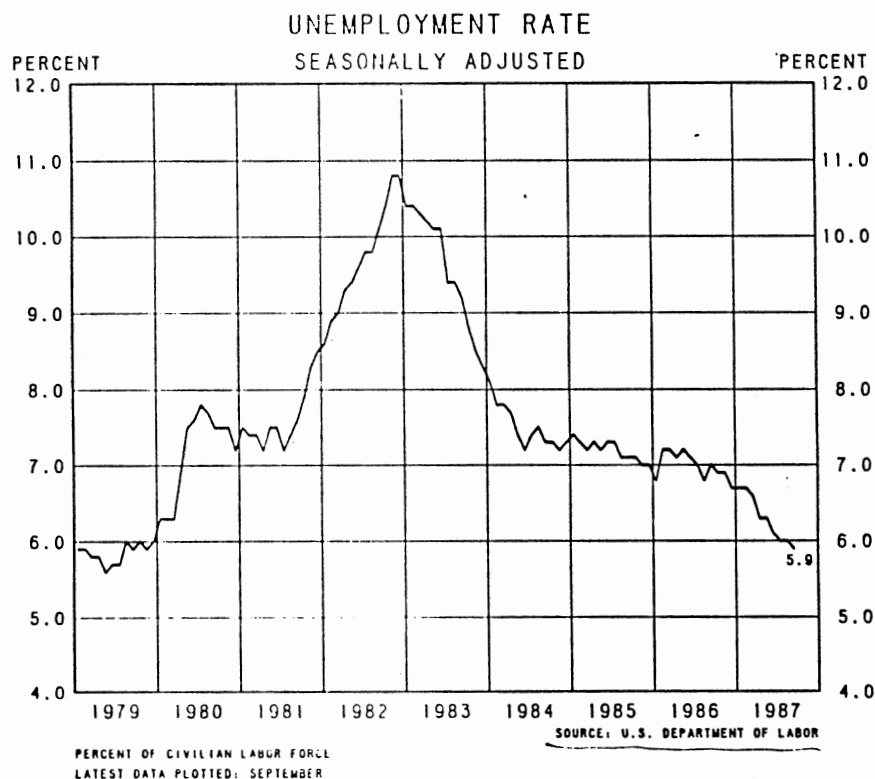
GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT



Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. National Economic Trends. St. Louis Missouri, 1987

Figure 2. Gross National Product

The unemployment rate topped out at 10.8% in late 1982 and early 1983.

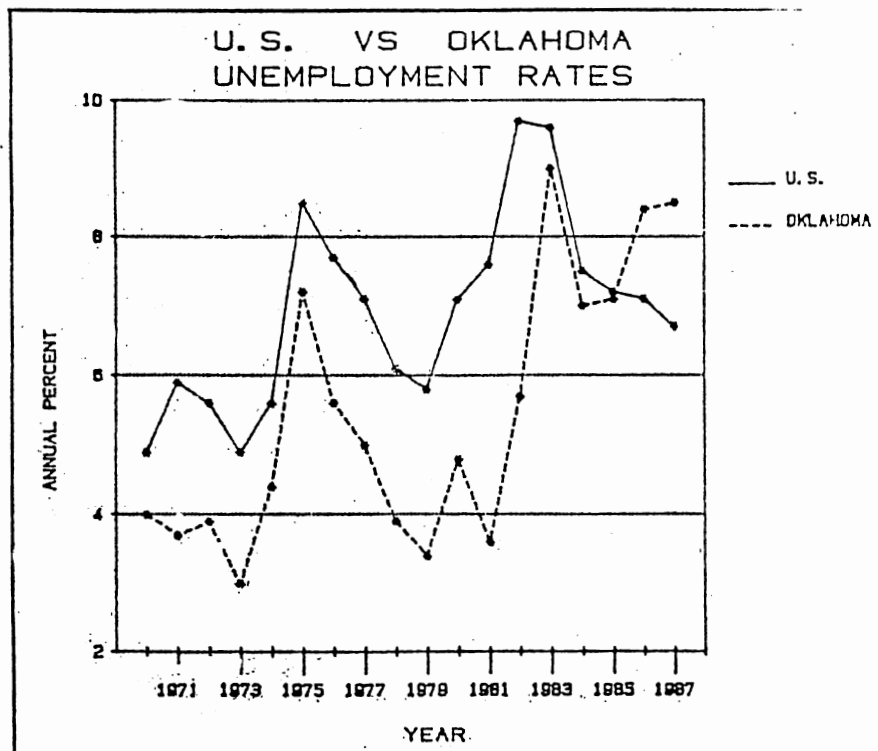


Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, National Economic Trends. St. Louis, Missouri, 1987

Figure 3. Unemployment Rate, 1979-1987

The national economy has since experienced five years of sustained growth, making this recovery the longest peace time recovery since World War II. Despite the remarkable resilience and health of the United States economy, Oklahoma's economy has still been in the doldrums. As Figure 4

indicates, since 1984 the unemployment rate, in Oklahoma, has been above the United States rate. This reversed the trend of Oklahoma's unemployment rate being less than the national rate. This previous trend was attributed to rising demand and rising prices for oil and energy related capital goods. Those two factors moderated the effect of the business cycle upon economic activity in the state through 1983.



Source: Oklahoma State University, Office of Business and Economic Research, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 1987

Figure 4. U.S. vs Oklahoma Unemployment Rates

Falling oil prices were the major reason for the reversal of this trend of Oklahoma's unemployment rate being below the national average. Prices per barrel of oil declined from the \$40.00 range to the \$16.00 range. At the peak of the oil boom years in 1981-1982, 24% of the state's output was attributed to the oil and gas component of the mining sector (OSU Oklahoma Economic Outlook, p. 4). By 1987, this percentage had been reduced to an estimated 12.8% (IBID). Figure 5 provides a more detailed look at Oklahoma output by sector.

Table 2
Oklahoma Gross State Product by Industrial Sector

	Actual		Forecasts		Average Annual Growth Rate		
	1970	1980	1986	1987	1970-1980	1980-1987	1986-1987
Agriculture	\$ 306	\$ 771	\$1,335	\$1,365	9.7%	8.5%	2.2%
Mining	1,415	7,366	7,378	6,648	17.9	-1.5	-9.9
Contract Construction	499	1,846	1,871	1,777	14.0	-0.5	-5.1
Manufacturing							
Durable	1,098	4,538	4,725	4,779	15.2	0.7	1.1
Nondurable	729	2,988	3,984	4,073	15.2	4.5	2.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade	1,652	5,464	7,884	8,070	12.7	5.7	2.4
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1,311	4,229	6,206	6,192	12.4	5.6	-0.2
Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities	986	3,234	4,928	5,133	12.6	6.8	4.2
Services	1,090	3,894	6,765	7,088	13.6	8.9	4.8
Government							
Federal	1,069	1,861	2,895	2,983	5.7	7.0	3.0
State and Local	778	2,434	3,902	4,005	12.1	7.4	2.6

Note: Components may not add due to rounding.
Totals are in millions of dollars.

Source: Oklahoma State University, Office of Business and Economic Research, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January, 1987

Figure 5. Oklahoma Gross State Product by Industrial Sector

Of immediate concern is the relationship between declines in mining output and its interactive effect upon other sections of Oklahoma's economy. Contract construction has declined for the past three years, as demand for both commercial and residential building has declined as oil output has declined. Record residential foreclosures have depressed the real estate, financial, and insurance sectors. The manufacturing sector has also been depressed, due mainly to the energy related nature of durable goods manufacturing. The manufacturing sector has lost an estimated 26,000 jobs between 1982 and 1987. Twenty three thousand of those lost jobs are in durable manufacturing (OSU, Oklahoma Economic Outlook, p. 6). Figure 6 demonstrates the results of the surveys the state's unemployment by sector.

Oklahoma Wage and Salary Employment by Industrial Sector

	Actual		Forecasts		Average Annual Growth Rate		
	1970	1980	1986	1987	1970-1980	1980-1987	1986-1987
Total	763	1,138	1,154	1,135	4.1%	* %	-1.6%
Mining	39	75	54	44	6.8	-7.4	-19.2
Contract Construction	39	57	44	41	3.9	-4.7	-8.1
Manufacturing							
Durable	81	124	100	97	4.4	-3.5	-2.7
Nondurable	53	67	61	62	2.4	-1.2	1.4
Wholesale and Retail Trade	169	266	289	289	4.7	1.2	-0.2
Finance, Insurance, and							
Real Estate	37	56	64	63	4.3	1.6	-1.2
Transportation, Communications,							
and Public Utilities	52	69	63	65	2.7	-0.8	3.1
Services	116	194	230	234	5.3	2.7	1.6
Government							
Federal (Civilian)	58	49	53	52	-1.7	1.0	-1.6
State and Local	119	180	196	190	4.2	0.8	-3.1

Note: Components may not add due to rounding.

Totals are in thousands.

* Less than .05 percent.

Source: Oklahoma State University, Office of Business and Economic Research, Stillwater, Oklahoma, January 1987

Figure 6. Oklahoma Wage and Salary Employment by Industrial Sector, 1970-1987

Recession, rising unemployment, and declining corporate profits and bankruptcies paint a picture of economic malaise in the state. It is in view of this backdrop, that we analyze employer investments in human capital.

Summary

This brief review of the literature on the subject of human resource management has provided the reader with information about growth of the human resource development

departments, and its importance to the business organization and employees.

The review also examined how human resource departments might assist the organization in adapting and integrating new policies throughout the organization. The literature pointed out that as the more complex organizations become, it is increasingly important to address the developmental needs of the people who make up the organization. Effective employee training and development programs can make the difference between success or failure and profits or losses within a business organization. The review also pointed out that with environmental changes and the present state of the national economy, human resource management has become a major focus in the life of organizations of all sizes. Although human resource management is costly, it is directly related to worker productivity and satisfaction. Human resource management, therefore, has a very significant role in contributing to the attainment of the company's mission.

Compensation issues touch every individual within organizations. The review determined that policy makers at the highest levels of government need to understand the process by which managers of business organizations make compensation choices. Otherwise, they cannot hope to adopt policies that are economically sound.

Finally, the review did not identify any research that would assist public or private agencies plan effective

programs to assist with human resource development needs during times of declining economic activity.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology used by the researcher to accomplish the purpose of the study. The researcher's objective was to provide information to human resource professionals regarding the selection criteria used by companies to determine compensation benefits or training programs which might be discontinued in times of economic decline. The population studied is described. Development of the questionnaire used to gather data is described. The methods of collecting the data and the statistical method used for analyzing the data are outlined.

Population

The population for the study consisted of 70 companies which are members of the Tulsa Green Country Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development. The respondents for the study consisted of 53 human resource professionals.

Collection of Data

The data were obtained from 70 companies in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area who are members of the Tulsa Green Country Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development. The population was identified by consulting the Tulsa Green Country Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development Professional Directory, 1986-1987. Seventy survey instruments were sent out, 63 were returned for a return rate of 93%. Data were collected during August, September, and October, 1987.

Questionnaire

Appendix A contains a copy of the questionnaire that was mailed to seventy Tulsa, Oklahoma area companies who were members of the Tulsa Green Country Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development. In addition to analysis by professors at Oklahoma State University, the instrument was "pilot tested" by administering it to a group of fifteen graduate students at the University Center at Tulsa to enhance its clarity. Their suggestions were incorporated into the final questionnaire.

The researcher mailed the questionnaire to the company human resource department manager at seventy companies. (See Appendix A) The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter which thanked the manager for agreeing to participate in the study, restated the purpose of the study, assured confidentiality of the responses, requested a return

by a date one week later and promised a summary of the findings of the study by November 1, 1987. (See Appendix B)

If the response was not received within the allotted two weeks, the researcher contacted the company representative by telephone to inquire if they had received the first questionnaire and had a chance to complete. If they had not received the questionnaire, their address was validated and a second questionnaire was mailed to them. The researcher thanked them again for their cooperation and valuable input to this study.

Analysis of Data

When the questionnaires were collected, the researcher compiled the responses in terms of the criteria used in the selection process for discontinuing training and development programs and how they selected the type of programs or compensation benefits which were reduced or discontinued during declining economic activity. The responses were also tabulated and analyzed to reflect what type of programs and compensation benefits were currently being offered to the employees of each of the participating companies.

The responses to the questionnaires were compiled based on the number of employees assigned by the respondent to the company. Companies having less than 100 employees were considered as small sized companies; companies having from 101 to 500 employees were classified as medium sized

companies; and large sized companies were those who had over 501 employees.

The primary statistical method used was the measure of central tendency. The findings are discussed in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Using the 1986 and 1987 ASTD Directories, the researcher identified companies in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area which had human resource managers or human resource departments. Seventy individual companies were contacted by the researcher. The companies represented a wide cross section of occupations.

The questionnaire was mailed to personnel previously identified as having an interest in or knowledge of human resource management. Of the 70 questionnaires mailed, 63 or 93% of the questionnaires were returned with responses. Five of the 63 responses were from private consultants, four did not work in the area being surveyed and one was retired and felt he could not answer nor contribute responses that would assist in the study. This left a total of 53 or 76% of the questionnaires as being applicable for tabulation and analysis.

Demographic Characteristics

For ease in analyzing the responses, companies with 100 or less employees were classified as small sized; companies with 101 to 500 employees were designated as medium sized;

and companies with over 500 employees were designated as large sized.

Seventeen responses were from individuals with employees numbering less than 100, small companies. (Table I) This represents 32.1% of the responses. Twenty responses were from companies who employed from 101 to 500 employees, medium sized companies. This represents 34.7% of the total responses. Sixteen responses were from large sized companies with 500 or more employees. This represents 30.2% of the total responses received.

TABLE I
SIZE OF COMPANY BY NUMBER OF RESPONSES

SIZE	EMPLOYEES	RESPONSES	PERCENT
Small	1-100	17	32.1
Medium	101-500	20	37.7
Large	Over 501	16	30.2

The responses recorded in TABLE II represent a large cross section of companies in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area. Nine responses were from health care providers; two from retail companies; one from a sales company; four from heavy manufacturing; three from utilities; five from oil and gas industry; one from electronics; one from aviation industry;

nine from educational services; five from banking and finance; and thirteen from other companies, for a total of 53 responses.

TABLE II
RESPONSES BY SIZE AND TYPE OF COMPANY

TYPE	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	TOTAL	%
Health Care	3	2	4	9	17.0
Retail	0	1	1	2	3.8
Sales	1	0	0	1	1.9
Heavy Manufact.	0	2	2	4	7.5
Utilities	0	0	3	3	5.7
Oil & Gas	0	2	3	5	9.4
Electronics	0	0	1	1	1.9
Aviation	1	0	0	1	1.9
Education	5	3	1	9	17.0
Banking	0	5	0	5	9.4
Other	7	5	1	13	24.5
TOTAL	17	20	16	53	100.0

The responses to Question number 1, "How many years have you worked at your present position?", revealed that 11 of the 53 respondents had been in their position one year or less; 14 for two years; six for three years; six for four years; and four for 10 years. The remainder had been in their positions from five to 20 years, with the average being 4.6 years and the range being from one to 20 years.

TABLE III
RESPONSES BY YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION

YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
1	11	20.7
2	14	26.4
3	6	11.3
4	6	11.3
5	2	3.8
6	2	3.8
7	1	1.9
8	2	3.8
9	1	1.9
10	4	7.5
11	2	3.8
12	1	1.9
20	1	1.9
TOTAL	53	100.0

In response to Question 2, "How many people are assigned to your department?", the range of employees assigned to the department was from one to 16 in the large sized companies; from zero to 80 in the medium sized companies; and from zero to 52 in the small sized companies.

The range of employees budgeted to the department, Question 3, "How many people are budgeted to your department?", was from one to 12 in the large sized companies; from zero to 80 in the medium sized companies; and from zero to 52 in the small companies.

Comparing the number of employees budgeted to the number of employees assigned to the department revealed that

one of the large sized companies had more employees assigned to the department than were budgeted, while three of the large sized companies, one of the medium sized companies and three of the small sized companies had less employees assigned to the department than were budgeted.

The responses to Question 4, "Are your training and developing programs by in-house staff members?", were affirmative for 14 of the large sized companies, 22 of the medium sized companies, and 12 of the small companies. This represents 90.5% of the responses. Eight of the companies indicated that they utilized a mix of in-house staff and private consultants depending on the nature of the training and the availability of in-house expertise.

Forty five (84.9%) of the companies, 15 large sized companies, 20 medium sized companies, and 10 small sized companies provided an affirmative response to Question 5, "Are the majority of your training programs conducted within the organization?"

There were 45 responses to Question 6, "Has your department undergone recent budget cuts?". Twelve of the 17 (70.5%) small companies responded. (Table IV) Of those twelve, only 4 (33.3) reported a recent budget cut, while 8 (66.7%) responded they had not undergone a recent budget cut. All twenty of the medium sized companies responded. Of those 20, 10 (55) indicated they had undergone recent budget cuts while 10 (50%) had not. Thirteen of the 16 (81.2%) large companies responded. Of those thirteen, 9

(62.2%) responded they had undergone recent budget cuts, while 4 (30.8%) had not undergone recent budget cuts. Twenty two (48.9%) of the 45 companies reported no reduction in activities.

TABLE IV
BUDGET REDUCTIONS BY COMPANY SIZE

RESPONSE	SMALL		MEDIUM		LARGE	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Reductions	4	33.3	10	50	9	69.2
No Reductions	8	66.7	10	50	4	30.8
TOTAL	12	100.0	20	100	13	100.0

Travel was the activity most frequently reduced or discontinued. (TABLE V) The second most frequently reduced or discontinued activity was a tie between employee reduction and overtime. The third most frequently reduced activity was a three way tie between retraining, management development, and career training.

TABLE V
ACTIVITIES REDUCED OR DISCONTINUED BY FREQUENCY
IN DESCENDING ORDER

ACTIVITY	REDUCED	DIS- CONTINUED	TOTAL RESPONSES
Travel	15	1	16
Employee Reduction	14	0	14
Overtime	11	3	14
Retraining	11	0	11
Management Development	10	1	11
Supervisor Training	7	2	9
Employee Assistance	6	1	7
Compensation Benefits	2	1	3
TOTAL	85	11	96

Though not requested on the questionnaire, four of the companies reported an increase in activities. The increases were in management development in one large and one medium size company; supervisor training in all three large companies and one medium sized company; overtime in two of the large companies; and employee assistance and compensation benefits in the one medium sized company that reported an increase in activities.

All of the subjects responded to Question 8, "What factors do you consider when determining whether or not to discontinue a training program?". Cost was seldom a factor considered for three small sized companies, one medium sized company, and two large companies. (TABLE VI) It was occasionally a factor considered by three small sized companies, five medium sized companies and six large sized

companies. Cost was frequently considered a factor for five of the small sized companies, seven of the medium sized companies, and five of the large sized companies. Cost was always a factor considered when determining whether or not to discontinue a training program for six of the small sized companies, seven of the medium sized companies, and three of the large companies.

Cost was always or frequently a factor considered in determining whether to discontinue a program in 65% of the small sized companies, 70% of the medium sized companies, and 50% of the large sized companies.

TABLE VI

COST AS A FACTOR BY COMPANY SIZE

COMPANY SIZE	NEVER		SELDOM		OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY		ALWAYS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	0	0	3	18	3	18	5	29	6	35
Medium	0	0	1	5	5	25	7	35	7	35
Large	0	0	2	13	6	37	5	31	3	19

The effectiveness of the training program was reported as seldom being a factor by one medium sized company.

(TABLE VII) None of the small sized nor large sized companies ranked effectiveness in the seldom category.

Effectiveness was occasionally a factor for two of the small

companies. It was frequently a factor for four of the small sized companies, eight of the medium sized companies, and five of the large sized companies. Effectiveness was reported as always a factor considered by 11 of the small sized companies, nine of the medium sized companies, and three of the large sized companies.

Effectiveness was always or frequently a factor considered in determining whether to discontinue a program in 88% of the small sized companies, 85% of the medium sized companies, and 50% of the large sized companies.

TABLE VII

EFFECTIVENESS AS A FACTOR BY COMPANY SIZE

SIZE	NEVER		SELDOM		OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY		ALWAYS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	0	0	0	0	2	12	4	24	11	65
Medium	0	0	1	5	2	10	8	40	9	45
Large	0	0	0	0	1	6	5	31	3	19

The quality of the training program was not ranked in the never nor the seldom category by any of the small or large sized companies, it was however ranked as seldom by one of the medium sized companies. It was occasionally a factor for two of the small sized companies, two of the medium sized companies, and three of the large sized

companies. Quality was ranked as frequently a factor by four of the small companies, seven of the medium sized companies, and four of the large sized companies. It was ranked as always being a factor by six of the small sized companies, 10 of the medium sized companies, and nine of the large sized companies.

Profitability of the program when considered as a factor for reduction in a training program was never considered by small or large companies. (TABLE VIII) One of the small companies, five of the medium companies, and one of the large companies ranked profitability as seldom a factor for consideration. Profitability was ranked as always a factor by seven of the small companies, five of the medium companies, and six of the large companies.

Profitability of the program was always or frequently considered as a factor in determining whether to discontinue a program by 71% of the small sized companies, 55% of the medium sized companies, and 81% of the large sized companies.

TABLE VIII
PROFITABILITY AS A FACTOR BY COMPANY SIZE

SIZE	NEVER		SELDOM		OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY		ALWAYS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	0	0	1	6	4	24	5	29	7	41
Medium	1	5	5	25	3	15	6	30	5	25
Large	0	0	1	6	2	13	7	44	6	38

None of the small or medium sized companies marked never when the factor being ranked was "Does the program require new or changed behavior (performance) on the job?", as a factor when discontinuing a training program, while one of the large companies did rank it in the never category.

(TABLE IX) Three of the small sized companies, three of the medium sized companies, and none of the large sized companies rated this factor as seldom being considered. Change in behavior (performance) was occasionally a factor for three of the small sized companies, three of the medium sized companies, and two of the large sized companies. Performance was ranked as frequently being a factor by four of the small sized companies, eight of the medium sized companies, and seven of the large sized companies. Seven of the small sized companies, six of the medium sized companies, and six of the large sized companies ranked performance as always being a factor that was considered when it was necessary to discontinue a training program.

Performance was always or frequently a factor considered when determining whether or not to discontinue a program by 65% of the small sized companies, 70% of the medium sized companies, and 81% of the large sized companies.

TABLE IX
PERFORMANCE AS A FACTOR BY COMPANY SIZE

COMPANY SIZE	NEVER		SELDOM		OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY		ALWAYS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	0	0	3	18	3	18	4	24	7	41
Medium	0	0	3	15	3	15	8	20	6	30
Large	1	6	0	0	3	19	7	44	6	38

The last factor the companies were asked to consider when determining whether or not to discontinue a training program was, "Does the program have a measurable impact on the organization with the reduction in cost, waste, or accidents?". None of the respondents rated performance as never being a factor for consideration when determining what programs to reduce or eliminate. (TABLE X) Two small sized companies, and three medium sized companies rated it as seldom a factor. Cost, waste, and accidents were ranked as occasionally a factor by five of the small sized companies, five of the medium sized companies, and three of the large sized companies. Three of the small sized companies, seven of the medium sized companies and nine of the large sized companies ranked it as frequently a factor. Cost, waste, and accidents were always considered when determining whether or not to discontinue a training program by seven of the small sized companies, five of the medium sized companies, and four of the large sized companies.

Cost, waste, and accidents were always or frequently

considered a factor in determining whether or not to discontinue a program in 59% of the small sized companies, 60% of the medium sized companies, and 81% of the large sized companies.

TABLE X

COST, WASTE, ACCIDENTS AS A FACTOR BY COMPANY SIZE

COMPANY SIZE	NEVER		SELDOM		OCCASIONALLY		FREQUENTLY		ALWAYS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	0	0	2	12	5	29	3	18	7	41
Medium	0	0	3	15	5	25	7	35	5	25
Large	0	0	0	0	3	19	9	50	4	25

Question 9 stated, "During the period of January 1984 to July 1987 have educational assistance programs been reduced or discontinued?" Four small sized companies, three medium sized companies, and no large companies reported a reduction in education assistance programs. (TABLE XI) One large sized company reported these programs had been discontinued. Twelve of the small companies, 17 of the medium sized companies and 12 of the large sized companies reported that the employee assistance programs had been unchanged. Though not requested, four companies responded that their employee assistance programs had increased between January 1984 and July 1987.

TABLE XI
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BY COMPANY SIZE

COMPANY SIZE	REDUCED		DISCON'T		UNCHANGED		INCREASED	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	4	24	0	0	12	71	1	6
Medium	3	15	0	0	17	85	0	0
Large	0	0	1	6	12	75	3	19

When small sized companies are considering factors to determine programs to be discontinued, the factor rated most often as always or frequently considered was effectiveness. Profitability was the second most often rated as always or frequently considered, followed by performance, cost, and cost, waste, and accidents, in descending order.

Medium sized companies considered factors in a different order of priority. When considering factors to determine programs to be discontinued, the factor most often reported as always or frequently considered effectiveness received the highest ranking. Cost and performance tied as the second most often rates always or frequently considered, following by cost, waste, accidents, and profitability in descending order.

Profitability, performance and cost, waste, and accidents tied as the factors always or frequently considered when determining whether programs would be discontinued by large sized companies. Cost and effectiveness followed in descending order.

Conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the questionnaire responses are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Research was conducted to determine which human resource development programs or compensations were discontinued by companies in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area during times of declining economic activity. If programs or compensation benefits had been reduced or eliminated, the companies were asked to rank the factors that influenced that decision. A review of literature was conducted regarding (1) the growth of human resource management; (2) the importance of human resource development; (3) cost of human resource development programs; (4) importance of compensation to employees; (5) current compensation options; and (6) Oklahoma's economy in perspective (1982-1987).

A questionnaire was developed, pilot tested, and administered. The questionnaire was distributed to 70 companies who were members of the Tulsa Green Country Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development. The findings reported in Chapter IV for the questionnaire were based on a 76% return rate.

Conclusions

The first objective of the research study was to determine the factors used by companies in Tulsa, Oklahoma in considering which of the compensations, benefits, or training and development programs to be considered for discontinuation in times of declining economic activity. The effectiveness of the program was the factor that was reported as always considered by most companies, regardless of company size. The cost of the program was the factor least often considered when determining which programs to reduce or discontinue. This finding is significant in that budget cuts had already occurred, the companies were aware of the importance of their employees and maintained programs that were most effective, even when the cost was higher. It may be concluded that during times of economic decline, effectiveness of programs in terms of achieving desired purposes is more important than cost of human resource development programs.

The study revealed that 47% of the compensation, or training and development programs surveyed in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area, have been reduced or discontinued. The programs that were reduced out numbered the programs that were discontinued by more than a seven to one ratio. Therefore, it may be concluded that human resource development programs are generally seen as a vital part of a business organization's strategy and not necessarily the

first programs to be discontinued during declining economic activity.

The second objective of the research study was to identify the types of programs or compensation benefits, if any, companies in Tulsa, Oklahoma have reduced or discontinued during times of declining economic activity.

Compensation benefits, employee assistance, supervisor training and management development were the four programs reported as least often reduced or discontinued. Travel, employee reductions, and overtime were the programs or compensation benefits most frequently reduced or discontinued. Therefore, it may be concluded that the compensation benefits that companies consider least essential are those that could be incorporated into other activities through more efficient management without a negative impact on the overall function of the company. These include benefits such as travel, overtime, and staff reductions.

To determine the types of compensation benefits or training and development programs that are currently being offered to employees in Tulsa, Oklahoma was the third objective of the research study. Analysis of the data revealed the programs and compensation benefits that were unchanged exceeded the number that were reduced or discontinued. Fifty three percent of the companies surveyed had not reduced or discontinued compensation benefits. Compensation benefits, employees analysis programs and retraining programs were the three programs reported most often as

being unchanged in times of declining economic activity. Based on the findings, it may be concluded that human resource development programs may be gaining recognition as a benefit that is as important to the worker and the company as is overtime compensation and other benefits.

The number of educational assistance programs were either unchanged or increased by the majority of the companies participating in the survey. The one exception was one large company who reported discontinuing their educational assistance program. The companies surveyed demonstrated their awareness of the need for employee growth and job satisfaction. In times of declining economic activity, when they could not maintain the previous level of on the job training and education, they maintained their commitment to the educational assistance programs. The data support the conclusion that educational assistance programs enjoy a higher priority than on the job training in times of declining economic activity.

Recommendations

The companies in the Tulsa, Oklahoma area should maintain a constant liaison with the public educational schools and institutions as a means of providing training and development programs for their employees. The liaison has the potential for saving the companies money, as well as making money from student enrollment for the institutions and vocational or technical schools.

One recommendation for further research is to examine the cost/effectiveness of human resource development programs to obtain a better understanding of the concept of effectiveness. Effectiveness was reported as more important than cost by companies responding to this survey.

Further research should focus on the number of companies who currently utilize the adult public education system for assistance in the development and implementation of their training and employee retraining programs. The results could then be correlated with the number of employees who return to higher education programs as a mode of retraining or job advancement at their employer's expense.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX A

ID. # _____

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PERSONNEL / HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS

FOR COMPANIES IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA

Date: _____

Your Position:

Circle the Number of Employees:

1 - 50;	101 - 150;	201-500;
51 - 100;	151 - 200;	over 500

Type of Company: (select number)

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Health Care | (6) Utilities Services | (10) Education Services |
| (2) Retail | (7) Oil & Gas Industry | (11) Banking & Finance |
| (3) Sales | (8) Electronics | (12) Data Management |
| (4) Heavy Manufacturing | (9) Aviation Industry | (13) Other (Specify) |
| (5) Light Manufacturing | | |

1. How many years have you worked at your present position? _____
2. How many people are currently assigned to your department? _____
3. How many positions are budgeted for your department? _____

PLEASE CHECK APPROPRIATE BLANK FOR THE NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 4. Are your training and development programs conducted by in-house staff members? | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Are the majority of your training programs conducted within the organization? | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Has your department undergone recent budget cuts? | _____ | _____ |
| 7. If yes was selected in question 6 please indicate the type of activities that have been reduced or discontinued within your department. (place x under appropriate column) | | |

Retraining or Upgrading Employee Skills	_____	_____	_____
Management Development	_____	_____	_____
Supervisory Training	_____	_____	_____
Career Development	_____	_____	_____
Overtime	_____	_____	_____
Travel	_____	_____	_____
Employee Reduction	_____	_____	_____
Employee Assistance Programs	_____	_____	_____
Compensation Benefits	_____	_____	_____

8. What factors do you consider when determining whether or not to discontinue a training program?

OCCA- FRE-
NEVER SELDOM SIONALLY QUENTLY ALWAYS

A. The cost of the program.

B. Does the program increase productivity of organizational effectiveness?

C. Does the program increase quality of service?

D. Does the program increase profitability?

E. Does the program require new or changed behavior (performance) on the job?

F. Does the program have a measurable impact on the organization with the reduction in cost, waste, or accidents?

9. During the period of January 1984 - July 1987 have Education Assistance Programs been reduced or discontinued? (please give approximate date of change)

_____ Reduced _____ Discontinued _____ Unchanged

_____ Date

10. COMMENTS:

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

APPENDIX B

August 26, 1987

Dear

My name is Elizabeth Snyder. I will receive my Master's degree in Human Resources Development from Oklahoma State University upon completion of my thesis. My Thesis is titled An Analysis of Human Resource Programs Provided by Companies in Tulsa, Oklahoma During Declining Economic Activity. Compilation of information of this topic is required.

Would you please take the time from your busy schedule to complete this enclosed questionnaire? All information that you provide will be held in strict confidence.

I thank you in advance for your courtesy and prompt reply. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Snyder

APPENDIX C

LIST OF PARTICIPATING
COMPANIES

APPENDIX C

LIST OF PARTICIPATING COMPANIES

American Airlines	Sooner Federal Savings and
American Red Cross	Loan
Blue Cross and Blue Shield	Spartan School of
Burtex	Aeronautics
CCC Parts Company	Springer Clinic
Cities Services Oil & Gas	Sun Refining and Marketing
Company	Company
City of Faith	T. D. Williamson, Inc.
City of Tulsa	Telex Computer Products
Communications Enterprise	Transok, Inc.
Crane Carrier	Tulsa Chamber of Commerce
Dowell Schlumberger	Tulsa Junior College
Excelsior Hotel	Union Public Schools
Explorer Pipeline Company	University of Tulsa
Farmers and Merchants Bank	Vo-Tech - Tulsa County Area
and Trust Company	Youth Services of Tulsa
First National Bank and	YWCA
Trust Company	
Ford Motor Glass	
Gilbreath's Information	
Services	
Greenwood Development	
Programs	
Hillcrest Medical Center	
Hilti, Inc.	
Human Affairs International	
Mapco	
Metropolitan Insurance	
Company	
Micro Resources, Inc.	
Mid-American Savings and	
Loan	
Oklahoma College of	
Osteopathic Medicine and	
Surgery	
Oklahoma Department of	
Corrections	
Oklahoma Junior College	
Oklahoma Natural Gas Company	
Oklahoma Osteopathic	
Hospital	
Oral Roberts University	
Parkside	
Public Service Company	
Quick Trip Corporation	
Saint Francis Hospital	
Sheraton Kensington	
Sinclair Oil Company	

VITA 2

Elizabeth A. Snyder

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: AN ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCES PROGRAMS PROVIDED
BY SELECTED COMPANIES IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA DURING
DECLINING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Salina, Kansas, July 26, 1956,
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Education: Graduated from Carl Junction High School,
Carl Junction, Missouri, May, 1974; received
Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management
with emphasis in Personnel Management from
Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma, in
December, 1984; completed requirements for the
Master of Science Degree in Occupational and Adult
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Professional Experience: Secretary and Admission
Representative at Langston University, Urban
Center at Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1985 to present;
Veterans Assistant for Langston University at
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Engineer Office, Augsburg, Germany, 1979-1980;
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