

METHODS OF INTERVIEWING AND SELECTING SALESMEN  
IN CERTAIN INDUSTRIES

By

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Bachelor of Arts

University of Oklahoma

Norman, Oklahoma

1947

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

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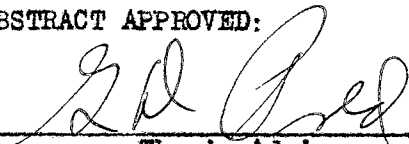
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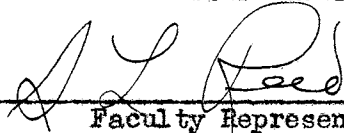
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MASTER OF SCIENCE

1951

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## PREFACE

Research, if it is to be of any value, must be directed toward the solution of a problem, and bring to light facts which can be utilized for betterment. Perhaps the problem will never be completely solved or the topic completely investigated. But through the effort expended, further insight into the problem and improvement should be gained. Not only will we become more familiar with the particular problem at hand, but we shall also have put ourselves in a position to become acquainted with research technique and scientific investigation. Thus, research will have served three purposes: To acquaint us with our problem, collect useful information and to introduce us to the exact and meticulous methods of science.

The acknowledgments expressed below are directed primarily toward those persons who, although burdened with their own problems, gave generous assistance to the writer.

To Dr. Gordon D. Fred, I am deeply indebted for the time he spent in constructive criticism and in guiding this study to its conclusion.

To Dr. S. L. Reed, who introduced me to the field of psychology and instilled in me an interest in the individual differences in people, I owe a great debt.

To Professor Harry K. Brobst, who stimulated my interest in psychology and directed it into industrial psychology, and motivated me to undertake this study, I will always be grateful.

To my wife, Muriel, without her encouragement, interest and help, this study would never have been completed.

To Mr. Harold Coonrad, who spent long hours of typing in order that this study might be completed on time, I greatly appreciate his help.

I wish to thank the personnel managers and officials of the various companies who furnished the information on which this study is based. Their cooperation and generosity in providing material made this study possible.

I also want to thank the secretaries and typists in the Department of Technical Journalism who re-typed into corrected form numerous portions of this study.

Lemuel D. Groom

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It is a far cry from the flashy-dressed "drummer," fortified with a vestfull of cigars, a repertoire of shady stories and an order book, which manufacturers sent out twenty-five years ago, to the picked and trained "sales representative" who is marketing the company's products today and in the future.

No longer does industry use a hit and miss method of selecting salesmen whereby smooth-talking, high-pressure extroverts with an overabundance of brass are selected to "peddle the company's wares." No longer are the average salesman's talents and selling ability as adaptable to selling automobiles, insurance, home appliances, office equipment, real estate or dry goods as they are to the products of the company he is representing.

Instead, the salesman is becoming a specialist in his line of products. Industry is beginning to regard him as a valuable part in the sales organization and the representative by whom the public judges a concern. As a result of this viewpoint, many of the major companies make a serious attempt to select for sales work those applicants whose experience, aptitudes, training and interests are in keeping with the particular product or lines of products they are to sell.

With the salesman becoming a specialist and selling a career, those who are starting to make it their life's work are having to meet a much more rigid set of standards than in the past. They must be trained along specific lines to become a definite and permanent part of a sales organization created to sell a particular product or line of products.

Business leaders have come to the conclusion that selling in its highest form is a process of education. Many companies plan to give all

new employees a company-conducted sales training course and hire with that intention. That is why the "best men" are preferred as salesmen or sales trainees.

The measure of a relationship as a salesman with any company today and in the future is not only what an association means on the day a man is employed but what it is likely to mean in the years to come if a permanent connection is established. "What are the opportunities?" is of concern to both the employer and the employee. The prospective employee is interested in possibilities for the next five, ten, twenty or thirty years if he enters a certain organization and perhaps takes their training. Does he want to cast his future with this company? Does this firm offer him the opportunity he is looking for to realize the greatest return for his ability? Does he really want this job?

Likewise, the employer is interested in what value this man can be to the organization in years to come if employed now and given expensive training. Does he have the potential for development? Will he fit into the personnel organization and be a loyal, satisfied, satisfactory employee, willing to stay and grow with the company? Does he want to hire this man?

Regardless of which viewpoint is taken, it is a long term one and intended to be on the basis of permanent employment.

Employee replacement and turnover is expensive in time and money to both employee and employer, as they both go through a liability period. The employee foregoes other employment opportunities which may have seemed equally promising when he takes a job with a company. He goes through a relatively low income period while being trained or at least learning that particular company's products and methods. His new job is a liability in that he may not be making as much money as he could have been



making if he had stayed on his former job or taken one which did not offer as much future. The employer has passed over other applicants in favor of the man he hires. He, too, goes through a period when the connection is a liability in that even on the payroll, the new employee must be given expensive training and/or at least go through a relatively non-productive period of orientation with the company before a profit can be realized from his services.

The length of this liability period varies with different individuals, different lines of business and different firms. But, in any event, it is largely dependent upon the employee's aptitude and preparation for the particular job and its features.

"Most concerns prefer to keep promotions within the company family and recruit from their own ranks of deserving and capable employees those to be elevated to responsible positions," The National Cash Register Company says in their booklet, "Your 100,000 Hours" (53). Many of the applicants of today must be expected to be the executives of tomorrow (5).

The purpose of one company's selective recruiting program is to select young men with outstanding potential to develop rapidly in the distributive end of the business, quickly becoming producers and attain managerial positions in the near future (40). Another company prefers promotion from within the ranks of the organization where possible. In order to function smoothly the hopper is fed from the bottom with young men with the required educational qualifications who are expected to work their way up in the company (14). Since many of their executives have come up through the ranks, concerns have found this to be a wise policy as well as serving as an incentive for employees to stay with one company.

Industrial concerns are looking to the future and drawing on the past experience and knowledge of their veteran salesmen and those of other companies. These salesmen's qualifications are checked in order to set standards for selection of applicants most likely to succeed (38) (41).

In many cases, companies are taking their cue from the selection practices used by the military forces and firms who are pioneers in the use of industrial psychology to employ scientific methods of selection to determine which applicants are best fitted by aptitude and temperament for the particular needs of that industry or the particular job for which they are being considered.

Industrial managers realize that selling would not be the ideal career for every man. Thus, psychological methods are being widely adopted to screen out those who do not possess the fundamental qualities which make for success in creative selling. Psychological tests play a significant role in this effort.

However, there is some opposition to carrying psychological tests beyond a certain point. The doctors at duPont, American Cynamid and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, for example, oppose the use of psychiatry for screening applicants for jobs. Until recently, most of the psychiatry tried (and largely abandoned) by industry concerned itself with helping personnel executives screen out the emotionally unfit, determine aptitudes, and guide promotions (43).

The reason given (for this caution) is, "If a good job is done screening out people with emotional problems, people that are normal as can be may be found, but some quite valuable people might be screened out, such as the ones who discovered such things as nylon. Also, there would be screened out the men with neurotic drives for power which carry them on to new heights" (43).

Each industry has its own particular needs and while these may be few in number, they are none-the-less important.

With industry tending to make a college degree the basic standard of formal education desired in an applicant, and looking to colleges as a source of supply for new sales employees, the campus is the logical place for a man to start preparation for a sales career if he has the necessary qualifications. This places an increasing responsibility on college testing bureaus and counseling services to guide the square pegs away from unknowingly preparing for what would be, for them, round holes. Also it is to help them better prepare themselves for the particular square hole they will best fit.

Salesmen are becoming trained specialists in their line, and certain aptitudes have been found to greatly insure the chances for successful selling. The sooner college testing bureaus and counselors can determine these aptitudes present in a student who thinks he is interested in sales work, the sooner and the more adequately he can prepare. But, if the desired qualifications are found lacking or insufficient, the student can be saved much wasted effort.

Selling aptitude is necessary but it alone is not sufficient. Salesmanship is an auxiliary qualification and the vehicle by which the salesman's other knowledge and interests are utilized. So the salesman must know something about the product he is to sell.

The successful salesman needs more than a complete knowledge of the product. After all, a mechanic knows more about the objective features of the product than does the salesman. But, the more the salesman knows about the product and particularly its adaptability, the better able he will be to explain the advantages of its utilization, which, after all,

is the main selling feature of a product.

The salesman's aptitudes must also be for a particular type of selling. Not all floor salesmen who make imposing records behind the counter would be successful sales representatives on the road.

Many of the selection standards required in industry are based on experience of the hiring companies who have found that through the years men with certain qualifications are more apt to be successful in selling their product than others. And with industrial concerns growing more insistent on applicants having certain qualifications, and becoming more specific in their particular requirements, college testing bureaus must know what qualifications are desired by certain industries in order to be more successful in counseling students who want to prepare for specific lines of business.

The information contained herein is certainly not intended to be an "interview and application crib sheet," showing the best answers to give an interviewer or information to put on an application blank. Instead, it is to help college testing bureaus and counselors know what certain lines of industry want in an applicant, what they look for in their interviewing process. This will facilitate a better job of advising students as to the type industry and work they are best fitted and in which they have a greater chance of achieving success. This would prevent a student who is an introvert and frankly not interested in other people, from spending four years to prepare himself for a selling career, just because his father, who is a successful salesman, is going to see that the son is "a chip off of the old block" and a successful salesman or he will "know the reason why" . . . when the boy may have none of the qualifications for salesmanship and instead be interested in agriculture, journalism

or industrial psychology. This information may furnish the "reason why" and show that, unfortunately, the father's hopes are apt to be but wishful thinking.

The college testing bureau or counselor's job is threefold with regard to selling: (1) to discover if a student has the basic qualifications for salesmanship; (2) if so, for which particular type of selling is he best qualified by reason of his temperament, physical limitations and interests; and (3) in which particular branch of industry is he best qualified to be a successful salesman because of his additional interests, knowledge and/or training.

The sooner a student's aptitudes are recognized and he is started developing them, the stronger his chances for success will be.

In the light of the foregoing demonstrated interest in testing and interview procedures, the purpose of this study is to show how different companies are meeting this interest.

## PURPOSE

In view of the foregoing discussion of the increased attention paid to securing salesmen whose qualification patterns give them a higher probability of success in selling a particular product; this research is aimed at determining whether or not industrial concerns are turning to scientific selection methods (industrial psychology) in order to detect in applicants the presence of the particular combinations of aptitude, training, and temperament which have been found to be needed to best carry out the selling duties in industry. Also this study seeks to determine if there is a basic similarity of qualifications sought and selection methods used to determine their presence in applicants.

In order that the above information may be made more useful and meaningful, the following tasks are set forth:

- (1) To discover and note just what basic techniques are used in the selection programs of the eight companies studied;
- (2) To show the extent to which the selection programs of the companies use these techniques in determining the presence of desired qualifications in applicants; and
- (3) To make a survey of selection techniques for use in the guidance situation.

There will be no attempt made to evaluate the effectiveness of these techniques but where such information was secured while gathering material for this study, it will be noted.

It is the author's hope that the information contained in this study will assist the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College testing bureau and student counseling service do a more successful job of student guidance. It will provide those two agencies with specific information about qualifications desired in salesmen, techniques of determining their presence in applicants, and the emphasis placed on these qualifications by the four branches of industry as represented by the eight participating companies.

## PROCEDURE

Participation. In gathering material for this study, letters were sent to forty-four companies which sell products on a nation wide basis and which were either known to, or thought likely to, employ some methodology in their selection of salesmen. The letters explained the purpose of this study and asked for information about company's selection and interview program, and any instructional material or aids used by the company's interviewers, if it employed interviewers. In the event the company had no material of this nature which would be self-explanatory or did not use interviewers, the company was asked for a letter briefly outlining its selection program.

Programs of the thirty responding companies ranged from no particular program through various degrees of complexity to quite extensive ones. Some companies refused to give any information, while others sent a voluminous amount of material.

From the thirty answering companies the twelve most representative ones were chosen on the basis of their differences and their representation of four broad branches of American industry to be covered in the survey. A second letter was then sent asking for copies of their application blanks and, if apropos, tests, interview rating forms and charts, and any particular or uncommon form which appeared to play a significant part in their selection procedure.

Then, the least promising company in each group was dropped, leaving eight companies.



In some cases a third letter was sent asking for specific information.

Results from these latter mailings varied as did those from the thirty companies answering the first letter of inquiry. Those companies finally selected for this study were more willing to provide information and answer questions than some of those dropped from the study. Sufficient information was secured from the participating companies to provide major and necessary information for the survey.

In order that the companies may remain anonymous in this study they will be referred to by alphabetical designation instead of by name, even in quotations, but they will not necessarily be presented in alphabetical order. Alphabetical designation, branch of industry represented and short descriptions of the companies included in the study are as follows:

Company A is representative of the smaller participating companies who manufacture specialty items and sell directly to the consumer and/or user, and are making an effort toward planned selection procedures of one sort or another. Company A uses a battery of psychological and aptitude tests in its selection process.

Company B and Company C are representative of the tire and rubber industry. Both companies employ a varied group of salesmen to call on different types of users. Company C has an organized campus recruiting program and Company B has a program for selection of salesmen in its retail stores. Because of the variety of these companies' sales organizations, this study will use only these particular programs of the two companies.

Company D, Company E and Company F are manufacturers of office machinery. Both Company D and Company E are large concerns. Company D

markets only typewriters, while Company E handles a varied line of office machinery, including typewriters. Company F is a smaller concern in the same general line of business.

Company G and Company H are two of the largest and most extensive chemical companies in the nation. Salesmen of Company G sell to industrial users exclusively while salesmen of Company H sell to manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers.

The interview and use of application blanks, basic vehicles in selection, are present in all of the techniques studied. However, their scope and method of application vary depending upon their purpose, the particular type of personnel sought, whether or not the new employees are to receive sales training, and the company personality.

✓ Presentation. In order to better understand the differences in the selection programs of the various companies, material will be presented in the following order:

1. The specific purpose of each company in the interview portion of its selection program, and the influencing factors;
2. The origin, development and/or background of the interview portion of the program and significant features, if any, of each program;
3. What each company is specifically attempting to accomplish through its selection program, the type of employee desired and the basis of its selection standards.
4. Difference in emphasis put on various qualifications in the basic selection standards and information desired about the applicant.
5. Variations in basic technique as a result of the foregoing objectives and noting any unusual practices.

There will be some overlapping within groupings of different relationships between qualifications and interpretation of terminology.

These will be pointed out as they appear in the study.

## RESULTS

## Purpose of Interview

Three of the companies fail to report having any particular purpose in the interviewing portion of their selection programs. But they intimate that it is, as Company E says, "to place the right man in the right job" (38). And it can be assumed that it is also to review the material stated on the application blank and determine if the applicant seems suitable.

✕ Company A applicants must come to them as trained salesmen with five or six years' experience since the company has no sales training, as such. The interview is primarily to see and judge the applicant's appearance and to ask any questions arising from the application blank.

✕ Company F's branch managers interview and select their own sales personnel and, except for a few pieces of general advice and preferences, the head office exercises no control over the selection of salesmen.

✕ Company H is so large and diversified that it is essential that each of its numerous sales divisions have their own selection and selling procedure to fit their individual selling problems (19).

✕ Company G, which is quite conscious of public relations as well as congenial relations between employees, considers the technique of interviewing applicants as simply a combination of courtesy, carefulness and common sense psychology. It looks upon interviewing as having a double purpose (5). Primarily they are: (1) to obtain the highest quality men in all fields for continuing company success; and (2) friendly, informal cordial interviewing is an important part of the company policy, making

friends for the company. Applicants should learn all they want about Company G and the interviewer must learn all he needs in order to make a considered judgment of the man's worth to the company (5). In order to obtain the highest quality men in all fields the interviewer's job is to search out from among the applicants those technically trained, experienced men with a good record of work well done, with a rounded, integrated personality and the kind of man with whom it would be both a pleasure and profitable to associate (5).

The purpose of Company B's interview is to get and give information which will permit the employer to determine an applicant's qualifications, a friendly situation of talking over every phase of the job and the man, and looking over for the weak points and strong points of both. The interviewer wants to get a picture of the applicant and the applicant wants to know about the job (32). Also, it is to enable the interviewer not only to weigh each applicant against the basic selection standards, but also against the specific requirements of the job as outlined in the store job specifications portion of the Personnel Manual and select employees from applicants who most nearly meet them (32).

Where Company B is particularly anxious to see that applicants meet the specific requirements for a particular selling job, Company C looks to the interview as a means to determine and appraise the qualifications of applicants so as to select men with outstanding potential to develop rapidly in the distributive end of the business and quickly become producers and attain managerial positions (40).

Company D looks upon the interview as the interviewer's opportunity to obtain all the information which he requires in order to make an intelligent decision and determine if the applicant has the "combination

of qualifications" he is seeking (41). All men are potential candidates for promotion and there are three important basic objectives to be accomplished when interviewing applicants, namely: (1) to select men of quality; (2) select men who can quickly become good producing salesmen; and (3) to select men who can achieve promotion to positions of greater responsibility in their fields and general office organizations (41).

Company E's purpose in the interview is to gather the specific information desired to help make a subjective appraisal of the applicant (38).

Each company participating in this survey uses the interview as a method of learning which applicants have the particular qualifications necessary to meet the company standards as well as the job to be filled, and/or be suitable raw material to fit in with the company's plans for the future. In addition, two of the companies depend upon the interview as an opportunity to do a public relations job in addition to its major purpose.

#### Origin, Development

Each company states that its selection plan is influenced by its particular specifications, with the possible exceptions of Company A and Company C. The plans of Company D and Company E appear to be the only ones that are "home grown" since they were developed by their own sales personnel and based on the qualifications possessed by successful salesmen within the company.

Company A, one of those who uses no interview guide, does use an activity check list of its own devising to indicate the applicant's interests in various areas such as people, figures, things and ideas (25). Also, it uses a pattern devised from its sales organizations which gives its interviewers a profile against which such character traits as

cordiality, aggressiveness, objectiveness, impulsiveness, liking for activity, etc. are measured (25,45). These traits are determined by tests and will be discussed in more detail later in this study. But since the tests are devised by the company and based on their own norms and obtain part of the information some of the other companies get through interview, they are included here.

Company A also has found from experience that it must require five or six years' sales experience in its applicants.

Company C has little documentary material about the selection of salesmen. Its selection procedure was built during a long period of time by means of manuals, letters, meetings and other types of communications (39).

In working out its selection program, Company D used two practical bases in determining standards for selecting salesmen: (1) consideration was given the selling problems which confront the salesman and the qualifications required to cope with these problems; and (2) these conclusions were compared with the qualifications of successful salesmen in the company's employ, in order to obtain an all-over conception of the combination of qualities which the company should seek (41).

The interview portion of Company E's selection program is an integrated five-point plan that is

"tailor made to fit the Company E organization and help the branch managers, who are responsible for hiring their own salesmen, come to their conclusions in a logical manner" (38).

It was developed over a period of time and is a pattern or guide of interview technique making use of a representative group of interview questions contributed by Company E managers in response to a request of the personnel department during the spring of 1948. When the program was

established, all salesmen were tested and the Company E standards ascertained from their responses to the test questions. Answers to the test questions were also gotten from thousands of other salesmen and the answers were found to follow a pattern similar to that pattern which psychologists have found is followed by salesmen in general (38).

The applicant is asked the representative questions as listed in the Interview Guide. Then he is rated on a five-point scale according to the interviewer's subjective opinion.

Company E has this to say about its selection plan:

"It is known that the answers of other persons in their occupations also follow their own occupational patterns. Therefore when a man is either recommended or not recommended for the position of Company E salesman, the interviewer knows that the recommendation has been based upon the conformity or nonconformity of the applicant's test responses with the responses of salesmen in general as well as Company E salesmen" (38).

Company F has made an effort to determine characteristics which distinguish success from failure by analyzing its employment files. They found little beyond getting some evidence that men who saved some money and were employed when they applied for a job are somewhat more apt to be successful. This information is not considered significant enough to warrant their being included as one of the companies which have based their selection standards on the qualifications found in their own personnel.

From the evidence available, only four of the companies in this study based their selection standards on those possessed by their own successful salesmen. This is true of two, Companies E and D, much more than of Companies A and C. The selection plans of the other four companies seem to have "just grown" like "Topsy." And while there is no concrete evidence as support, it is reasonable to assume that the



personnel departments of Companies B and G were influenced by their past success when setting up their selection programs and listing desired qualifications. The same might be said of the Company F local managers who hire their own personnel independently of the company's head office, and the employment officials of the various Company H sales divisions who hire according to the needs of their individual selling problems.

#### √ Results Desired From Selection Program

All of the companies want men with superior character traits.

Since it has no sales training program as such (only specialized training along the lines of its own system and products), Company A attempts through its selection process to get trained salesmen who have had "creative" sales experience. This type of selling is that in which the salesman must develop his own market and create within the prospect an interest for his proposition instead of servicing a narrow, restrictive list of prospects handed him by a sales manager. This "creative type" is opposed to the salesman who sells a staple commodity or the type which might be called a "pickup order" salesman (25).

Company B believes that selection is the first of the four basic steps of building a successful organization--the other three being development, training and followthrough (32). In its selection process, Company B does not seem to be searching for applicants with any over-all outstanding characteristic, just those who can meet the eleven basic qualifications for any applicant for a non-supervisory position in a store as outlined and described in its Selection Manual. If the application is for a supervisory position the twelfth qualification, supervisory ability, is required (32).

The purpose of the Company C campus selective recruiting program is to select during the spring and summer months from among those who plan to enter the distribution fields and have an academic background in commerce or business administration--young men with outstanding possibilities to develop rapidly in the distributive end of the business, quickly becoming producers and attain managerial positions in the near future (40). The term "outstanding" is emphasized in instructions to the interviewers with the statement that:

"No compromise is to be made on quality. If no prospects are outstanding, none are to be taken. The company is not compelled to meet a quota and is not obligated to select salesmen from each college at which interviews are held" (40).

Company C wants "doers" not "dreamers"; young men who can act as well as think, and who like the taste and feel of competitive business. Since the new employee is expected to earn his way at every step in competition with others, he must be willing to work hard on the lower rung jobs and last long enough to realize his potential (40).

To Company D, an applicant's potential for development is of paramount importance. It expects to send most of its new employees to a company training school and believes that:

"The first and probably the most important requisite in the development of an effective sales organization is selecting men who possess qualifications which can be developed through training for successful selling. Only those candidates who possess the basic qualities for success are considered. It is a costly waste of time and effort to experiment with mediocre talent" (40).

In approaching the selection problem, Company D interviewers start with the premise that they are seeking applicants who are interested in sales work as a career and who have a sound basic knowledge gained through actual experience or training that particularly fits them to sell a

certain type of product. The interviewer takes into consideration that only a few men select the selling of a certain line as a vocational objective and that one cannot, therefore, expect to find experienced applicants already equipped to sell it (40).

Company E depends upon its recruiting and selection program "to secure and place the right man on the right job" (38). To Company E that means a man who on the basis of a sufficiently satisfactory subjective rating in the seven sections of the interview could be hired without an aptitude test (40).

"While all applicants are given a six-set battery of aptitude tests as the final screening device, the aptitude test report can not (be expected to) supply the interviewer with a good man. He must produce the good man to be tested" (40).

However, the Company E interviewer's final decision on hiring depends on the aptitude test results.

Company E recruits a large pool of applicants and the best of the group, according to the aptitude test battery scores, is selected. Test reports are likewise looked to as a definite aid in training as well as selection (40).

A clear contrast is shown in the last three named companies' main interest in an applicant. Company D is particularly interested in a man's potential for development through training for successful selling. Company C wants outstanding men who have the potential to develop in the distributive end of the business and attain managerial positions soon. Company E's foremost interest in a new man is how well he will fit into the organization, being a loyal, congenial, happy employee, proud of his job, and create a good impression for the company, in addition to his

having the other necessary qualifications determined by the other selection processes. Aspects of job satisfaction appear in the Company E interviewers' questions on practically every other qualification, especially in the questions the interviewer asks himself about the applicant. As examples, when investigating the applicant's marriage situation the interviewer is conscious of that part which a wife plays in a man's job satisfaction. (Company E says that "the employer of a married man is really hiring a team" (40).) Also, if the applicant voices any criticisms when being questioned about the last place he worked, the interviewer asks himself if the same objections would prevail in working for Company E (40).

Company G is the company mentioned in the introduction which prefers to promote from within the ranks when possible. For this reason it tries to hire young men just out of college, trained primarily in chemistry and chemical engineering who appear to have the qualifications for advancement.

Since Company G believes that its success as a business enterprise is due entirely to the calibre of the men who make up the organization, it tries to get exceptional men and then sell them on the company but not oversell them (5).

Only those men who measure up to the company's standards and will "fit in" with any of its plants are selected, because men are not employed for one locality but for company-wide use (5).

Company G considers enthusiasm for the job at hand (in a given field) as one of the prime ingredients of success, and wants men with this qualification (5). Since promotion from within the ranks where possible

is one of its main personnel policies, it holds that aggressiveness and initiative are valuable qualities in men who can advance to supervisory positions. "Many of the applicants of today must be expected to become the executives of tomorrow," Company G interviewers are told. Aggressiveness within moderation is a good trait. Lack of initiative indicates that a man can hardly be expected to inspire the effort of others (5).

There is no particular qualification desired in the Company H selection procedure. This is no doubt due to the difference in needs of the ten industrial departments and their various operating divisions and their varied sales problems making it essential that each have its own selection and training procedure (19). There are some indications that lead to the belief that Company H is more security conscious than the other companies in this study. Perhaps this is because of the large amount of Government work they do. In its Application for Employment, which is used with experienced personnel, space is provided for listing with explanation, any police record or record of arrests and a paragraph regarding the applicant's activities in the interest of some government, other than that of the United States, as follows:

"Have you at any time been affiliated with an organization devoted, in whole or in part, to influencing or furthering in the United States the political activities, public relations or public policy of any other government? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If you have been associated with such an organization, either local, national or international, give name of it and describe your activities" (1).

Each company wants its selection program to pick out from the field of applicants those with the particular qualifications of education, training and experience it has found are desirable and necessary for a salesman to be the most successful in selling the company's particular

product or line of products. And in addition, have the personal qualifications it desires for harmony within the company and/or continued company success.

#### Difference in Emphasis

Company A has no interview guide nor system which can be studied, Company F leaves interviewing up to the local managers except for a few general preferences, and Company H has such a large number of sales divisions that each must have its own selection and training procedure. So, material from these three companies offers little information on differences in weight put on various qualifications in the basic selection standards and information desired about the applicant.

Experience. All of the companies are interested in an applicant's work experiences and provide space for employment history on their application blanks as part of the objective over-all picture of the applicant. Their further interest varies in degree.

Company A places more emphasis on experience than any of the other companies in this study, and justifiably so, because that is the primary basis on which it hires. It has no sales training activities and must require an applicant to come to them as a trained salesman, with a minimum of five or six years of sales experience in order for him to have a good chance of success in selling their particular line of products. While Company A does not specify any particular type of previous sales activity (clerking in a retail store is not considered as "sales experience"), it is preferred that applicants have had "creative" sales experience (25).

The only weight Company F puts on experience is that if the applicant is above the age of thirty, what he has done with his working years is a lot more important than schooling, and it takes a dim view of men

of any age without selling experience with a specialty (51).

Company H provides space for experience under employment history in its Application for Employment blanks and also a whole page for the applicant to tell, in his own words, his experience to correspond with positions and dates listed in his employment history. The Company H personnel department considers this a particularly important part of the application as their ability to evaluate the applicant's experience record depends largely upon the information it furnishes (20,1). It has also developed a Biographical Index Blank which refers to personal history items (20). However, the weight placed on experience will vary considerably among the Company H sales divisions where considerable technical training may be needed (19).

An Experience Record form is maintained by Company H on every employee after hiring. This is used as a selection tool only in so far as it might be used in selecting personnel from within the organization for advancement or transfer to sales (20).

Company B requires that an applicant have had "sufficient experience to meet the requirements of the job" (32). This means that the applicant should have had some experience relating to the job for which he is applying, and will aid him to better perform his duties. The kind and extent of the experience required depends upon the particular job for which he is applying and its responsibility (32). Company B interviewers are warned, "beware of the chronic drifter who has had many jobs and been dissatisfied with each one" (32).

Company D looks upon sales experience in applicants as a lagniappe, an additional point in their favor. It feels that those with experience in the use of the product are usually good prospects, provided they

possess selling instincts and other necessary qualifications, because this experience makes the training job easier (41).

Company D is also interested in an applicant's length of service, why he has left previous jobs and is willing to leave his present job. Men who make frequent employment changes are usually poor risks, and those who have held the same job for many years find difficulty in adapting themselves to a new job. A desirable employment average is five years (41).

Company D puts special weight on a particular experience that if the applicant worked his way through school he deserves great credit and extra consideration (41).

While present Company D salesmen have come from different sources, in the main they were familiar with office records and systems through experience or training, and therefore had a sound foundation for sales training (41).

Company E's particular interest in an applicant's experience and work record is to the extent of how many jobs he has had since leaving school; if there has been a continued improvement on each job and how much money he has recently been earning (38).

Like Company B, Company E is interested in whether or not an applicant's experience would prove helpful to him on the job for which he is being interviewed. Although his job may not have involved selling, close attention to his story may reveal some of the traits Company B desires in a salesman (38).

Company G's appraisal of the applicant's past experience is less concerned with what or how long as attitude and influence on present ability. The importance of the job and how much opportunity he has had for working on his own is contrasted with the same period of time spent



in diversified operations creditably performed. Ten years of menial routine work is not as worthwhile as six months of actual research and individual work (5).

Marriage situation. Company E is the only one of the companies which is particularly interested in an applicant's marriage situation. This could be because marriage has such a strong influence on job satisfaction. Company E feels this is a significant factor in appraising a prospective employee because the employer of a man who is married is really employing a team. Ignoring one-half of this team may be overlooking a major consideration either for or against taking the applicant. Therefore, the interviewer wants to know the part the wife plays on this team. He wants to know what the wife thought about his last job and other former employers (38). He is also interested in what the wife disliked in the applicant's other jobs; if she was ever ashamed of his job; had she ever urged him to stay on a job or leave it, and why (38). He also learns if the wife approves or disapproves of earnings on a commission basis, if she prefers to know in advance what amount is earned, if she can manage all right by proper budgeting, and if she is able to cope with the ups and downs of a salesman's pay check (38).

Special importance is placed on whether the applicant and his wife would move to another city if the company offered him a promotion there. The strength and reason for geographical preferences is also determined (38).

With this information in hand the interviewer again turns his questions inwardly and asks himself if there are any aspects of the job of a Company E salesman that the applicant's wife would dislike (38).

None of the companies state a preference for married men in their applicants. However, Company D does advise its interviewers that many employers prefer married men for responsible positions on the premise that, by and large, they are more stable because of their fixed domestic obligations (41). Company C, D and E interviewers link marriage status with the question of dependents. This helps determine the extent of an applicant's obligations and whether or not his potential earnings will be sufficient to reduce distracting worries which may impair his efficiency (41). Therefore the number of dependent individuals, their relationship and the extent of dependency is noted. Company D's further interest in an applicant's marriage situation is that a man cannot do a good job if his home life is one of conflict and his emotional life is disordered (41).

Company E takes the same viewpoint and in addition to wondering if an applicant's marriage situation will be an emotional hazard it wants to know if his wife will have an adverse influence on job satisfaction instead of marriage helping give him stability (38).

Company B's interest in dependency and marriage status is in its relationship to stability. A happy domestic situation means the employee will not have distracting outside influences and can do a better job. Also, the employee with the responsibility of dependents has a strong motivation for staying on the job and trying to advance (41).

Company C interviewers include marriage status and dependents among the items to be considered in appraising the potential of the applicant, but only to the extent of whether or not he can live on the company rate during training (40).

While there is no connection mentioned, Company E may link with the

"real" family situation any possible emotional hazard that might rise from the applicant's marriage situation. The information about whether or not he spends his weekends with his family is sought when appraising his recreational and social background.

Social Effectiveness. Company E interviewers investigate the recreation and social background of the applicant plus his spare time activities to get an indication of his social effectiveness, and whether or not they think the applicant can gain the liking and respect of Company E customers (38).

Among the information Company E interviewers desired is how the applicant spent his spare time while in school and if these activities were likely to give poise and self confidence. Was there participation in school clubs and societies, and if not, was it because he was too busy studying, because he was working his way through school or just was not interested? Was he interested in people? Did he enjoy organizing affairs? Also, if he was an officer in any of the organizations of which he was a member (38). Activities in which his spare time is spent now are noted by the Company E interviewer and whether the time is spent alone or in a group. Of what fraternal or civic organizations is he a member or officer? Does he give the impression of being a playboy? Does he drink too much? Are there any doubts about his being considered completely respectable?

From the information on the applicant's spare time activities the interviewer comes to a conclusion of whether the applicant seems to like and enjoy meeting people and if he appears to be prejudiced for or against some people to such an extent that it would be detrimental to him in selling for Company E (38).

Company D is also interested in the private and social life of an applicant, particularly his diversions and spare time activities, because of the influence they can be on his doing his job (41).

Company G interviewers are interested in whether the applicant belonged to social organizations in school because they believe if a man gets along with people at school it generally carries over into after life (5). It also believes that social activities are valuable indices to character. No rigid specifications for social life are drawn but it feels that a man who likes others, takes an active part in the social life of his community, and has a normal interest in social activity is, generally speaking, well balanced. Sports, hobbies and tastes in recreation are desired information for judging whether the interviewee has a rounded personality (5).

Past Environment and Family Background. Company D and Company E are the only companies which note past environment and family background in their interview and selection procedure. Company C only mentions this among the items to be considered by the interviewer in appraising the potential of the applicant (40). Company B is interested only to the extent that present and previous home addresses may be a clue to stability as an aid in checking references. The father's and brother's occupations generally indicate home training, environment and employment stability of the family (32).

Company D believes that there are many exceptions to the rule, "Like father, like son," but also there are innumerable cases where the physical and psychical characteristics of parents are transmitted to their offspring. Likewise the family environment in which the applicant is reared often moulds his future life. The interviewer is alerted and on

guard during this portion of the interview to detect any negative traits. Specific points of information sought are if his parents are dependent on him for support, where his parents have lived from time to time and how long the applicant lived with them (41).

Both Company D and Company E want to know what other family members do or did for a living and the extent of success (41,38). Company E includes information about the applicant's past environment and family background with his home life in determining the "real" family situation. Additional factors considered here are if he lives in the same neighborhood as his parents and how long he has lived there, whether he is greatly influenced by his family and what they think of selling as a career.

Job Satisfaction and Loyalty. Company E places particular emphasis on job satisfaction and loyalty of the applicant. When questioning the applicant about past employment and employers, special significance is attached to his reasons why the companies he has worked for are or are not good places to work, if a person can really get ahead there and the reasons for termination (38). The justification of the applicant's attitude and opinions is checked by an investigation of his work history with his former employers and also by his attitudes in general (38). As the applicant answers questions about former employment and gives his reasons for feeling so, the interviewer asks himself if the same reasons would prevail at Company E. The interviewer is also interested in learning the applicant's description of his best and his worst boss, and getting indications of the kind of man for whom the applicant wants to work and the kind of man he is (52). After getting this information the interviewer determines if he is the desired type of boss and if the applicant is the

desirable employee (38), assuming that the interviewer is the branch manager.

The Company E interviewer looks for a man who will not only be proud of his job and be a loyal, enthusiastic worker, but who will also improve the loyalty, cheerfulness and job satisfaction of others, one who will be a tremendous asset to his employer because others will enjoy working with him and will be stimulated by association with him. "That man would be most valuable when the going gets rough and spirit is sagging" (38). Other factors relating to possible job satisfaction are whether the rest of his family, i.e., his father, mother, brothers and sisters, think highly of selling as a career and if there are other emotional hazards that would be destructive to his best efforts as a salesman (38).

Company G interviewers are also conscious of their responsibility to get men who will be satisfied with their job but they do not go into it as thoroughly as does Company E. One of the qualifications of the type of man they search for is a rounded, integrated personality, making him "the kind of man with whom it would be both a pleasure and profitable to associate" (5). They, too, go on the assumption that the applicant's attitude toward former employers can be a most valuable indication of possible job satisfaction. A man who talks disparagingly of a former employer may, upon the slightest provocation, do the same with any employer. Company G interviewers want to know whether or not the applicant ever discussed his dissatisfaction with his former employer. Is he open and above board, with an honest desire to settle matters to a mutual satisfaction, or is he a chronic grouch whose personality would be a liability to any employer? Company G believes that enthusiasm for the job in hand is one of the prime ingredients of success. Therefore, the

interviewer tries to bring out and note if the man has a definite interest in a given field and has focused his education so that it fits him for that choice. The interviewer attempts to uncover and properly specify why an applicant is likely to have more interest in a special field (5).

Geographical Preference. Geographical preference is of significant interest to Company G interviewers since men are hired for company-wide use, not for just one locality. Applicants who have a strong geographical preference restricting themselves to certain localities, are likely to resist transfer. In time, this would develop into an inflexibility that might prove injurious to the company's activity. Arbitrary objections to a number of localities might limit the company's most effective placement of the employee in years to come and be detrimental to job satisfaction (5).

Ability to Accept Directions and to Supervise. The applicant for a non-supervisory position in a Company B store must be able to accept direction. He must be able to take orders willingly, to recognize the need for authority and be able to follow company policies. An applicant for retail sales manager should have supervisory ability because he must be requiring yet considerate of the people who work for him, and with ability to properly direct subordinates to get maximum of effort and results (32).

Both Company B and Company C mention leadership among the desired qualifications but neither emphasizes it. Company B links it with loyalty, dependability and industry and ambition--qualifications which the interviewer is to determine if the applicant possesses (32), while Company C lists it with other qualities which its interviewers will look for when

interviewing on the college campus (40). Company G does not segregate leadership ability as a separate desired qualification. Instead, it includes it as a contributing aspect of personality. There, the Company G interviewer notes if the applicant appears to be the sort of person one would listen to if he were in a position of authority (5).

Company G says:

"A negative personality, one whose words appear to lack weight, one who lacks the courage to be positive, not the presence to be respected, would be poor material for growing responsibility" (5).

Education. A college degree is almost mandatory with four of the companies, and two others state a preference for graduates.

Neither Company A nor Company H state any educational specifications. However, the Company A application blank is one of the two that provides space for listing sales training courses with particulars in addition to the usual educational history. The other company is Company F. Company H does hire directly from college applicants desirous of entering the sales field, but the weight placed on education in its selection requirements varies among the sales divisions (20).

Company F discourages its managers from employing men with less than a high school education and when an applicant is below thirty years of age the company prefers college graduates. Above the age of thirty, what the applicant has done with his working years is a lot more important than schooling. They do not like to hire men who fail to graduate from college, especially if they drop out after three years (51).

Company B is another company that does not require that all applicants for sales positions be college graduates. It requires that the applicant have enough formal or specialized education to meet the



requirements of the job for which he is being considered. At least a high school education is mandatory for retail salesmen. It is desirable that a retail sales manager and an outside salesman have had some college work, and the outside salesman have had some business courses (32).

It is almost mandatory that applicants for a sales job with Company C have a college degree, and an academic background in commerce or business administration (39). In some cases, where the applicant is interested in industrial products sales and wants to get into sales engineering, he will also need a background of engineering (40). The campus interview is held when the applicant is a graduating senior but he does not report for work until after graduation.

Company D believes that the more schooling an applicant has the better, and the consideration of college men is strongly recommended in recruiting (41). College graduates with a knowledge of business administration, office management, salesmanship and accounting are preferred. But, the Company D sales organization follows the practice of recruiting college men for all kinds of jobs, frequently starting them at the bottom (41).

While many inherent qualities essential to success other than a college education are also required, Company D believes that if these are present, the man fortified with college training enjoys a decided advantage over the one who has not received the benefits of advanced education. In addition, he is better equipped for subsequent promotions to positions of greater responsibility (41).

Company D explains its attitude by saying that:

"During the sixteen years of schooling a college graduate received he followed organized educational programs covering a wide range of diversified subjects. He learned how to study, how to use text and reference books, and where and how to find essential information. His work required the ability to think and to absorb training. He must exercise industry, patience, perseverance, persistence, thoroughness and many other qualities of equal value in sales work. For men of such training, the study of his employer's products and their application utility should be a comparatively simple undertaking" (14).

Another point in a college graduate's favor with Company D, and which is distinctive in that it is not expressed by the other participating companies, is that a college education is a costly financial investment. If the student's parents paid the bill, it indicates, in most cases, having a good home environment where there is an appreciation of the value of education and sufficient means to pay for its acquisition. If he worked his way through school, he deserves extra credit and consideration. When interviewing a college graduate the Company D interviewer notes the subjects in which he majored and those in which he excelled, and if his studies included any subjects particularly desirable for understanding the utilization of the product he is to sell (14).

Company G has no fixed rules as to education but from a practical standpoint they try to hire young men just out of college, trained primarily in chemistry and chemical engineering. The applicant's college record is significant to Company G interviewers in that it can show not only marks and work covered, but attitude toward certain types of courses. Selection of electives is often a good indication of a flair for certain techniques of types of study. College courses, too, can tell the Company G interviewer if a man was earnest in his school work; if he picked up "snap" courses, Company G feels he might have a tendency to select the easier in preference to the better way out of a problem (14).

Company E includes in its preliminary interview the interviewer noting if the applicant has had "too much or too little schooling and education" but does not enlarge upon this nor mention it at any other time except to ask for a "yes" or "no" answer in the final appraisal (38). It believes that educational background of the applicant is becoming more important in selection procedure all the time. In the education portion of the interview the Company E interviewer tries to get as complete a picture as possible in order to determine whether or not the applicant's education is appropriate for the kind of sales job available, and whether his education fits him to meet the company's customers (38).

Among the information a Company E interviewer wants to know about the applicant's education is whether or not it sticks out like a sore thumb, and does he appear very conscious of it and make the interviewer conscious of it. Were his marks in school at least average and is his educational foundation sufficiently strong enough to support additional training he will receive if hired? This is one of the few places where Company E mentions any additional training. What field had he decided to go into in his first year of schooling is desirable information, and if he was persistent and interested enough to follow through, or easily diverted. The interviewer wants to know if he is taking courses now preparing himself for a selling career or has prepared himself for work in a field other than sales. If so, will it be helpful to him in selling? Does he try to avoid the subject of self improvement or cover up in a way indicative of little or no desire for self improvement? Company E wants to know if he impresses the interviewer as having been seriously trying to improve himself (38).

Appearance. Company B lists appearance as one of the basic standards to be met, and says only that the applicant be "neat in appearance and well groomed." If he is "hopelessly below par" on appearance he is to be courteously dismissed early in the preliminary interview. The interviewer is cautioned to watch his prejudices, keep an open mind and not try to judge a man's character by his manner, facial or other physical characteristics (32).

Company C makes no mention of appearance other than asking its interviewer for a subjective opinion of "does he look like a 'doer' instead of a 'dreamer'" (40)?

Both Company D and Company E relate appearance with health. Company D is interested in whether the interviewer is favorably impressed with the applicant's general appearance in respect to physique, carriage, face and skin, shave, hair, linen, necktie, suit, hat and shoes, and to what degree he is neat or slovenly (41). Company E expresses a specific interest only in whether or not the applicant is slovenly and unkempt in general appearance (38).

Company G goes into the subject of appearance more thoroughly than any of the other companies, and puts significant emphasis on it with the statement, "Company G prefers to have attractive people as its employees" (5). It relates appearance with manner, and regards it as one of the points which over the years have proved helpful in estimating a man's fitness for probable success, not only in his work, but in society as a whole. "While looks are often deceptive, a good appearance, neatness, and careful grooming are a distinct credit." It also includes appearance as one of the factors of personality and says of it:

"An applicant's appearance is a composite effect of his facial and bodily characteristics, the manner of dress, and his personal cleanliness. Excessive physical ugliness is a handicap. Good well-balanced features, properly developed body, and graceful, coordinated movements are an asset.

"Clothes too are outward signs that point to character traits. Loud, flashy dress can cover either arrogance or an inferiority complex. Good clothes, carelessly kept, may point to a habit of disorderliness. A man's taste can be fairly well estimated by his apparel. In dress, as in everything, there is a golden mean. Good, but not flashy clothes, well-kept, usually are a hallmark of good taste....and it will extend deep below the surface."

Personal grooming, care of nails, teeth and personal cleanliness are other factors of appearance to Company G which believes that what a man is can be pretty well gauged by his appearance. "In the well-rounded personality all things are in balance, and personal tidiness is essential in making up a good appearance" (5).

Character. Company A is interested in an applicant's character to the extent that it investigates his moral background (25). In addition, it has devised a pattern from its sales organization (32) that gives a profile against which such character traits as cordiality, aggressiveness, objectiveness, impulsiveness, liking for activity, etc. are measured (4,5).

Company B requires that an applicant be of sound moral figure, able to discipline himself and possess good personal habits. It is particularly interested in the applicant's stability as a factor of character. In this the interviewer's opinion is based on the applicant's financial condition as well as his father's and brother's occupations to show occupational stability. His marital status and its influence on him is also regarded as a possible clue as well as his present and previous home addresses, and length of time he spent on each of previous jobs. Company B

likewise requires its interviewers to make a subjective appraisal of an applicant's loyalty, dependability and industry as character indicators. The nature of a veteran's discharge is a significant character factor to Company B, and is to be examined if an applicant is a veteran. Men with bad conduct records or dishonorable discharges are not to be hired (25).

Company C acknowledges character as one of the qualifications but passes over it with wondering about the applicant's character habits and expecting its interviewers to be acute to indications of stability, industry, and whether or not he is a leader or follower (40).

The presence of high character traits are demanded by Company D, who tells its interviewers:

"The absence of high character traits can not be offset by any other qualification. A salesman of questionable integrity could easily jeopardize the reputation of the company and minimize the worth of years of previous sales efforts" (29).

Company D puts particular emphasis on character because it believes that honesty and sincerity are the most important of all the qualifications, saying:

"Without them the others are ineffective. Misrepresentation, exaggeration and distortion of facts destroy company and personal reputation and endangers the interests of prospects and customers. When such tactics are employed, the listener either detects their presence or intuitively senses that all is not well. In either case, his confidence is lost, and, without confidence, there can be no sales" (41).

So, the Company D interviewer is interested in whether the applicant impresses him as being honest and talks in a sincere and earnest manner, with his statements and answers straight forward and frank, making no exaggerated or vainglorious claims. He is interested in whether the applicant gives the impression of being dependable and trustworthy, with no

traces of deceptiveness or evasiveness, and if he speaks disparagingly about his former employers or others. "Beware of egoists and braggards," interviewers are warned (41).

Both Company E and Company G put particular emphasis on the applicant's attitude toward former employers as a most valuable signpost pointing to the character of an applicant.

"A man who 'knocks' a former employer may upon the slightest provocation do the same with any employer. A question such as, 'Did you ever discuss your dissatisfaction with your former employer?' might indicate to the interviewer whether the man before him was open and aboveboard, with an honest desire to settle matters to a mutual satisfaction, or a chronic grouch whose personality would be a liability to any employer" (5).

Company F has no character specifications but they do not like to hire men who fail to graduate from college, especially if they dropped out after three years (51).

Company E tends to associate enthusiasm and sincerity with sales personality and sales ability instead of with character (38). It does not set character apart from personality and social effectiveness other than to want to know if the applicant gives the interviewer the impression of being a playboy, whether he drinks too much and whether there is any doubt about his being considered completely respectable. The main indication of the applicant's character seems to be his description of his best and worst boss giving the interviewer "good opportunity to discover the kind of man he is" (38).

\* Personality. Different conceptions of personality exist among the various companies participating in this survey, although there is a broad basic agreement. Different importance is attached to the facets of an

applicant's personality pattern and different terminology is frequently used for interdependent traits.

These traits run the gamut of personality features from ~~amicability~~ <sup>friendly</sup> ~~enthusiasm~~ to zeal and are so interwoven in their relationship with one another and with general and sales personality, that it would be impractical to attempt to separate the various qualities in discussing selection requirements and qualifications of the participating companies. This could be done only by going into a separate study to show which company considers which characteristic when appraising which aspect of the applicant's personality.

In order to present the findings of this study more clearly and with some continuity, no effort is made here to segregate the various features looked for by the different companies and the <sup>of their</sup> nuances of their interpretation in appraising an applicant's sales and/or general personality. These traits are presented as they occur with sufficient importance being attached to them by the various companies to justify inclusion in this study. This treating will require some repetition and re-presentation of various characteristics which are believed by the various companies to influence several major qualifications, as each of the qualifications itself is presented.

Company <sup>A</sup>G, like Company <sup>B</sup>E, associates character and personality with the applicant's dress and appearance denoting several character traits. It relates manner with the effect that a person has on those around him and also considers it as a personality trait.

"Sincerity of manner is essential if a man is to have the respect of his fellows. A weak character and an ineffective personality may overcompensate; may cover up its weakness with affectation. Is the man being interviewed 'acting' or is he sincere, being himself, no more, no less" (5)?



Company D and Company G are the only ones which are interested in an applicant's manners as such. Company D includes them with personality, appearance and approach (41) while Company G groups them with knowledge, experience and appearance as part of personality (5).

Companies E, D and G are the only ones which place sufficient weight on general personality (distinct from sales personality as far as treatment here) to be worth mentioning. However, some other desired qualifications such as self-confidence, optimism, cheerfulness, a good sense of humor and the ability to get along with people are considered features of both general and sales personality (41).

Company E is particularly interested in job satisfaction and loyalty among its employees and makes a subjective appraisal of a prospect's personality, based on the impression the applicant has made during the interview. It is particularly interested in the personality influence an applicant would be on others, and does not want a chronic complainer (38).

"A disloyal, grouchy man who is dissatisfied with his job, can create dissatisfaction among fellow employees and do a great deal of harm. He might be the one rotten apple in the barrel, ruining all the others. But a man who will not only be proud of his job and a loyal, enthusiastic worker, but also will improve the loyalty, cheerfulness and job satisfaction in others can be a tremendous asset to his employer. Every person is not gifted in this manner but most people will respond favorably to such a person. They will enjoy working with him and will be stimulated by association with him. That man would be most valuable when the going gets rough and the spirit is sagging" (38).

Company E further shows interest in personality by giving the Bernrueter Personality Inventory test to applicants (38,6).

Company G interviewers recognize that there are personality differences in applicants by taking different approaches with different persons as personalities differ (5).

Company G and Company E are vitally interested in compatibility of employees and pay particular attention to personality. The keynote of personality is the question, "What is the reaction of the interviewer to the interviewee? Does he seem to be a person it would be pleasant to have around? Is he likable" (5)? In analyzing whether an applicant would be pleasant or unpleasant to work with, one of the largest influences guiding the Company G interviewer's decision is the type of people who surround the applicant in his present situation (5)!

Company G associates personality with leadership ability, in that the interviewer makes a subjective opinion of whether the applicant appears to be the sort of person one would listen to if he were in a position of authority. "A negative personality, one whose words appear to lack weight, one who lacks the courage to be positive, the presence to be respected, would be poor material for growing responsibility" (5)!

The Company G interviewers will in all cases be personal--"Do I like this man? If not, why not" (5)?

Sense of humor, responsibility, tolerance, maturity and emotional balance are all sought for in the interview as personality traits.

Company G interviewers are warned that:

"Personality and appearance are ephemeral qualities and sometimes play strange tricks. First impressions can be confirmed or radically altered for better or for worse. The interviewer is to ask himself if his attitude changes toward the applicant after the first conversation? If it does, it will probably follow the same trend as the opinion of the applicant's supervisor and fellow employees" (5)!

The most significant indication that Company A is interested in an applicant's sales personality is the use of the Johnson Temperament Analysis, a test prepared for checking a person's temperament traits rather than his sales ability (25,17). It has no interview guide and

information secured from it makes no direct statement that it is interested in sales personality. Another selection activity which could be taken as an effort to check the applicant's sales personality, but of less significance than the test, is having the applicant's business background carefully studied by an outside investigation agency. Thus Company A ascertains that what the applicant has told in the application blank is in agreement with what former employers and other references specify (25).

Company B lists voice, expression, self-confidence, ability to make friends, ability to present himself and mental alertness among the basic qualifications of sales personality desired in an applicant. Its basic sales personality standard is that the applicant must have a friendly, open personality and be able to contact customers easily and naturally (32).

When considering an applicant's sales personality, Company D is interested in whether or not he speaks clearly and distinctly, with firmness and conviction, in a manner which commands attention and respect. This company believes that a versatile vocabulary, coupled with a strong and well-modulated voice, is a definite asset. Good diction, pronunciation, grammar and rhetoric are equally important. Profanity or slang and profuse use of unusual words are serious sales deterrents (44).

Company B also requires an applicant to have the ability to get along with others, be able to maintain good and effective relationships, and win their acceptance, respect and friendship (32).

Company C is interested in whether an applicant has the ability to express himself well in conversation and be convincing. Questions which

the company is interested in on this particular qualification are:

"Can the interviewer visualize him as a salesman in one of the sales divisions of the company?...Does he appear to have aptitude for hard, aggressive, sustained sales work? Is his best effort in selling himself" (39)?

Since Company C expects the new employee to be able to earn his own way at every step in competition with others and last long enough to realize his potential, it wants him to have a satisfactory sales personality or the selection program will have defeated its purpose (39).

Company D believes that there is a relationship between health and sales personality. It feels that it is difficult and often impossible for a person suffering ailments to be most efficient (41).

Company D is interested in whether the applicant is the business man and executive type and can be visualized interviewing executives of the interviewer's acquaintance who have the authority to buy. Also, if he could be trained to do so. Whether the interviewer is impressed with the applicant's manners, appearance, approach and personality, and if he manifests selling instincts and interests in sales work as a career are important information (41).

Company D says about the prospective employee:

"His enthusiasm should be augmented by an optimistic viewpoint, cheerfulness, a good sense of humor, and the ability to get along with people.

"Coping with such obstacles as prospects who are hard to sell, who resist sales efforts, have closed minds or procrastinate and other difficulties and delays, requires patience, ingenuity, perseverance, persistence and aggressiveness. All of these qualities must be exercised tactfully and without any semblance of being overbearing. The salesman must persist in his sales efforts without offending and antagonizing the prospect" (41).

In view of its practice of giving new sales personnel training, Company D tells its interviewers that:

"The first and probably the most important requisite in the development of an effective sales organization is selecting men who possess qualifications which can be developed through training for successful selling. The successful sale of products requires the services of high-grade salesmen. Only those candidates who possess the basic qualifications for development are considered. It is a costly waste of time and effort to experiment with mediocre talent" (42).<sup>2</sup>

So, sales personality must of necessity play a significant part in the subjective appraisal made by the Company D interviewer.

Though Company E does not list a specific group of qualifications by which its interviewers base their appraisal of a candidate's sales personality, there are a number of characteristics which are considered in deciding if a candidate appears to have the personality to be a successful Company E salesman.

The applicant's neatness and the use of satisfactory English are preliminary desired information. From investigating the applicant's spare time activities and sociability, the interviewer comes to a conclusion as to whether or not the applicant likes and enjoys meeting people, and whether he seems to be prejudiced for or against some people to such an extent that it would be detrimental to him in selling for Company E. The interviewer also asks himself if he thinks the applicant can gain the respect and liking of Company E customers (38).

Company G does not focus any particular attention on sales personality or segregate it from general personality. Its main interest in this qualification seems to be compatibility with fellow employees and whether or not the applicant would be a pleasant person to have around.

The keynote of the item on personality is the question: "What is the reaction of the interviewer to interviewee? Does he make a good impression" (5)?

As for the qualifications which would lead to success, Company E believes that enthusiasm for the job in hand is one of the prime ingredients of success. Personality is the sum total of appearance, manner, enthusiasm, sincerity, knowledge and experience (5X).

Ability to get along with others is closely related to personality and social effectiveness in the selection standards of the five companies which use it in their selection procedure, as reported in the information in this study.

Since all of the eight companies are interested in hiring applicants who have the potential for successful selling, it goes without elaboration to say that all of them are interested in their applicants having the ability to get along with others. All of the companies' application blanks have space for listing social activities and organizations of which the applicant is a member--basic source of information on this characteristic.

Company A, which uses tests to gather information that many companies get by means of a more extensive interview, uses the Johnson Temperament Analysis, as previously mentioned, to test a person's temperament traits. And the profile from findings is checked against a pattern devised from their own sales organization (25).

STOP  
Ability to Get Along with Others. Company B lists ability to get along with others as one of the basic qualifications and says:

"He (the applicant) must be able to maintain good and effective relationships with others, winning their acceptance, respect and friendship. An applicant should be able to get along well with customers, fellow employees and his superiors".

And since supervisory ability is one of the qualifications desired in certain of their applicants (and it follows the practice of elevating employees within the company), Company B requires that "an applicant for a sales position have the ability to direct subordinates (so) that the maximum of effort and results are secured" (32).

Company D wants to know about an applicant's social life and lists compatibility as one of the qualifications impossible to have if a person is suffering ailments. And it feels that enthusiasm should be augmented by the ability to get along with people (41).

To Company E, the applicant's social effectiveness is, of course, almost synonymous with ability to get along with people and the same allied characteristics are sought in both. These are manners, social and activity record in school, clubs and lodges belonged to, and spare time activities now. Specific information gotten by the Company E interviewer is if his spare time is spent alone or in a group and if he is an active member and/or officer, or just a dues-paying member of these organizations. His reasons for leaving his last job, his attitude toward former employers and what can be learned from his former employers when they are investigated are all of interest to Company E (38).

To Company G, "ability to get along with people" is the sum total of all of the personality characteristics desired in the applicants they hire..."the kind of man with whom it would both be pleasant and profitable to associate." Whether or not the applicant belonged to social organiza-

tions while in school is information of note to its interviewer, who goes on the company belief that if a man gets along with people in school it generally carries over into after life (5).

Company G interviewers closely relate manner to maturity and look on it as an aspect of personality, believing that: "Sincerity of manner is essential if a man is to have the respect of his fellows" (5). While it does not want a man who thinks everything is funny, because he is not likely to discharge serious matters in a responsible fashion, it does believe that a man who has no sense of humor can be equally trying. In this search for cheerful employees Company G cautions its interviewers that "irresponsible souls to whom nothing is serious may make pleasant companions at times, but usually they work a hardship on the team when it is in harness."

"An overbearing manner likewise is not hard to detect. It shows itself in a lack of respect for the opinions of others, a hard-headed immovable judgment on everything and an intolerance of a great many things the majority of people feel worth while. A reasonable self-assurance is the mark of educated, well-seasoned individuals. Arrogance may mask hidden weakness, and usually it works a hardship both on the individual, because people around him draw away, and on his fellow workers who have to put up with his browbeating" (5).

Company G believes that attitude toward former employers is another signpost pointing to the character of the applicant. It "might indicate to the interviewer whether the man before him was open and above board, with an honest desire to settle matters to mutual satisfaction, or a chronic grouch whose personality would be a liability to any employer" (5).

Initiative. According to the information available, only four of the companies in this survey make any special effort to determine an applicant's initiative, mentioning it by name. Only one of these, Company E,



gives tests (38). It can be assumed that the others want sufficient initiative in applicants for their sales needs. Three strongly indicate their interviewers search for initiative in applicants, even if it is not specifically termed such. Of this latter group, one of them gives all applicants a test which could indicate initiative. The eighth company in the survey gives various tests on occasions where it is believed they will yield information not secured in the interview (20).

Company A does not directly mention in the information provided that it seeks initiative in its candidates for employment. But it can assume that this trait is desired in sufficient quantities in its applicants since they are required to have five or six years of successful sales experience. Additional basis for this assumption is that the experience must have been "creative" selling in which the salesman developed his own market and created within the prospect an interest for his proposition (25).

This company also gives the applicant the Johnson Temperament Analysis, a test which can give them an indication of initiative. They also can get an indication of an applicant's initiative from the Occupational Interest Inventory of their own devising, which indicates the applicant's interests in various areas.

Company B links initiative with aggressiveness and specifies that an applicant "must be a 'self starter,' able to initiate ideas and programs and aggressive enough to carry them through." In addition to the above general specification, Company B requires that its applicants have industry, ambition and leadership. In checking an applicant's work record, the Company B interviewer is interested in the nature of the transition from one job to the next, and whether it was toward a better job and a

better company on each move. Also noted are if the applicant's employment and salary record speak well for his qualities of industry and ambition, and if he has made satisfactory progress in salary and responsibility (32).

Company C instructs its interviewers to look for "doers" not "dreamers," young men who can act as well as think, and who like the taste and feel of competitive business. The applicants accepted must definitely be ambitious, with aggressiveness and drive, resourceful, industrious and have demonstrated some of the characteristics of leadership ability (40).

Initiative is an important characteristic to Company D. It is keenly interested in an applicant's potentials to develop in sales ability and achieve promotion. To Company D interviewers a very important consideration is whether or not the candidate seems to have characteristics which would make him a good potential candidate for future promotions in the field and general office organizations. They are reminded that the continued success of the organization is dependent largely upon the quality, initiative, ability and industry of each individual comprising the group. One of the observations of the company's interviewers is whether the interviewee would enjoy sales work which involves the analyzing of problems and the development and presentation of solutions thereof. Company D tries to select salesmen who can cope with prospects who are hard to sell, who resist sales efforts, have closed minds or procrastinate and offer other difficulties or delays. With this type of man in mind, they look for ingenuity, aggressiveness, perseverance, persistency, tact and forcefulness. Company D makes good health a necessary condition for the last three qualities. The salesman must be able to persist in

his sales efforts without offending and antagonizing the prospect. Company D interviewers also note an applicant's ambitions and plans for the future when appraising him (41).

The only direct reference Company E makes to initiative is to include it with other information sought from the applicant's former employer (38). It may get some indication of this by learning what sort of work he is interested in. It does give the Bemrueter Personality Inventory and other tests to all applicants but these are scored by an independent organization (38) which probably will give an initiative score, so the interviewer does not have to go very thoroughly into that qualification.

Company F makes no reference to initiative in the information it furnished for this study. But, while it leaves hiring to its individual local managers, they are aware that the company does not look with favor on men who fail to graduate from college, especially if they dropped out after three years (51).

Company G believes that a go-getter is an asset to his company. If it does not verge on bumptiousness, a certain aggressiveness is necessary and commendable (5).

"Initiative and aggressiveness are valuable qualities in people who can advance to supervisory positions. Many of the applicants of today must be expected to become the executives of tomorrow....Backwardness in answering questions, no effort put forth to contribute to the subject discussed, and a history showing lack of initiative indicates that a man can hardly be expected to inspire the effort of others" (5).

Company G's remarks on emotional immaturity indicates a relationship in their mind between that and initiative. They feel that: "An emotion-

ally immature employee is likely to become a problem child. More balanced personalities can be depended upon to deal with their own problems" (5).

Demeanor and Manner; Subjective, Objective Appraisals. Six of the companies definitely make subjective appraisals of applicants, even if tests are used, and one of the others makes an objective decision which is, to a large degree, based on subjective information. So demeanor and manner are just noted in passing by most of the companies, not mentioned or included in personality, or ability to get along with others. It is the impression the applicant makes on the interviewer.

Company D, one of those which mentions it specifically, looks upon demeanor and manner in which the applicant answers questions as an interview tool, enabling the interviewer to judge the quality of the applicant's reasoning and the character of his enthusiasm. Honesty and sincerity are the most important of all the qualifications to Company D, who believes that without them, the others are ineffective (41).

Company D wants to know:

"Does the applicant impress the interviewer as being honest? Does he talk in a sincere and earnest manner, with his statements and answers straightforward and frank? Does he give the impression of being dependable and trustworthy with no traces of deceptiveness and evasiveness" (41)?

The Company D interviewer looks for enthusiasm augmented by an optimistic viewpoint, cheerfulness, a good sense of humor and the ability to get along with people. He does not want an applicant who is overbearing.

"The manner in which the applicant conducts himself during the interview is to be observed. Is he timid, meek or shy? Does he yield whenever the interviewer differs with him or show evidence of an inferiority complex? Is he impatient or irritable?"

Does he seem to be easily discouraged or is he self-possessed? Does he reflect self-respect and determination? Is he aggressive and tenacious without being domineering or offensive? Does he give the impression of being a man difficult to 'shake off'; one who will stick to his objectives until they have been successfully accomplished" (41)?

When investigating the applicant's attitude toward his last employer, the Company E interviewer notices his general attitude while talking about the employer and tries to learn if he is a chronic complainer. The interviewer also notes his enthusiasm for work and for people, and looks to see if there is any noticeable trend or pattern to the interview up to that point indicating the applicant is for or against some idea, something or some person. To the Company E interviewer alertness and intelligence are significant items and are included in the over-all impression gained by the interviewer during the entire interview (38).

Company G credits manner with being one of the points which, over the years, have proved helpful in estimating a man's fitness for probable success, not only in his work, but in society as a whole. It goes more into the subject of manner than any of the other companies, believing that an easy, well-poised manner indicates that a man is easy to work with and probably would be easy to work for. It further believes that in the item of manner, the Company G interviewer has an estimate of the effect of a person on the people around him, as well as a means of judging his probable ability. Sincerity of manner is essential if a man is to have the respect of his fellows. A weak character and an ineffective personality may overcompensate; may cover up its weakness with affectation. The Company G interviewer wants to know if the man being interviewed is "acting" or if he is sincere, being himself, no more, no less (5). If the applicant's manner is not effected, Company G wants its

interviewers to try to determine if he appears to be serious, aware of his responsibility, or does he seem to have a trait of not quite restrained frivolity that creeps out (5)?

Age. Company B is the only one of the eight companies which has rigid age specifications (32). Three of the others, Companies C, D, and F, list age specifications but qualify them by saying that under certain conditions they will take men not included in the specified brackets. The other companies do not mention an age range.

While Company A does not specify any age limit it does feel that a salesman, in order to succeed best on the job, should be vigorous and in good health (25).

Company E depends upon the interviewer's independent judgment to determine if the applicant is too young or too old (38). Company G prefers to hire young men just out of college, who can grow with the organization. (14)

The factor of age varies considerably among the various Company H sales divisions since some of the sales representatives need to have much more technical training than others (20).

Company B, the only one of the companies with rigid age specifications, twenty-one to forty years of age, also has the highest and lowest specifications. The applicant for retail salesman and retail sales manager must be between twenty-one and thirty-five years of age, while for outside salesman the applicant must be between twenty-five and forty years of age. "The applicant must be young enough to accept new ideas and mature enough to handle the job to which assigned" (32).

Company C prefers men between twenty-two and thirty, but men with outstanding potentials who do not fall in that range are not excluded (40).

Company D feels that its requirements can best be served by men between twenty-two and thirty-eight years of age (41). It explains this by saying that capable men in this bracket are old enough to negotiate with business executives and the range also affords an opportunity to build for the future. Exceptions may be made in the case of qualified men; but the development of a future permanent organization requires a preponderance of younger men (41).

Company F discourages the managers of its branch offices from employing men below twenty-five years of age (51).

Financial Condition. Five of the companies state an interest in an applicant's financial condition. Two of them, Companies D and E, go into the subject fairly thoroughly. Company B shows a mild interest, Company C barely mentions it, and Company F did analyze its employment files and found some evidence that men who had saved some money when they applied for a job are more apt to be successful (51). They do not mention this finding in their interview procedure but they probably are influenced some by it.

All of the companies provide space on their application blanks for listing financial conditions, savings, etc.

Whether the applicant has a savings or bank account and carries some insurance, and whether he appears to have financial obligations in excess of current earning possibilities are significant items to four of the

five companies showing an interest in financial condition.

Company B looks upon the financial situation of an applicant as an indication of whether he is a stable mature person with a strong financial incentive to work hard. It also helps the interviewer determine if the applicant is financially responsible and, considering his family status and other financial responsibilities, whether he lives within his income and could live on the salary the job will pay (32). Company C also wants to know this latter information (40).

As additional items of interest to the Company B interviewer in appraising the applicant's financial condition, the interviewer considers whether the applicant carries adequate insurance in keeping with his ability to keep up the premiums, or whether he has savings (32). This is a somewhat different attitude from that taken by the other companies in that Company B considers insurance (at least from their wording) as a substitute for savings.

Company C and Company D want to know if an applicant is burdened with heavy debt or faced with recurring financial obligations in excess of his immediate earning possibilities. If so, he is not to be considered (32,41). Company D tells its interviewers: "Constant pressure of his difficulties makes it practically impossible for him to meet the concentrated requirements of an extended training program. Nor will his mind be free for constructive planning and impartial sales work" (41).

To develop conclusions, the Company D interviewer learns if the applicant owns his home or other real estate and the extent of mortgage obligations, if any; what investments he has, or if he receives income



from other sources; how much life, accident, health or other forms of insurance he carries and if he has a bank account. The interviewer also wants to know what salaries the applicant has earned during the previous five years and what percentage of his income he has saved. Since Company D is one of the companies which requires an employee to furnish bond, its interviewers want to learn if the applicant is able to do so. The extent and nature of his debts is investigated and what income he requires for current and other obligations. Company D is the only one which wants to know if an applicant gambles and if so, for what stakes (41).

Company E believes that exploring the financial situation of the family will give an indication of how sensible the applicant has been in the past about providing for his wife and children, if he has any.

Like Company D, the Company E interviewer particularly notes what income the applicant has from a source other than his salary or commission, or if he has enough money in reserve for emergencies such as unemployment or an extended period of a few months of sickness in the family, the adequacy of his insurance coverage, if he has debts other than the usual monthly bills and whether or not he is living beyond his means. The interviewer is also interested in what the applicant has been earning and how much he thinks he must earn, and would he be able to live on what he could expect to receive from the job for which he is being interviewed.

Desire for Position or Field. The applicant's desire for the position for which he is being interviewed is of enough interest to five companies that they include it in their selection procedure (38).

Company B requires that the applicant must have a sincere desire to get into that particular type of business (tire and rubber industry) and

to work for Company B. Its interviewers believe that the applicant's first and second choice of position desired will immediately indicate whether he is seeking a position in line with his previous experience or whether he is simply "job shopping" (32).

In interviewing and appraising the potential of the applicant, the Company C interviewer considers whether he appears to really want the opportunity to work for Company C and will stick with it if selected (40).

After the first interview (on the campus), the Company C interviewer tells those applicants who are going to be considered further that "they will hear from the company in a reasonable period of time. Then their reaction is noted" (40). No explanation is given for this but it may be to test the strength of their interest in securing employment with Company C in particular or, like Company B interviewers, whether they are playing the field and "job shopping."

Company D interviewers are looking for applicants who are interested in sales work as a career, so that is one of the facts they try to learn about each applicant, and his reasons as well as why he particularly wants to work for the company (41). Since Company D plans to go to the expense of giving new employees training in the company conducted schools, its interviewers make every effort to get men whom they think will go through the training course and stay with the company (41).

Company E interviewers introduce a new note into investigating why an applicant wants to work for it in particular. If the applicant will have to reduce his standard of living in order to take the sales position available with Company E, the interviewer satisfies himself that the

applicant really wants to come with the company and has a plausible reason for taking a position paying less money. The Company E interviewer also wants to know if the applicant is really interested in sales work as a career or if he is just interested in getting selling experience which might be useful to him in another position or just why he is applying for a selling job. Having the applicant give a verbal description of a previous selling job, the Company E interviewer notes whether or not the applicant shows any enthusiasm for the work described (38).

Company G thinks that enthusiasm for the job in hand is one of the prime ingredients of success. And, since some applicants will be reluctant to state a preference for a certain kind of work (job), fearing that it may exclude him from employment, the interviewer tries to bring out and note if the man has a definite interest in a given field and has focused his education so that it fits him for that choice (5). This is an opposite view from that taken by Companies B, C and E, who are suspicious that applicants may be "job shopping" or just interested in getting selling experience.

Company D more or less concurs with Company G in this viewpoint. It tells its interviewers to take into consideration that but few men, in planning their futures, select the selling of certain lines as a vocational objective (41).

Health and Physical Condition. Health is an important enough qualification for five of the companies, Company A, B, C, D, and E, to mention it specifically in their selection procedure, but all of the companies provide a space on their application blanks for routine questions on health.

While only three of the Companies, Company A, B and C, state specifically that they require a physical examination, it is a probability that they all include one in the final stages of their employment procedure.

Company A requires a physical examination and it feels that a salesman, in order to succeed best on the job, should be vigorous and in good health (25).

Company B specifies that an applicant must be strong physically with unlimited capacity for work. As a result, the interviewer checks the applicant's application blank to see if he has any chronic ailments which might be detrimental if assigned to the position under consideration. Prior to the medical examination the interviewer makes reasonably sure that the applicant can meet the physical requirements of the job in question (32).

Company B wants only people in good physical condition and with only one exception, they must be approved by the company medical examiner "accepted for any work." That exception is handicapped or disabled returning Company B veterans, to whom Company B has a moral obligation to reinstate in the kind of job they can handle. If the applicant is rejected as not being "accepted for any work" he is not employed. In the case of veterans whom the medical examiner cannot certify for "any work," the interviewer refers the applicant to the district office giving full details (32). When interviewing a veteran the Company B interviewer learns the character of his discharge. If he was discharged for medical reasons the interviewer determines their severity and makes sure that the applicant can be certified by the examiner for "any work". While

Company B feels a moral obligation to all returned veterans, apparently the only disabled veterans they hire are those who are former Company B employees. An up-to-date medical report is required and a prospect must pass the company's physical requirements as of the day he reports to work. However, the company does not list any specific physical requirements for its interviewers to check on, other than listing health as one of the items for the interviewer to note (40).

Company C believes that a sound body is one of the essentials for a person's mental ability and personality to be at their best. Its interviewers notice if there are any apparent indications of ailments and question the applicant about his past and present health. Specific information desired includes how much time he has lost in the past five years due to illness; if he passed his last physical examinations and if he would be willing to submit to such an examination again (41).

Health is another important factor in selecting salesmen, Company E interviewers are told, and the importance of good health should not be underestimated. Even though an applicant may have the characteristics of a salesman he must also have the stamina needed for the stresses and strains of selling positions. It is therefore imperative that both the interviewer and the applicant be as sure as possible that the applicant's health will not prevent him from doing a good job (38).

Specific information the interviewer wants is whether or not the applicant requires any special medical treatments or whether his health has any bearing on geographical preference; also if there has been any serious illness or injury which might prevent the applicant from performing his job. The amount of time he has lost due to illness during

the time he has been working is noted and this is also checked with his former employers. The interviewer is likewise interested in whether or not the applicant has been accustomed to being on his feet all day and if he is used to walking a great deal. His spare time activities are noted to determine if he has been reasonably athletic. The interviewer notices if the applicant appears hesitant at all after he has been given a good idea of the pavement pounding and stair climbing that is part of his job. The interviewer rates the applicant on "whether or not he appears to have the requisite health and stamina for the job" (38).

Six of the seven companies which furnished application blanks for this study include questions about the applicant's military service on their applications. Of these, only two pay more than just a slight notice as to whether or not the applicant had seen military service. These two companies, Company F and H, are the only ones included in the study in which the company's main office plays very little part in the selection procedure. Company H asks eight questions in four different categories while Company F asks seventeen questions about twelve phases of the applicant's military service. From the nature of the questions asked, there is no apparent significance between the fact that Company H handles a large number of Government contracts and its being interested in an applicant's military record.

Only three of the companies mention the applicant's military service in their selection procedure and one of these, Company G, just asks for his rank at discharge (5). The other two companies, B and D, are interested in how the applicant's military service might help him as an employee (32,41).

As reported previously under physical condition and health, Company B feels it has a moral obligation to veterans and makes an exception in its physical condition requirements for its own returned veterans; also it instructs its interviewers to examine the character of the veteran's discharge closely. In addition Company B instructs its interviewers to review the applicant's military service briefly. He may have been performing duties which will be of value in the position the interviewer has open (32).

Policy in Hiring Veterans. In regard to hiring veterans who are not former employees, the Company B interviewer is warned that it is important that he be doubly sure he is making the right selection and that the chances of keeping them on the payroll is reasonably good. Turnover of this type of personnel may react unfavorably toward the manager (interviewer) in his local community as well as to the company. "A resignation or 'quit' may easily be twisted into a 'discharge' when told by a disgruntled or disabled veteran," they are told (32).

Company D feels itself obligated to give first consideration to former employees who return from the armed services and are seeking re-employment. This company believes former privates in civil life are now equipped, through war training, to undertake work of greater importance in the business world. As a result of this belief, it looks upon its former employees, as well as thousands of others released from war service, as offering outstanding opportunities for rehabilitating a sales organization.

"Many of these men received intensive training which in some cases was equivalent to a college education. The ex-service man applicant has contacted a great number of men under all kinds of conditions, frequently involving long hours of exhaustive work. Some had experienced grave responsibilities" (41).

From the available information it appears that each company studied is looking for applicants who have the combination of qualifications which the company has found will best fit an applicant to be a satisfactory and successful employee in the particular job for which he is being interviewed.

Specific requirements as well as emphasis placed on the same qualifications will vary among the companies depending upon needs, the particular type of product sold and type of selling. But there is more variation in emphasis placed on the qualifications than there is in nature of the qualifications, according to the material at hand.

Character, initiative and experience are of interest to seven of the companies; age, sales personality and education receive close attention from six companies but not necessarily the same six with each characteristic. Physical condition, desire for position, ability to get along with others, appearance and financial condition each are of particular interest to five companies. Other qualifications receive less uniform interest.

Some of the companies indicate little interest in a qualification other than just noticing it, while other companies will give it major attention. Conversely, some qualification that one of the latter companies all but ignored will be of particular interest to one of the other companies, because this qualification is more necessary for its particular type of product and type of selling.

While there is a uniform objective among all the companies--the selection of men with selling potential and securing the "right man for the job"--the greatest similarity found in qualifications desired was not in



two companies selling the same product but in two quite different products, office equipment and industrial chemicals. Getting loyal, compatible employees who are satisfied with their jobs is the keynote of both companies' basic qualifications.

#### Variations in Basic Technique

All of the participating companies use the interview as a means of determining which applicants have the particular pattern of qualifications desired.

Five of the companies, B, C, D, E, and G, have an interview guide or at least "a manual of selection procedure" for the use of interviewers. Of the other three, A, F, and H, who do not have any documentary material on interviewing and selection as such, one of them, Company F, depends upon the managers of its branch offices to select their own personnel and expresses few desires on the qualifications for employees; another, Company H, leaves interviewing and selecting to the personnel departments of the individual sales divisions who better know their particular sales problems and employment requirements. Since the personnel department at the head office does the interviewing and selecting for Company A, it would have less need than the other companies in the study to issue interview and selection material.

Of the five companies which do use instructional material in their selection process, three of them, B, E, and G, use a prescribed step-by-step procedure while the other two, C and D, leave the order of the interview to the interviewer's dictates.

Of the same five companies, three of them, Companies B, D, and E, have the interviewing and hiring done by the manager, either district or

store or other key personnel, or at least the official under whom the new employee will work. But the Company B and Company D interviewers usually have their selections checked by some other pivotal people in the organization in order to secure additional reactions and opinions.

Salesmen for Company D are selected by the local manager who usually seeks the additional judgment of the regional or divisional managers under whom the salesmen will work (41). Company B recommends that several persons participate in the interview. The Company E manager's decision on hiring is final (32,28).

Of the other two companies which use instructional material, one of them, the recruiting and selection for Company C is decentralized and carried on in the field under the direction of district managers and supervisors (40). In some cases a representative of the official does the actual interviewing but where possible, the company uses the highest official it can (40). In any event, if the interviewer is the district supervisor or representative of the district manager, his decision is reviewed by the district manager, after an interview with him and his staff in the district offices (40).

Interviewing and selection by the other company using a guide, Company G, is done by a separate department, the Department of Technical Personnel, under the direction of the Technical Personnel Manager, which is located in the head office but has representatives in each plant and which coordinates the recruiting, hiring and placing of all technical personnel for the entire company G organization (5). (Because of the nature of their work, their product and necessary background, Company G salesmen are considered technical personnel.) The local representatives

are not staff members but they cooperate with the Technical Personnel Manager.

Company C, Company D and Company G all use the multiple or panel interview in which several persons take part. Company C accomplishes this by having those applicants selected by the interviewer on the campus called in to the district office for an additional interview by the district manager and/or his staff when the first interview was conducted by the district supervisor or a representative of the district manager (40). Company D has the manager and the district manager participate in the interview. Each fills out a qualifications appraisal chart (34) and then their respective conclusions are discussed (41). Company G's regular practice is to have each applicant interviewed by from three to eight persons in sales, advertising, public relations and the personnel department, with the interviewers taking different approaches with different persons as personalities differ (5). Each man makes a comment on a memorandum of interview form (23) stating his opinion of the candidate (5).

Type of Interview. Company G believes that the centralization of placement eliminates two divisions of the same company negotiating with the same individual and that it assures a diversity of education and geographical background in men employed throughout the company (5).

In order to get the advantage of cumulative opinion from several persons to decide whether or not an applicant will be hired, Company G uses the panel interview. Therefore no applicant can be considered as one man's choice (5). It believes that a variety of personalities in the interview is essential to insure a variety of applicants being chosen

because one man cannot help but consistently choose a type he considers ideal. A number of different men can make a less personal and more objective choice. Also, Company G, being quite public relations minded, "feels that it is hardly fair to let an applicant talk to only one or two men to represent the entire Company G" (5). Also, it enables the representatives to secure good personnel that may not be needed at the plant or office where the interview takes place, but are needed in some other part of the organization.

Some sort of a preliminary interview is conducted by four of the companies, Companies B, C, D, and E. Although it is not spoken of as such in its interview material, Company G might be considered to have a preliminary interview in that the applicant is interviewed by several persons and if the first person finds the applicant unsuitable beyond any doubt he can dismiss him and save the other interviewers' time. This seems to be one of the purposes of the preliminary interview by the other four companies.

Company B uses the preliminary interview to determine if the applicant can meet the ten basic standards as outlined in the Basic Selection Standards form and the specific requirements of the job as outlined in the store job specifications form. He first judges the applicant's appearance, voice and expression, and experience. If the applicant is not satisfactory in these three qualities he is to be courteously dismissed. But if he is satisfactory the interviewer has him complete the application form and talks to him again, letting the applicant do most of the talking and the interviewer interjecting searching questions here and there. Unless his answers are favorable and unless the applicant measures up to

the following four qualities, the interview is terminated. These qualities are: the ability to present himself, self confidence, ability to make friends, and mental alertness (32).

If the preliminary interview and/or questionnaire indicates further interest, the applicant is gotten to fill out a Company B application form (2). In Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey another form is used because of restrictive regulations under the Fair Employment Practices Law (32). Company G is the only other company that also uses another application form for these three states (5).

Company B says of its application form:

"There is a considerable amount of factual data in the completed Company B application and it is the interviewer's most valuable employment aid, provided he learns to use it in conducting the interview" (32,2).

After the applicant fills out the application form all the information is reviewed in logical sequence. "Too often clues which would be important in the acceptance or rejection of an applicant are entirely missed by the failure to review all the data available on the employment application," Company B interviewers are warned (32).

The Company B interviewer always double checks his final decisions on applicants about whom he is enthusiastic. If possible he has other pivotal people in the organization interview applicants in order to supply additional reactions and opinions (32).

Immediately after the interview and while impressions are still fresh in his mind, the interviewer evaluates the various factors and rates the applicant using the Company B Interviewing Guide for Salesmen and comes to a decision. If other store pivotal personnel interview the applicant, they too fill out the Interviewing Guide for Salesmen form (32). If the applicant is employed, the form becomes a permanent part of his personnel folder.

After the interviewer has decided the applicant is qualified, he describes the job he has open, outlining duties, hours of work, and the income. He makes sure that the applicant understands the exact nature of the job (32).

Company C recruiters contact many schools each spring to get new personnel. This is done through a faculty member contact if possible, but if none is known to the recruiter, the head of the School of Business Administration is contacted. But in either case, the recruiter depends pretty heavily on the contact when appraising candidates.

The Company C field manager in charge of recruiting is allowed to contact schools in addition to those on the list furnished by the company personnel office. And the number of schools contacted each year is constantly being enlarged (40).

The Company C recruiting procedure is carried out in four major steps (40):

- a. Campus interviewing and screening.
- b. After each campus interview and screening the results are reported to the Director of Sales Training at the head office.
- c. Top prospects are interviewed and a Retail Credit and Personal History Report is made out.
- d. Outstanding prospects are called to the District Manager's office within two weeks after the campus interview for multiple interviews by at least three members of the District Office staff.

In arranging the date and time to interview on the campus, the faculty representative is contacted by letter stating that the interviewer wishes to interview graduating seniors at that school on the date and time named, subject to confirmation by the faculty contact. This letter is sent far enough in advance for a satisfactory date to be established and confirmed

by letter (40). Under separate cover a number of booklets containing general information about the company and some application blanks are sent to the faculty representative. This material is mailed so that it will be received by the college no more than two weeks before the interviewer is scheduled to be on the college campus. He is asked to make the booklets available to those who wish to be interviewed so that they will have some advance information regarding Company C. Also, the faculty contact is told that it will greatly aid if those who wish consideration and an interview will have one of the application forms completed at the time of the interview (40,11). The interviewer takes a small supply of the information booklets and a good quantity of application blanks with him to each college.

Company C believes that it is more satisfactory for the interviewer to first hold a group meeting lasting about a half hour, in which the company's plan, purpose and program is explained. There he tells the group of applicants the purpose of the meeting and something about Company C, the products it manufactures, its distribution methods, problems, facilities, the plan for those selected, the training period, etc., the number of employees and a little of the Company C history.

This is followed by personal interviews to last between 15 and 30 minutes, never more or less. The amount of time that can be devoted to each interview depends on the number of applicants.

Company C interviewers allow a full day for interviewing on each campus. If necessary, two days consecutively or a second day later on are used (40).

In the representative's discussion on the campus he tries to give complete information on salary during and after the initial training

period and answer any questions regarding the company, plan, program and kind of work that might be of interest to those wishing consideration (40).

After the initial interview the interviewer fills out a Record of Preliminary Interview blank to record impressions on each person interviewed who interests him, as well as securing a complete application form, with pictures, if possible. The interviewer controls the interview and keeps the applicant on the subject by asking questions or making remarks, giving the applicant a chance to talk and express himself and provide the desired information about himself. Companies B, D, and E give their interviewers nearly the same instructions along this line.

The manner in which the interview blank is filled out is also used in determining facts about the applicant. The interviewer notes whether it is filled out completely and carefully or in a slipshod manner. Company C pays more attention to this than any other company.

If possible the interviewer obtains additional information from the faculty contact on those applicants interviewed in which he is interested. At the end of each day's interviewing, the most favorable prospects are discussed with the faculty representative and his opinion gotten.

After finishing his interviews at each school the Company C interviewer tries to discuss with, and secure the faculty contact's opinion on, the applicants who impressed him in the interviews. Later the faculty contact is notified of the company's final decision as soon as the information is available.

Those applicants who are not going to be considered are courteously informed of that fact and those whom are to be considered are further told that they will hear from the company in a reasonable period of time. Then their reaction is noted. (This may be done to test the strength of



their interest in securing employment with Company C in particular, or whether they are playing the field and "job shopping.")

Employment offers are made by the Company C district manager direct to the prospect either at the time of the multiple interviews or within two weeks, and an acceptance in writing is desired in either case. Applicants can be employed or report for work any time between February 15 and September 1, and of course it will be after graduation (40).

When an employment offer is made at the time of the multiple interviews the interviewer reports to the personnel department at the home office the name of each person accepting and the date he is reporting to the district office for training. This report is made far enough ahead of the starting time so that a training schedule can be forwarded.

After the district manager has made his selection or selections, he makes an employment offer direct to the prospect. Upon acceptance of the offer the district manager completes arrangements as to the date and time he wants him to report to the district office for employment and training. This time and date will be after graduation.

Exceptional prospects not selected for the 23-week training group are referred to the district for consideration to be employed direct for current job openings when the man is available. (40).

After the campus interview is completed at each school, the Company C representative sends the sales training department at the head office a record of the interviewing at that school, covering the following: name of school, date, number of group meetings, number personally interviewed, number of favorable prospects for the different branches of sales (if interviewing for several), number referred to the district for interviews and any comments that the interviewer may have in which he thinks the

head office would be interested. A form is provided for this purpose (40).

Applications of the exceptional prospects from other sections of the country who wish consideration outside of the interviewer's district, along with all records and results of his interview are also forwarded at this time. (40).

After a campus interview, applications, files and results of the interviews of the most favorable prospects are turned over to the district manager of the branch for which the men were interviewed.

References are checked and a personal history secured on each one, then the district manager decides on the basis of the above information and the interviewer's report, which applicant he wants to come to the district office for interviews with him and his staff (40).

After the district manager has established an interview date when he will be in the office, as well as other interviewers available for that purpose, the prospect is notified direct of the date he is to appear for further interview, with the district paying transportation expense to the interviewing point and return if necessary, this is charged to the same department, in the head office to which salaries and allowable expenses connected with selection and training are charged.

Employment papers are completed including an up-to-date medical report and forwarded to the head office personnel department (40). Care is taken to make sure that the prospect understands he must pass the company's physical requirements as of the day he reports for work (40).

While it is desired to select candidates in such a manner that they will be trained and receive their first job assignments in the geographical area where they are going to school, and that they call home, occasionally a prospect whose home is in another area will desire employment

near his home area. If the prospect is an outstanding man in the opinion of the Field Manager of the district in which he was interviewed, the prospect's file can be referred along with his "Record of Preliminary Interview" (40,36), the interviewer's opinions and recommendations, the result of the interview and the manager's recommendations to the district manager of the district in which the prospect's home area is located, and in which the applicant desires to be employed. The receiving district manager is expected to acknowledge the application to the applicant even if not interested in giving him consideration.

Type of Interview. For the information and assistance of each Company G interviewer, a Memorandum of Interview is prepared on each applicant (5,23). There are twelve sections to the memorandum, each numbered consecutively. Items one to eight are preliminary facts filled out by the representative of the Technical Personnel Department. These items provide each interviewer with background and factual information on the applicant which saves the interviewer's time and prevents the applicant being asked the same questions repeatedly. The items provide a starting point for the interviewer to begin drawing out the information he needs to judge the man he is interviewing.

The foundation of the judgment as to whether or not a man is to be a member of the Company G organization is the cumulative effect of what the interviewer reports under items nine to twelve of the Memorandum of Interview, and a sound judgment based on these items is the most important part of his task. These include personal characteristics, impressions gained by the interviewer, his comments on items and ratings and his definite vote on whether or not he thinks the man is suitable for hiring and and the type of work for which he thinks the applicant is best fitted.

Since each interviewer is looked on as the judgment and eyes of the Technical Personnel Department, the observations must be reported on a form that lends itself to comparison. Great care is taken in evaluating the memorandums, and each interviewer is a strong link in the chain.

The interviewer is urged to consider the interview in retrospect. It is a twig that may indicate the way a tree will bend.

Item eleven is the summary of evidence about the applicant gained from each portion of the interview. He has been judged on a basis that can be compared with other interviewers' judgments--the final decision will be based on these findings and compared with the experience of Company G in the past. There are certain specific traits the interviewer finds will lead him to make certain ratings. He is to consider these specifically, briefly, and above all, inclusively. The interview may bring to light certain points that another interviewer will miss completely. He is to give the people who must act on his report the benefit of his knowledge and experience, and the time spent conducting the interview. The interviewer's report should be compact but complete, avoiding vagueness, so that his comments can be correlated with those of other interviewers at a glance.

Item eleven is also the interviewer's personalized judgment, the factors on which he bases the specific decision he fills in under item twelve. It is of utmost importance that his judgment be impartial, detailed, and supported by all the facts of experience, character, and personality which he has carefully unearthed in his interview.

The Company G interviewer's comments in item eleven are reasoning based on observation. It must be complete enough to support the interviewer's ratings of the applicants and broad and detailed enough to compare with the other interviewers' judgments. No pertinent fact is too

small to be omitted from his comment. What he may note as incidental might corroborate facts discovered in great profusion by other interviewers. And on the other hand, an observation he alone considers relatively unimportant might enhance the applicant's possibilities for employment and direct his placement in a most profitable way to himself and the company.

The summary judgments a Company G interviewer makes of an applicant should be supported by facts and be consistent with all facts discovered. In this the necessity of impartiality is paramount, since a biased approach might lead to the reporting only of biased facts. There is no easy rule-of-thumb method by means of which an interviewer can assure himself of having an open mind. It is expected that each applicant will receive the benefits of an impartial judgment--expected because of the type of men given the responsibility of carrying out the interview (5).

While some details of experience may remain in the interviewer's mind for months and even years, many of them slip away, almost as fast as the minutes. For this reason, the Company G interviewer is urged to fill out the memorandum of the interview immediately upon completion of the applicant's visit or even while talking. This will give the Technical Personnel Department, usually far removed, full benefit of the interviewer's efforts while facts are fresh in his mind.

Also, matters of employment are usually pressing, needing immediate attention. Company G believes it is of little use to have approved a man of exceptional character only to have him hired by another company who is in a position to make a fast decision. Something of the Golden Rule enters here too. If a man has no chance of employment with Company G, it is hardly fair to keep him waiting for an answer. His time may be better employed in seeking another connection (5).

After Company E secures applicants the following factors of its selection plan are used in trying to place the right man on the right job (38):

1. Preliminary interview.
2. Main interview.
3. Personal visit.
4. Followup or interview on another day.
5. Aptitude test.

The proper use of these factors or tools is thought to be of great assistance to the interviewer in the selection process.

The preliminary interview opens with the first screening, in which the interviewer talks to the applicant in a friendly manner for a few minutes in order to put him at ease and tell whether he has the basic qualifications and is interested in the job described before he has him fill out the application blank (38).

If he is obviously unqualified, the applicant is not asked to fill out the application, but if he impresses the interviewer as being good potential material, the applicant is gotten to fill out the application blank.

After the blank has been completed and before proceeding with the interview, the Company E interviewer examines it carefully to see that it has been entirely filled out, noting if all the applicant's years of schooling and employment are accounted for or if there are gaps; and if the information given agrees with what he told briefly in the preliminary interview. If any irregularities appear they are settled to the interviewer's satisfaction before the applicant is seriously considered any further (38).

Before conducting the main interview the Company E interviewer knows in advance what he is looking for and also how he is going to get information of sufficient worth to enable him to decide whether or not the

applicant should be employed as a Company E salesman. His decision is not based upon objective detailed data, such as would appear on the application blank. It will be based upon subjective data, the impression the applicant makes upon exploration of his qualifications (38).

In order to assist its interviewer in conducting the interview, Company E has devised a pattern or guide of interview technique making use of a representative group of interview questions. This guide is divided into seven main sections, six of which are designed to bring responses from the applicant which will enable the interviewer to decide on his possibilities for employment. Certain leading questions and statements are suggested as means of directing the conversation of the applicant to the subject the interviewer wishes to talk about. Also included are a number of other questions directed to the interviewer as reminders of the information to be gotten from an interview and help him appraise the information he gets. Company E does not consider these "reminders" as all-inclusive and the interviewer can add to them or subtract from them as he sees fit (38).

The Company E interviewer is supposed to become completely familiar with the Interview Guide so that he will not have to use it as a crutch during the interview and refer to it only when necessary to do so if his memory needs jogging.

After completing each phase of the interview the Company E interviewer rates the applicant by selecting one of the five answers which he thinks best fits the applicant according to the information gotten therein. An example of this is the occasion when the interviewer is drawing his conclusions on whether or not the applicant has the ability to sell for Company E, and how satisfactory he will be. The prescribed rating answers

from which the interviewer selects one on this occasion are as follows:

5	4	3
No, will not make the grade	Marginal; might get by	Would do an adequate job
2	1	
Would be a good salesman	Would be highly effective	

Company E believes that the questions and statements it suggests to its interviewers as "conversation directors" may be just what is needed to start the applicant talking and perhaps he will keep talking until the interviewer has answers to all the "reminders." It is felt more probable, however, that the interviewer will have to supplement the "conversation directors" from time to time with other comments and questions to guide the applicant to the answers to the reminders (38).

The Company E Interview Guide is intended to prevent the interview from being haphazard and spread out in all directions, channeling the conversation into the main subjects to be considered, thereby enabling the interviewer to come to his own conclusions in a logical manner (38). Also, adherence to the Interview Guide is believed to remove the tendency to concentrate on one factor about an applicant which happens to interest or please the interviewer to the extent that he might tend to overlook some "red flags" or danger signals which would have come to light if he had conducted a thorough interview (38).

Company E uses a rather unusual tactic in its interviewer's efforts to learn an applicant's sales talk, enthusiasm and sincerity. If the applicant has had previous selling experience the interviewer asks him to pretend he, the interviewer, is a prospective customer of the applicant's previous employer and have the applicant "try to make a sale." After listening to his presentation, the interviewer decides to what degree he



thinks the applicant has the ability to sell for Company E and how satisfactory he would be.

After completion of the interview the applicant is rated on the degree to which he seems to be mentally alert and quick to see a point, according to the over-all impression gained by the interviewer during the entire interview.

These ratings consist of: (5) Definitely dull; (4) Somewhat slow; (3) Holds his own; (2) Bright, good impression; and (1) Very alert, "on his toes" (38).

At the conclusion of the interview the applicant is left with the thought that during the next day or so both he and the interviewer can be weighing the possibility of joining forces and that he should communicate with the interviewer on a definite day shortly thereafter.

Company E believes that immediately following the interview and not in the presence of the applicant is the best time for the interviewer to review with the Interview Guide what he has learned from the applicant during the entire interview and decide if the applicant is a strong possibility for the job, and whether to check on his references (38).

While the interviewer was formulating impressions of the applicant during the interview, Company E believes that this thoughtful consideration afterwards may make the contents of his remarks meaningful. Therefore, the interviewer goes back over the Interview Guide, reading a section and then recalling the applicant's responses concerning the section while the interview is still fresh in his mind. Then he reads the section again and answers the questions directed to him. Finally at the end of the section, he chooses the one answer (of the five given answers) which most accurately signifies his impression. The five answers are numbered

on the Interview Guide and also on the Interview Impression Record where they are repeated. The interviewer records his choice on the Interview Impression Record by circling the appropriate answer number. (Not until at this stage in the interviewing procedure does the interviewer mark the rating.) On the lines set aside for "comments" he records any thoughts he thinks will be useful in making his appraisal of the applicant.

After this has been done he proceeds to the next sections and follows the same procedure. When the Interview Impression Record has been completed he has a record for the sales position he has available. As a guide to use in evaluating the decisions on the seven sections, the applicant is given further consideration only if the interviewer has selected (38):

- (1) Answers No. 1 or 2 on all seven sections, or
- (2) Answers No. 1 or 2 on at least four sections and the answer No. 3 on no more than three sections.

After the interviewer has interviewed a number of applicants for the particular position available and is trying to narrow down his choice to a select few to whom he will give the aptitude test, he eliminates those applicants with the largest number of Number three answers (38).

At this point in the Company E interview process the applicant's references are checked as the interviewer views him as a strong possibility for employment.

If the Company E interviewer receives satisfactory information regarding the applicant's background, or information requiring his further questioning, the interviewer invites him in for a second interview. This is to afford the interviewer opportunity of delving into anything that he might consider questionable, and the applicant another opportunity to ask questions about the company and the position for which he is being

considered. Moreover, this interview is believed to enable the two of them to become better acquainted and consequently more equipped with impressions necessary for formulating judgments (38).

This follow-up interview or "Interview on Another Day" as it is listed in the Company E Interview Guide, is divided into the seven sections patterned in the Interview Guide and which were followed in the previous interview. Without making the conversation repetitious the interviewer discusses with the applicant the subject matter of the previous interview. Company E believes this may automatically lead the applicant to bring up things he had not mentioned before. The interviewer may have some special lead he wishes to explore and the applicant's additional remarks may throw a different light on the subject. At the conclusion of this talk the interviewer reviews it with the Interview Guide and makes out a second Interview Impression Record form to see if he is still in agreement with his first impression (38).

The Company E interviewer is in no hurry to make a decision to employ the applicant at this point or sooner. He feels he has a life-time opportunity available for the right man. The person Company E wants must be keen enough to see the possibilities for advancement in position and income and be willing to wait until the final decision has been made (38).

When the interviewer has decided by means of all the previous information gathering that the applicant would make a good Company E salesman, and that he would employ the applicant without any test scores, he gives the applicant the Company E battery of aptitude tests, the company's final screening device. Although the experience of Company E and others supports the advisability of employing only those who have been recommended by aptitude test findings, it is not mandatory. Company E feels that aptitude testing is no substitute for managerial discretion and

decision. It feels that if the manager-interviewer has recruited and selected carefully before testing, his chances of obtaining recommended applicants are far better than if he had relied entirely upon aptitude testing. It urges its interviewers to remember that "the aptitude test report cannot supply him with a good man. He must produce the good man to be tested" (38).

Use of Tests, Questionnaires. Three of the companies use psychological and aptitude tests in their selection procedure, Companies A, E and H. Of the other five, one, Company B, does have a very intensive interview system, which together with a very careful check of an applicant's record, it feels assures it of proper selection (15). In addition it uses company-designed questionnaires. Company C has been experimenting for a considerable period of time to validate certain tests and determine if it is possible to establish a test program which might be of aid in selection (39). However, when interviewing on the college campus it does try to secure scores and results of any aptitude or psychological tests, ratings and analysis that might have been given the applicant on scholastic performance and achievement (40). Company D depends upon its list of qualifications and standards about which it says:

"However, the company is confident that using this 'yardstick' will result in much greater success in employing the right kind of salesman than relying upon 'hit or miss' methods which have no well defined purpose or uniformity" (41).

Company G has under study several psychological tests which the head of the personnel department says might have merit as a tool in the selection of sales personnel (5). At the present time the basis of the company's selection procedure is the multiple interview. Company F made an analyzation of its employment files to determine characteristics which

distinguish success from failure and found little beyond getting some evidence that men who saved some money and were employed when they apply for a job with them are more apt to be successful. They plan to employ a specialist and try again (51). Results of this latter analyzation are not available.

Company H uses tests in selection where it is thought they will provide information difficult to obtain through the personal interview or biological background (20). However, where tests are used, they are undergoing careful validation. Since this validation takes considerable time, especially as related to salesmen, Company H believes that it would be unwise to divulge the names of the tests. However, the type of test employed will depend on the factors to be considered. The sales job has so many variables--calibre of the people, geographical location, etc.--that it takes a longer time to establish the necessary criteria. The tests that they have used, in general cover mental ability, interest factors, language facility, etc. In addition, they have developed a biographical interest blank which refers to personal history items (20).

The tests used by Company H may be secured through some of the various testing services or it may be necessary for the company to prepare them specifically for their purpose (19).

Company A uses several aptitude tests. The Wonderlic Personality Test is used for an IQ rating, and an Occupational Interest Inventory of the company's own devising is used as an activity check list to indicate the applicant's interests in various areas such as people, figures, things and ideas (25).

As a temperament test Company A uses the Johnson Temperament Analysis

(25). In order to best utilize the findings from this test and others, it has devised a pattern from its sales organization which gives a profile against which such character traits as emotional stability, cordiality, aggressiveness, consideration of others, objectiveness, impulsiveness, and liking for activity are measured (25).

As the fifth and final step of its selection plan, Company E uses a six-set battery of aptitude tests prepared for it by the Klein Institute For Aptitude Testing (9). The battery is set up to take a minimum of four hours for completion and consists of (9):

1. Otis Mental Ability Test
2. Bernrueter Personality Inventory
3. George Washington University Social Intelligence Test
4. Strong Vocational Interest Blank
5. How Perfect is Your Sales Sense? (Klein Institute)
6. Washburne Social Adjustment Inventory

The applicant is given the Otis Employment Test in the interviewer's office so that the time allowance can be held to exactly twenty minutes. There is no time limit on the remaining portions of the test battery, which may be filled out either in the interviewer's office or wherever the applicant desires. Company E gives the applicant this choice so that he may take the opportunity of working on the test amid surroundings that are conducive to his natural behavior. This is believed important because a person's surroundings can have an influence on his test responses. The Company E interviewer makes sure that the surroundings of his office offer no distractions to the applicant when taking any of the tests while there (38).

If the applicant chooses to take the complete battery of tests in the interviewer's office, he is given the Otis Test after he has taken one of the others. This is to enable him to become accustomed to the idea of answering test questions before he takes the timed Otis. If the applicant

chooses to take the remaining tests elsewhere, he takes the Otis after completing the others (38).

After the applicant completes the Company E aptitude test battery, it is forwarded to the personnel department in the home office, which in turn forwards it to the Klein Institute for Scoring, which also prepared the battery of tests. Within two days the Klein Institute gives the personnel department a brief, telephoned report and follows up several days later with a complete written report. The personnel department mails a copy of the brief telephoned report to the branch office where the interview was held and the test given and, upon receipt of the complete report, mails it to the branch office also. The branch manager or interviewer, basing his decision on the information received through the interview and tests, decides whether or not he would hire the applicant (38).

Company E says of its standards devised from testing its own salesmen:

"It is known that the answers of other persons in their occupations also follow their own occupational patterns. Therefore, when a man is either recommended or not recommended for the position of a Company E salesman, the interviewer knows that the recommendation has been based upon the conformity or nonconformity of the applicant's test responses with the responses of salesmen in general as well as Company E salesmen" (38).

Company A does not say who scores its battery of tests and neither does Company H, but when it uses tests available through some of the various testing services it probably has the service score the tests. But when it finds it necessary to prepare a test specifically for its purpose the scoring is probably done by its personnel department.

Company H does not reveal how it utilizes the test results from its tests and Company A says only that it has devised a pattern from its

sales organization against which applicants' score profile is measured.

None of the companies giving tests use the test results as the deciding factor. Company A says it believes that the tests are a good aid to raw judgment in the consideration of an applicant, but do not use them as the single deciding factor any more than they do the examination, interview or application (25). Company H also uses the tests only to supplement other selection devices and they are used under controlled conditions where it is possible to validate the results (19). Company G, which says that it is using no tests at the present time but is studying some, must be experimenting because it adds to its denial that if it does use tests it does not use them as a deciding factor (5).

Company E goes into more detail in reporting its regard and use of test results. Its interviewers are told that the applicant is to be tested only if the interviewer can honestly answer "yes" to the question, "If I had no aptitude test report on this man, would I hire him?" So, to it the aptitude test report is merely one factor in the selection process and cannot be relied upon for the complete job of selection. However, in more than seventy-five percent of the cases the managers act in conformity with the recommendations of the aptitude test reports in deciding whether or not to hire (9).

Generally the Company E managers (interviewers) are in agreement that the reports are a definite aid to them not only in selecting new employees but also in training them after hiring (9).

After a large enough pool of applicants has been recruited and his choice narrowed down to several candidates whose aptitude test reports have been received, the interviewer is ready to make his selection based on all the selection factors (38).



The rating sheets of the aptitude test report indicate in terms of percentiles how the applicant's mental ability, personality portrait and sales aptitude compare with salesmen in general (38).

The average range for any given trait for Company E salesmen is between the twenty-fifth and seventy-fifth percentile on the salesman-in-general scale. This does not necessarily mean that an applicant who ranks below the twenty-fifth or above the seventy-fifth on any one trait is undesirable, because his percentile rating on any one trait must be considered in relation to his total test pattern and to the job for which he is applying. All of these factors and deviations are considered in the aptitude test report. The interviewer is also made aware of the fact that unlike school grades or marks on school tests, the highest ratings do not always mean the most desirable scores, since a salesman can be too much of a social mixer, too tactful, and have too much of a sense of humor--all in excess of the specifications for the best salesman (38).

The Company A test profile on which the applicant's composite pattern of several tests is measured against that of the average Company A salesman shows the following percentile rating for the average Company salesman: emotional stability, seventy-five; industry, eighty-five; cordiality, sixty-five; sympathy, thirty-two; objectivity, sixty-five; domination, eighty; self mastery, fifty-five; and mental ability, seventy (45). This shows the average Company A salesman to be an industrious, aggressive, rather hard boiled, unsympathetic person.

The Company E test battery is given in order to determine the suitability of an applicant for a sales position. The test report serves as an aid in answering the question, "Has he got what it takes to be a

Company B salesman" Company B says of its testing procedure:

"Although interviews and checking of background may disclose a great amount about a person, it is not possible for even the most skilled interviewer to ask as many questions regarding so many different subjects as those included in the battery of tests (38). Therefore these tests save the interviewer time and, in addition, give him a psychological interpretation of the applicant's responses to test questions which can be used not only in the selection process but also in the training of men after hiring" (38).

While it uses no psychological tests, Company B does use company-designed questionnaires to determine the extent of the applicant's aptitude for the position in mind. In some instances the questionnaire may be an aid in determining an applicant's aggressiveness, business information, personal interests and general knowledge which an applicant should have in order to do a satisfactory job (32).

Only one questionnaire is indicated for salesmen and that is a Retail Sales Questionnaire (37), a no time limit questionnaire consisting of twenty-five questions on which the subject (applicant) circles the correct one of four proposed answers (32).

After the applicant has been briefly interviewed the questionnaire is given to help the interviewer and save him time. Also, the answers are helpful in determining an applicant's strong and weak points so that if he is employed emphasis can be placed on the things in which he is weak (32).

In the following explanation of the Company B Retail Sales Questionnaire obvious practices have been omitted--such as having the interviewer see that the applicant is placed where he can fill in the application blank and questionnaire without interruption, and impressing upon him the importance of completing or designating an answer for each question to secure a true grade when scoring (32). The manner in which the applicant

completes the application and questionnaire is closely observed. The applicant is told this as part of the instructions given him before he starts to fill in the questionnaire. On the front of each questionnaire is a complete explanation and several sample questions. The applicant is given every assistance. A complete set of scoring stencils are kept on hand by the interviewer and when an applicant returns his application blank and questionnaire the interviewer grades it immediately. During the final phases of the interview, the interviewer may wish to discuss with him the questions he has missed. The stencils are cut and made in such a manner that the correct answer is shown by placing the stencil beside the various questions. The proper answer will appear along side the symbol given on the scoring stencil. Incorrect items are marked. The number right in each section and the total number right are entered in the scoring section of the questionnaire. Then the interviewer computes the percentage of correct questions for the entire total in order to secure the final grade.

While Company C does not administer any tests itself it does secure any available records on scholastic performance, ratings by faculty or personality traits, aptitude test analysis, and campus activity achievements that are available at the school where it is interviewing, and which will help its interviewers in making the selection (40).

Source of Supply of Applicants. Seven of the eight companies included in this survey make note of source of supply of applicants. Their evidenced interest varies as does the source to which they look for worthwhile material. But while each company's particular need influences the sources to which it looks, there are several general sources looked to

and means used by all of the companies.

Five of the companies, A, C, E, G and H, offer little information on this part of their selection programs, while Companies B and D go to greater lengths in their sources of supply and explaining their reasons. Perhaps the reason Company C does not offer much on this part of recruiting is that the material in this study is on their campus recruiting and interviewing program--which limits their specific sources of raw material to only one main source.

Since Company A requires applicants to have five or six years of experience it probably depends primarily on salesmen from allied lines to those manufactured by Company A wanting to better themselves through an employment change. Also, while it does not provide this information, it probably looks to its own personnel for employees to advance from minor, semi-selling jobs to full scale sales jobs, perhaps bringing in men from one of its ninety-three branch offices.

The above supposition is based on the fact that Company A is the only one of the seven companies which show an interest in sources of new employees that does not mention specifically a company policy of looking first to its own organization for sales material.

In addition to its own ranks of employees who appear to have the potential, Company E recruits applicants by means of newspaper advertisements, employment agencies, schools and associations. Company B and D also use newspaper advertisements as well as including the other three sources.

Company G looks to colleges and universities primarily for new

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employees because of the educational requirements necessary for young men brought into the organization who are expected to work their way up through the company (46).

In instances where a man experienced in a specialized field is needed, and cannot be found within the company, it may be necessary for Company G to bring a new man into a high supervisory position. There, exceptions are made to the company policy of elevating members of the organization into the better positions wherever possible. This exception is made after a thorough study of available personnel within the organization, and only if a suitable candidate is not found (46).

An unusual feature of Company G's selection practices is that to avoid favoritism it never employs a relative of anyone holding a key position within the company (46).

Because of the large number of sales branches of various sales divisions of Company H's ten industrial departments and their individual selling problems, the particular needs and thereby sources of new employees will vary. But there are three general courses which are usually pursued throughout the Company H organization in the selection of salesmen. They are chosen from applicants with previous sales experience, selected from company personnel who show aptitude for selling or are hired directly from college applicants with the necessary qualifications who are desirous of entering the sales field (19).

The particular phase of Company G's selection procedure dealt with in this study is its campus interviewing efforts. So for this the company looks to graduating seniors in business administration and engineers desirous of entering the sales field. Also, it looks to key faculty,

its campus representatives, to steer graduating seniors to the Company C interviewers, and candidates interviewed in some area other than their home area but who want job assignments in their home area.

Company B is particularly strong in its belief that the primary source of supply for new employees should be within the organization. It feels that one of its managers can't afford to develop discontent and lack of confidence among his employees by hiring from outside the organization when he has promotable people in his own personnel. When a new position or vacancy occurs, Company B urges the person doing the hiring to first see if there is some qualified employee within his organization to whom the new position represents a promotion. If the vacancy represents a promotable position and the manager has no qualified employee in the present organization, he should ask himself why. One of the major responsibilities of the Company B manager is to build his organization so that promotable material is available to fill open positions. When necessary to employ someone outside the organization, time and effort is to be taken to hire the best man that can be found for the job. Proper selection of new employees is the manager's first problem (32).

If possible, Company B likes to hire local people because they provide a source of additional business in that most customers prefer to do business with local people. So, the Company B store manager, who does most of the hiring for Company B stores, or at least is the first person to contact prospective employees, is urged to be constantly on the alert to "discover" outstanding individuals in the community who can be employed and developed for greater responsibility. These people are quietly investigated and cultivated, so that if a vacancy occurs the manager is not forced to make an emergency replacement but will have several qualified

applicants in his applicant file from which to choose (32).

Other normal sources of applications looked to by Company B in addition to its own applicant files are:

1. Former employees who have returned from military service within the previous ninety days and have not been employed elsewhere in the meantime.
2. Acquaintances of present employees.
3. Business acquaintances and salesmen.
4. YMCA, church, and veterans organizations.
5. Local schools and technical colleges.
6. Colleges, universities, and alumni organizations.
7. Business and civic organizations--banks, etc.
8. Employment agencies.
9. Newspaper want ads.

With the exception of the certain provisions on number one, this group of applicant sources also is looked to by Company D (41).

One feature of the Company B selection methods, and which does not appear in that of any other company included in this study, is the building of a file of applications of good prospects for future use. Included in here are even the applications of persons who had applied for a job with Company B and not hired. These applications are filed alphabetically by job classifications, and referred to first when an opening occurs in order to quickly find qualified applicants. About January 1 all applications are reviewed and those a year old are destroyed (32).

Not all these sources of supply are good in all localities. In some towns one will be better and in other towns another. Any or all of them are to be used as labor conditions dictate.

Company B will not negotiate with persons employed by another rubber company and another singular practice of this company's selection technique is that it will not employ former employees who have resigned, regardless of the reason (32). Apparently, then, employees who leave the company's employ to enter the armed forces are exceptions to this company rule or else they are given a leave of absence.

In many instances, applicants will be attracted without any solicitation. Often these individuals represent good material for present and future use. In any case, every applicant is entitled to prompt and courteous treatment, and an interview. And each applicant is an opportunity for the interviewer to build good will for his store and Company B whether or not he offers employment (32).

Company D believes that the successful sales of products requires the services of high-grade salesmen. Only those candidates who possess the basic qualifications for development are considered. It further believes that it is a costly waste of time and effort to experiment with mediocre talent (41).

It believes that the first and probably the most important requisite in the development of an effective sales organization is selecting men who possess qualifications which can be developed through training for successful selling. As a result of this view, Company D pays particular attention to the various sources from which applicants might be secured. The procedures adopted at each Company D office will depend largely upon the ingenuity, ability and contacts of the manager and his assistants (41).

In approaching this problem Company D starts with the premise that it is seeking applicants who are interested in sales work as a career



and who have a sound basic knowledge particularly fitting them to sell a certain type of product, acquired through actual experience or training.

Present Company D salesmen have come from different sources. In the main they were familiar with office records and systems and, therefore, have a sound foundation for sales training (41).

The Company D corporation like Company B feels itself obligated to give first consideration to former employees who return from the armed services and seek re-employment (41). Their former employees, as well as thousands of other released from war service, impress the company as offering outstanding opportunities for rehabilitating a sales organization. Many of them received intensive training which in some cases was equivalent to a college education. They had contacted a great number of men under all kinds of conditions, frequently involving long hours of exhaustive work. Some had experienced grave responsibilities. "Many former privates in civil life are now equipped, through war training, to undertake work of greater importance in the business world" (41), interviewers are told.

These war veterans may be contacted through Officer Service Clubs, the American Legion, The Veterans of Foreign Wars, one of the other veteran's organizations which have sprung up since World War II, the U. S. Veterans Bureau, the U. S. Employment Service, and Rehabilitation Service of the U. S. Veterans Administration.

Company D believes that consideration should be given to capable persons now in the organization who can qualify in sales work. Also to be considered are former salesmen, now in the company's employ in another capacity of a temporary nature or who left the company during the World War II or present war emergency, provided they have the necessary qualifications. Service men who are selected and trained for ultimate transfer to the sales department are excellent candidates for salesmen since a

knowledge of the mechanics of Company D machines helps materially (41).

Whenever a man is employed for any job in a branch office, his qualifications are carefully reviewed, not only as they relate to the immediate vacancy but also as they relate to other jobs in the promotion program. Company D believes that by training the new employee for each successive advancement, practically all of the personnel problems will be solved and at the same time a well-balanced and loyal organization developed (41).

Consideration of college men is strongly recommended by the Company D head office.

Every employee in each Company D branch office, including the manager, is aware of the type of man wanted and is on the alert always for competent candidates for the company's employment.

Company D believes that another good source of potential office machine salesmen are junior accountants who did not complete their studies for Certified Public Accountant or failed to meet all their requirements. Their studies offer an excellent background especially for accounting machine sales work. In cases where they possess selling instincts, they are good prospects for sales work (41).

These men can be contacted through employment departments of accounting schools and colleges, accounting societies and associations, and firms engaged in public accounting work where many of them are temporarily employed to obtain required practical experience.

The United States Employment Service is considered by Company D as being a good source of technical and professional employee material and private employment agencies are a source of other worthy applicants who are seeking connections with a company like Company D (41).

Check on References. All eight of the participating companies include space on their application blanks for listing references but only five of them, Companies A, B, C, D, and E, provided further information.

Of the five companies which mention checking the applicant's references, two of them, Companies C and D only mention it as one of the latter stages of their selection process. Company C lists it as one of the determining factors used by the district manager on which to base his decision as to which applicant he wants to come to the district office for interviews with him and his staff (40). Company D includes a satisfactory report from his references and with the bonding company as being necessary factors on which the applicant's employment is contingent (29).

Company A must take a sales applicant pretty much as he is and depends to a large extent on a verification of facts given by the applicant during the interview and on his application. It accomplishes this through having a careful study made of the applicant's background from both a business and moral standpoint through an outside investigation agency. Thus Company A ascertains that what the applicant has told it on the application and in the interview is in agreement with what former employers and other references specify (25).

The district manager's office checks the references of Company C applicants and the head office takes care of this detail for Company D (40,29). Company B and Company E interviewers personally check on their applicant's references, but differ in their method. Company B interviewers prefer to use a form letter or telephone while Company E interviewers prefer to obtain the information by means of a personal call if at all possible (32,38).

The Company B interviewer makes a check of the applicant's past employers for a period of ten years using a form letter for out-of-town references. But the company believes that it is usually more satisfactory to check local references by telephone as former employers will generally give more detailed and accurate statements of their experience with the applicant through conversation rather than inquiry letter.

Former employers are asked direct questions such as the following: How long did the applicant work for you? How and under what circumstances did he leave? What specifically were his duties? What was his salary? Is he a plugger on the job, or easy going, lacking drive? Is he a spender, or did he live within his means? How easy or difficult is he to handle? Is he dependable and cooperative? Will he take disciplining in the proper spirit? Would you re-employ? If not, why not (32)?

The interviewer immediately records the result of any verbal checkup as each personnel folder must contain a complete check of references. In so far as possible the information given by former employers is directly quoted, with special care taken to record correctly the name and position of the individual contacted (32).

Company B believes that personal references are usually of little value, except to show social status, as it is obvious an applicant will not knowingly give the name of a reference who might speak unfavorably about him. But it does feel that there are many cases where it may be beneficial to also check these (32).

The Company E check of an applicant's references is made between the main interview and the follow-up interview only if the interviewer decides to give the applicant further consideration. The applicant's previous employers and if apropos, his supervisors, are checked in person

by the interviewer provided the former employers are in or near his city. In case of an out-of-town employer located near one of the Company E branch offices, the manager of that branch can be requested to check in person for the interviewer. In case of an out-of-town employer located at considerable distance away from the nearest Company E branch office, the interviewer attempts to secure information by means of a letter (38).

Company E believes as does Company B that the main value of securing information about the applicant's work experience during a personal visit is that pertinent data are more apt to be obtained in that manner than in a letter since many employers will not put things in writing. Also, an "inside story" might be obtained which would help in the second interview or possibly later on the job if the man is hired (38).

This company also believes that the tone of voice a former supervisor uses when talking about an applicant may be significant. If he is hesitant and several other former employers are also, the interviewer should be careful. On the other hand, the interviewers are to remember that a former supervisor may have "had it in" for the applicant. If this is evidenced in one case out of three the Company E interviewer makes an attempt to obtain both sides of the story and all factors are weighed carefully. But if more than one indicates a desire to "tear the man apart," the interviewer should proceed cautiously (38).

Company E does not overlook any chances to utilize all possible opportunities in that it considers a personal visit to a previous employer as having the additional benefits of being another contact for the interviewer, who usually is a branch manager, and perhaps the sale of Company E products (38).

In checking with former employers Company E desires the following information concerning the applicant (38):

1. Dates of employment.
2. Description of job.
3. How long on that job.
4. Circumstances surrounding termination of employment.
5. Would employer re-employ? If not, why not?
6. Was he honest?
7. Was he dependable?
8. Was he cooperative?
9. Did he have initiative?
10. What was his attitude?
11. How was his attendance?
12. How was his health?
13. Did any of his outside activities interfere with his work?  
If so, what activity or activities?

Public Relations. More companies are becoming public relations minded and five of the companies in this study, Companies B, C, D, E and G include some public relations efforts in their interviewing practices. Three of them, Companies B, D and E, do not mention public relations and make no special effort as such. But their uniform practice of kindness in handling applicants they do not hire has a public relations tone even though it is more of an effort to avoid creating ill will than a positive effort to create good will in the applicant.

Interviewers of the other two companies are conscious of their public relations opportunities and utilize them.

Both Company B and Company E interviewers courteously dismiss an applicant as soon as they realize that he is not the kind of person they desire and give him no encouragement, nor does the interviewer tell him that he "will let him know" (32). Neither does Company E allow an obviously unqualified applicant to go away "living in hopes" (38). The interviewer explains to him that his qualifications could not be used to the best advantage on the job that the interviewer has to fill (38). Also, while most of the companies present the company in a good light to an applicant after the interviewer has decided that the applicant is a

likely prospect, Company E interviewers early in the interview give the applicant an objective and accurate account of a typical territory job and present the company to them in a good light.

Before rejecting an applicant the Company D interviewer carefully reviews his qualifications to determine if he is eligible for sales work in some division other than the one for which he was originally interviewed. If the applicant cannot be considered for any job the interviewer is kind and sympathetic, thanking the interviewee for calling and trying to get him to leave with a friendly feeling of good will. Company D tells its interviewers: "His future connections may place him in a position where he can purchase or influence the purchase of the company's products" (41).

Company C representatives are conscious of their public relations opportunities arising from the fact that they are representatives of their company and are the company to many people. Even when rejecting an applicant they try to leave him with a friendly feeling for the company. The impressions the representative makes are just as important as the impressions that he strives for on any of his other business contacts. The active goodwill of the faculty contacts toward him and his company can be a major factor in securing the outstanding prospects not only at that time but in the future. The students' acceptance of him will help create interest in the company for business as well as recruiting purposes. Those interviewed are customers or prospective customers as well as prospects for employment. "Make your contacts produce results in public relations," Company C representatives are told (40).

Interviewers are also urged to be on time for their appointments or notify the faculty contact if delayed by transportation difficulties.

In some cases the student is being excused from class or taking time off from a campus job to meet the representative.

Likewise the representative pays the faculty representative the courtesy after the campus interview of notifying him of what applicants were chosen and what disposition is made of their applications, whether they are sent to some other area or what.

Company C believes that the initial recruiting and screening of applicants is such an important task that it should be assigned to those who are not only the most capable in interviewing and selecting material with potential, but also have the manner, poise, and vocabulary to make the best impression.

Also, this attitude is carried out by the Company C interviewers on the college campus. There, believing that students are not going to be favorably impressed unless the company representative looks and acts the part, Company D interviewers make it a point to be well groomed and as the radio commercial urges, "Look sharp, feel sharp, be sharp" (40).

Company C interviewers are instructed to be prepared to give information to those inquiring about fields other than the one for which they are interviewing, and to refer the applicant to the interviewers for that particular field, or refer them to the proper person in the main office. This company is the only one in this study following this particular practice, probably because it is the only one whose campus interviewing technique is particularly studied.

District managers of the various fields in the same market are urged to contact one another when making up their college itinerary to determine if the other field is looking for recruits and wants to accompany him (or his representatives) to the college or to have some prospects referred



to him. If both divisions are doing college recruiting, they work together, agreeing on place, time and date so that two representatives of the company will not appear before the same people at different times, which might give those contacted the impression that Company G is not well organized and the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing (40).

Friendly, informal, cordial interviewing is an important part of the Company G policy, part of its all-over aim, which is to make friends for Company G (5).

Company G believes that since public relations begins at home, the attitude of a significant portion of the public is influenced in an interview and thousands of interviews take place throughout the Company G organization each year, giving the interviewers thousands of opportunities to make friends for Company G.

The Company G interviewer tries to make a good impression on the interviewee as the desired information is gathered about him. The only way that the interviewee can judge the company is by what he sees, how he is treated, and how he is made to feel. The three to eight men the applicant talks with when interviewed by Company G are the company's show window to him. The impression he gets will stay with him for many years, whether he is hired by the company or whether he goes with another company and tells people what he knows of Company G.

Company G interviewers make an effort to see that few applicants whom they interview receive an impression of haste and the majority never know how the interview cuts into the busy day of the man who sits down for an informal chat (5). And further, Company G feels it is to the interviewer's credit and a valuable implement to the company's public

relations efforts that applicants cannot tell, from the friendly manner of the interviewer, whether he is making a good or bad impression. This last is considered important because the applicants who are refused employment are not made to feel that the company's refusal is due to their own inadequacy, but to factors outside the company's control. In this way Company G does not put itself into the position of passing judgment on men who may fit into some other organization (5).

Since Company G believes that its success as a business enterprise is due entirely to the calibre of the men who make up the organization, it tries to get exceptional men and then sell them on Company G, but not oversell them. But this "selling" effort on the part of the interviewer is never wasted. It is part and parcel of the company's public relations policy to make friends in every community where there is a plant, a sales office or a single customer (5).

Distinctive Practices. The companies included in this study which report their interviewing technique have about the same practices in setting up the interview. The attitude they show is verbalized by Company G which says, "The approach is half the interview" (5). All of them try to make the applicant comfortable in the interviewer's presence, relaxed, so that he is in the frame of mind to tell all the little details the interviewer needs to know before he can decide if the man is suitable or unsuitable and the reason. Company G interviewers frequently conduct their conferences at some spot removed from their normal sphere of activity (5).

Company D adds a slightly different note to this with the attitude that the applicant's opinion of the interviewer and his conclusions will be influenced primarily by his reaction to the manner in which the interviewer conducts the interview (41). Therefore, in all Company D interviews,

the cardinal principle of "treat others as you would have others treat you." is practiced. The interviewer should be pleasant, kind, considerate, sympathetic, and friendly, so that the applicant may be at ease, taking a liking to the interviewer and freely answer his questions without any reservations (41).

Company B goes a little further than this in that it tells its interviewer to try to not be disturbed by constant interruptions of telephone calls and employees coming to his desk during the interview. By making sure that he has privacy, the interviewer can lessen the applicant's tendency to "freeze up" and to be uncommunicative. The interview is arranged so that the interviewer will have plenty of time.

Company E interviewers start the interview by asking a few questions such as, "What have you been doing?" to draw the applicant out and give him an opening to talk about himself. Also, it gives the interviewer a few facts about the applicant to enable him to decide if he wants to continue the interview and have the applicant fill out an application blank. If it appears that the applicant is unsuitable he is courteously dismissed without being gotten to needlessly fill out a long application blank (38). The applicant is not gotten to fill out the application blank until further along in the Company E interview when the interviewer frankly asks the applicant if he is interested in the job. If so he is gotten to fill out the application blank but if not interested the interview is terminated at that point (38).

Company D is in more of a hurry to have the application blank filled out because it feels that ordinarily the interviewer is in a much better position to intelligently question the applicant in detail when he has

available all of the general information revealed by the application form. Therefore, Company D instructs its interviewers to have the application form prepared when the applicant calls or immediately after a short preliminary interview. The latter procedure eliminates the application blank formality in all cases where the candidates are obviously unacceptable (41).

Other differences in the preliminary interviews of the eight participating companies are too insignificant to warrant mentioning.

Company H is the only company in this study which uses two different types of application blanks in its selection program. It uses the Application For Employment (1) for experienced personnel and the Qualification Record (35) is used for the inexperienced college graduate. In addition it maintains an Experience Record and History Card (12) on an employee following employment.

The Application For Employment includes the usual personal, family and educational data, plus military data including draft status, and employment data which includes space for the applicant to write in his own words his experience to correspond with positions and dates listed in his employment history. The Company H personnel department considers this a particularly important part of the application as their ability to evaluate the applicant's experience record depends largely upon the information furnished in this particular place (1).

Company A is the only company volunteering the efficiency of its interview and selection program. The others have been using the same basic techniques for several years, bringing them up to date as occasion demands. As an example, Company H, which has in the past few years gotten

a large amount of Government business, including in its application a question relative to subversive organizations and the interest shown in returning veterans by Company B and Company D.

Company A says that the results of its employment and brief specialized training program have been good and the company is well pleased with it (25).

Another distinctive practice, one that appears in the interview method on only one company, is that the Company D interviewer differs with the applicant occasionally in order to test his aggressiveness, perseverance, sincerity, enthusiasm and honesty of convictions (4).

Company B considers it very important that the front page of the Veteran Record form be completed at the time the Company B veteran is being interviewed for reinstatement, and marked "Company B Veteran." This form must be filled out by the interviewer, not the veteran, and gives many additional facts about the veteran's service experience and training which will aid in determining where he will best fit (32,49).

The Veteran Record form is completed on a non-Company B veteran only when he is being employed directly after release from the armed forces, that is, within 90 days after discharge from the armed forces or service hospital and who has not been employed elsewhere subsequent to such discharge. For the non-Company B veteran who applies for a job under the conditions above, the form is completed at the time of the interview to assist the interviewer in determining his qualifications for a job. If the non-Company B applicant is subsequently not employed, the form is destroyed, but if he is employed, the form is marked "Veteran" (32).

Those veterans employed who do not come up under either of the above categories are not included in the special veteran employment procedure but are considered as any other civilian applicant (32).

The Veteran Record form, properly marked for both Company B and non-Company B veterans, is sent to the District Office attached to the payroll cards and other employment papers. Later it is returned to the local manager by the district office for a 30-day, 60-day, six-month and one-year progress report on the veteran, which must be completed and returned to the district office (32).

No study was made beyond the offer of employment to the applicant and his acceptance. Bonding the new employee, orienting him in the company routine, training practices, etc., are disregarded and not included in this study.

### Summary of Variations in Basic Technique

Variations in the basic techniques of the participating eight companies as a result of their particular objectives are rather small when considering how much material each of the programs is designed to secure and the similarity of their lists of desired qualifications.

All of the companies use an interview as a means of screening applicants in order to find those who fit the interviewing company's needs.

Five of the companies use an interview guide of some sort in order to assist the interviewers in obtaining all the information they need in order to make an intelligent decision. Without the interview guide many of the interviews would become mechanical question and answer situations. Or, on the other hand, they might lapse into a haphazard unorganized piece of conversation with first the interviewer and then the interviewee sidetracking the other into subjects unrelated to the matter at hand--determination of the applicant's fitness for the position.

Interviewing is done by the personnel department for one company. Another company has a special department to do all interviewing and hiring for the entire organization. Four of the companies have the interviewing and hiring done by the local manager, with two of them suggesting that additional persons participate. Another company leaves the interviewing and selection to the personnel departments of its various sales divisions and the other company depends on the district managers and their representatives to carry on a decentralized program in the field.

Two of the companies use a step-by-step interview and selection program. Of these, one program is a five-point program including three

interviews. The other one is a two-interview program as are the programs of two of the other three which use an interview guide. The fifth program of this group uses from three to eight interviews in its effort to secure the right man for the right job.

Three of the companies use psychological and aptitude tests in their selection procedure, another company uses a very intensive interview system in addition to a company-designed questionnaire and a careful check of the applicant's record. Another company, which uses no tests, makes an effort to secure results on any tests which have been given its applicants. One company has under study several tests.

Two companies feel obligated to re-hire former employees who have returned from the armed forces.

Five of the companies include some public relations efforts in their selection and interview procedure; two of them make a decided effort along this line.

Each company has its own distinctive action or attitude such as not hiring relatives of key personnel to starting an argument with the applicant to see if he can "take it."

Interviewers for seven of the companies make subjective appraisals based on objective and subjective information. The eighth company's interviewers make an objective decision based on subjective and objective information.



## CONCLUSIONS

As for what type of man is required to achieve the greatest measure of success as a salesman, there is no all-inclusive answer because there is no absolute and infallible composite pattern for the all-round successful salesman.

This study shows that there are certain general qualities which a man must have but it is also a fact proved through years of experience that men with widely different backgrounds, personalities and characteristics have developed into successful and even outstanding salesmen of different products.

The qualities which make for successful selling on one branch of industry are much the same as for another with perhaps the greatest of these being the man's own desire and determination to succeed. However, there are some general qualities which seem to be considered essential in all cases. This was brought out in the foregoing study.

A man should present a pleasing appearance. He should be neat, dress in good taste, be well-groomed and have a personality that is pleasing to both his fellow workers and his prospective customers. The term "sales personality" is more than a figure of speech. Many people buy from one salesman in preference to another simply because of the way in which the two men affect them. He should have a family background that does not interfere with his work or affect his morale adversely. He should enjoy meeting people and being with them. If his hobbies, interests and experiences fit in with his work and are compatible with the

product he sells, that is an asset and a point in his favor.

From the standpoint of formal education, the more he has the more rapid his development is likely to be, other factors being equal. Five of the companies included in this survey all but make a college degree mandatory. In any event they weigh a college degree heavily in their appraisal of the applicant. The others require that new employees have at least a high school education and prefer that the younger, inexperienced applicant have had college training or a degree so long as it is along the lines adaptable to the product to be sold. None of the companies participating in this evaluation are interested in just "a degree." It goes without elaboration to state that a business machine manufacturer who does not require a college degree would rather have an employee with two years of college training in commercial subjects than a master's degree in animal husbandry. While the contrary might be true in the case of a feed manufacturer or some firm marketing a product having something in common with that branch of agriculture. With some companies the amount of formal education an experienced applicant has beyond a certain minimum may be less important than his natural aptitude, his desire to learn and what he has done with his working years.

A salesman must be an intelligent observer, able to recognize conditions in a customer's place of business or statement of his wants. He must be qualified to analyze the needs from the standpoint of how his product can improve a system and/or offer a solution to the customer's problem. Much of this can come through training and knowledge or experience, but there must definitely be an inherent mental alertness.

The salesman applicant of tomorrow should be fairly young. The desired ages among the companies in this survey are from twenty-one to forty, with most of the companies wanting men between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age.

He must have initiative--be a "self starter"--and be ambitious to grow and develop with his company, earning his way up the ladder.

Character, integrity, honesty and the ability to get along with others and with himself, are all necessary qualifications in the successful salesman, according to the desires of the companies included in this study.

The foregoing study has brought out the great importance attached to adequate experience and/or training for the job the applicant is seeking.

The salesman must of necessity be gregarious--he lives with people, he makes his living from people. He must sincerely like people.

Selling is being made a career which has capabilities of ranking with other professions as a means of service and personal opportunity.

\* Finding the "right man for the right job" is one of the largest tasks industry is facing today and it is slowly growing less of a problem. The "right" man can be found among the personnel of one's own company, in the ranks of already successful salesmen, or perhaps on the college campus--a man with the particular pattern of traits and aptitudes needed for selling any and all lines of products. He is being found and placed in the job for which he is best fitted.

...And this is being accomplished through applying the methods of industrial psychology to interview, selection and training techniques-- detecting by means of planned interviews and oftimes validated tests the presence of desired qualifications which have been learned through research and verified by experience, then giving a course of training tailor-made for the particular industry.

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In the interests of brevity, items in the following tables have been stated as briefly as possible and are self-explanatory.



## APPENDIX A, TABLE I

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO COMPANIES IN APPRAISING  
APPLICANT'S ABILITY TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Applicant's ability to get along with others	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Ability to make friends, Friendly		X						
Attitude toward former employers					X		X	
Is or would be, good influence on others					X		X	
Pleasant disposition							X	
Demeanor and manner				X	X		X	
Social effectiveness				X	X		X	
Activity record								
In school				X	X		X	
Since school				X	X		X	
Spare time activities now				X	X		X	
Spent alone or in group					X			
Recreational and social background					X		X	
Active member, officer in organizations					X		X	
How spends weekends								
With family					X			
Away from family					X			
Spare time activity he dwells on					X			
Is this activity considered desirable or undesirable for Company M salesman					X			
Test given to detect presence of compatibility	X				X			X
Personality	X	X	X	X	X		X	X

X is "yes" answer to whether or not company appraises this qualification or investigates this topic in interviewing procedure or gives a test to detect its presence.

APPENDIX B, TABLE II  
 INFORMATION SOUGHT OR PREFERENCES REGARDING  
 AGE QUALIFICATIONS

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Age preferences	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Age limit or specifications		X					X	
Retail sales and manager 21-36		X						
Outside salesman 25-40		X						
22-38				X				
22-30			X					
25 up							X	
Should be vigorous and in good health	X		X					
Young enough to accept new ideas but mature enough to handle job to which assigned		X						
Prefer young men but outstanding men not in that range not excluded			X		X	X		

X denotes "yes" answer.

## APPENDIX C, TABLE III

FEATURES CHECKED IN APPRAISING, OR POLICY OF COMPANY  
IN REGARD TO APPEARANCE OF APPLICANT

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Appearance		X		X	X		X	
Facial and body characteristics							X	
Expression		X						
Properly developed body							X	
Physique				X				
Good, well-balanced features							X	
Excessive ugliness							X	
Face and skin				X			X	
Neat or slovenly		X		X	X		X	
Careful grooming		X					X	
Hat, shoes				X				
Graceful coordinated movements							X	
(Carriage)				X			X	
Company G prefers to have attractive people for employees							X	
Includes with manner							X	
Includes with health				X	X			
Hair				X				
Shave				X				
Linen				X				
Nails							X	
Teeth				X			X	
Dress				X			X	

APPENDIX C, TABLE III (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Breath				X				
Physical condition		X			X			
Necktie and suit				X				
Looks like a "doer" instead of a "dreamer"			X					
Is the interviewer impressed with his appearance				X				
No mention of appearance specifically	X		X			X		
Composite effect							X	
Personal cleanliness							X	
Clothes are outward signs that point to character traits								X

X denotes "yes" answer.

## APPENDIX D, TABLE IV

INFORMATION SOUGHT OR METHODS USED  
IN APPRAISING CHARACTER OF APPLICANT

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Character	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Have check list	X							
High character traits			X	X				
Interested in moral background	X							
Want men with sound moral fibre		X						
Self discipline		X						
Good personal habits		X						
Honesty and sincerity (Earnestness)				X	X		X	
Enthusiasm				X	X			
Stability		X	X					
Any doubts about his being respectable						X		
Honest and aboveboard with honest desire to settle matters to mutual satis- faction								X
Appear dependable and trustworthy		X		X				
Loyalty		X						
Industry	X	X						
Appear efficient					X			
Is he leader or follower		X	X	X				
Attitude toward former employers as indication						X		

APPENDIX D, TABLE IV (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Dress							X	
Personal grooming as indication							X	
Do not like men who failed to graduate from college, especially if they dropped out after three years						X		
Nature of veteran discharge		X		X			X	
Loyalty to former employer					X			
Financial condition as indication of character traits					X			
Ability to get along with others	X	X		X	X		X	
Kind of man applicant wants to work for					X			
Manner in which application blank is filled out				X				
Worked way through school				X				

X denotes "yes" answer or that company notes this item in appraising the applicant's character.

## APPENDIX E, TABLE V

QUALIFICATIONS DESIRED AND INFORMATION SOUGHT IN APPRAISING  
APPLICANT'S DEMEANOR AND MANNER

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Demeanor and manner	X	X	X	X	X		X	
In which he answers questions				X			X	
Sincerity of manner							X	
Reasoning supported by								
Insight				X				
Judgment				X				
Initiative				X				
Imagination				X				
Self confidence				X				
Ability to think quickly				X				
Ability to analyze				X				
Ability to create				X				
Enthusiasm augmented by								
Optimistic viewpoint				X				
Cheerfulness				X				
Sense of humor				X			X	
Compatibility				X				
For work described				X	X			
For people					X			
Job at hand							X	
Tact				X				
Aggressive and tenacious with- out being domineering and offensive				X				
Seriousness					X		X	
Responsibility					X		X	
Emotional maturity					X		X	
Manner in which he Conducts self during interview				X			X	
Timid, meek or shy				X				

APPENDIX E, TABLE V (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Show evidence of inferiority complex				X				
Attitude toward last employer					X		X	
Impatient, irritable				X				
Reflect self respect and determination		X		X				
Alertness and intelligence		X		X	X			
Ability to present self		X	X	X	X			
Appear dependable and trustworthy		X						
Compatibility	X	X		X	X		X	
Does education stick out like sore thumb					X			
Test given to measure traits					X			

X denotes "yes" answer to qualification desired or information sought.



APPENDIX F, TABLE VI  
 INFORMATION SOUGHT IN APPRAISING  
 APPLICANT'S DESIRE FOR POSITION

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Desire for position		X	X	X	X		X	
Will he stick with it if selected			X	X	X			
Why want to work for particular company		X	X	X	X			
Why desire to get into particular type of business		X						
Why interested in sales work as career				X	X			
Does he have enthusiasm for work described					X		X	
Does first and second choice of job indicate if he is "job shopping"		X	X		X			

X denotes "yes" answer to whether company desires particular information.

## APPENDIX G, TABLE VII

INFORMATION SOUGHT OR METHODS USED IN APPRAISING  
EDUCATION OF APPLICANT

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Education	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
College degree almost mandatory			X	X	X		X	
College degree preferred	X	X					X	
At least high school education required	X	X					X	
Sufficiently strong enough to support additional training						X		
Appropriate education for job available						X	X	
Requirements vary according to division								X
Marks in school						X		
Field wanted to go into first year of school						X		
Was persistent enough to continue early aim						X		
Doesn't stick out like sore thumb						X		
College graduates with knowledge of business administration and office management					X			
Salesmanship and accounting preferred					X			
Taking courses now preparing for selling						X		
Has prepared for work other than sales						X		
If so, will it be helpful in selling						X		

APPENDIX G, TABLE VII (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
More schooling better gives advantage				X				
Too much or too little					X			
Shows good home environment				X				
Campus attainment and campus activity			X					
Does he try to avoid subject of self improvement					X			
Does not indicate lack of desire for self improvement					X			
Has been trying to improve self					X			
Attitude shown toward certain courses								X
Studies majored and excelled in				X				X
Studies desirable for understanding and utilization of product				X				
Activity during vacations				X	X			
Activity in school				X	X			X
If below thirty, a college graduate							X	
Knowledge of product's uses and possibilities acquired through experience and/or training				X				
Colleges attended								X
Degrees received			X					X
Major and minor subjects				X				X
Suitability of subjects to job applying for				X				

APPENDIX G, TABLE VII (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Grade average					X		X	
If wrote thesis, what							X	
Percent of college expenses earned			X	X				
Employment since graduation				X	X			
Applicant conscious of his edu- cation and make interviewer conscious of it						X		
Use of language as indication of whether or not education fits him to meet company's customers						X		
Judging from content of remarks, does education fit him to meet company's customers						X		
Test to determine qualification								X

X denotes "yes" answer or that information is sought and considered in appraising an applicant's education.

## APPENDIX H, TABLE VIII

INFORMATION SOUGHT AND REQUIREMENTS IN REGARD TO  
APPLICANT'S EXPERIENCE AND BUSINESS BACKGROUND

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Experience	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Requires five or six years	X							
Desires a particular type	X	X					X	
Retail clerking desired								
Yes		X						
No	X							
Prefers creative selling	X							
Requires sufficient for the job		X						
Jobs since leaving school		X		X	X			
Duties and salary					X			
Was there improvement at each change		X		X				
Money earned recently				X	X			
Frequent employment, poor risk			X	X				
Applicant too long on job, too settled				X				
Experience in use of product desired				X				
Use of working years		X		X		X		
Job he enjoyed most, why					X			
Job he enjoyed least, why					X			
Questionnaire used to detect presence of qualification		X			X			
Doesn't expect to find experienced applicants already equipped to sell certain line				X				
Some salesmen do not require as much training as others				X				X

APPENDIX H, TABLE VIII (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Desire applicant have knowledge of product in general				X				
Specification education and/or training desired				X	X		X	X
Considerable technical training needed							X	X
Must be trained salesman when hired	X							
How long on last job				X				
Desirable average five years				X				
Duties				X				
Sales made				X				
Enthusiasm shown for work described					X			
Why applying for selling job					X			
Why interested in sales work					X			
Description of best and worst boss					X			
Why left last job		X		X	X			

X denotes "yes" answer, practice of company or information sought in appraising an applicant's experience.

APPENDIX I, TABLE IX  
 INFORMATION SOUGHT AND PRACTICES IN REGARD TO  
 FINANCIAL CONDITION OF APPLICANT

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Financial condition		X	X	X	X	X		
Debts, extent and nature		X		X	X			
Recurring financial obligations in excess of immediate earning capacity		X		X	X			
Will not hire applicant with above		X		X				
Can he live on company rate during training			X					
Income required for current expenses				X	X			
Own home or other real estate				X				
Extent of mortgage obligation				X				
Investments				X	X			
Income from sources other than salary				X	X			
Insurance		X		X	X			
Life				X				
Health				X				
Accident				X				
Bank account				X	X			
Savings account		X		X	X	X		
Salaries during past five years				X	X			
Percentage of above saved				X				
Can applicant furnish bond				X				
Does applicant gamble, and for what stakes				X				

## APPENDIX I, TABLE IX (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Financial condition indicates character traits		X						
Reserve finances for emergency					X			

X denotes "yes" answer, information sought or practices of company in regard to appraising applicant's financial condition.



APPENDIX J, TABLE X  
 INFORMATION SOUGHT FROM APPLICANT TO APPRAISE  
 POSSIBLE JOB SATISFACTION

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Job satisfaction	X	X		X	X		X	X
Last place to work Opinion					X		X	
Would same complaint prevail with Company E					X			
Personality	X			X	X			X
Best boss and worst					X			
How long on jobs		X		X	X		X	
Why left last job		X		X	X			
Job enjoyed most, and why					X			
Job enjoyed least, and why					X			
Employment record checked		X		X	X		X	
Physical condition sufficient for job	X							
Temperament test given	X				X			X
Maturity					X			
How much of factor is geographic location					X		X	
What does family think of selling as career					X			
Financial condition		X	X	X	X			
Recurring financial obligations in excess of immediate earning capacity		X		X	X			
Compatibility		X		X	X		X	
Marriage situation		X		X	X			

X denotes "yes" answer or information desired from applicant in regard to his possibilities of being satisfied on a job.

## APPENDIX K, TABLE XI

## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION SOUGHT

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Intelligence tested					X			X
Well informed on general subjects, current topics; magazines applicant reads				X				
Does he drink too much				X	X			
Armed forces veteran								
Obligated to give first consideration		X		X				
Date and rank of discharge							X	
Nature of discharge		X						
May be useful in organization		X		X				
How much factor is geographic location			X		X			
Manner in which information blank filled out			X					
Promotable employees within organization given first choice		X	X	X	X		X	X
Kind of man applicant wants to work for					X			
Applicant's idea of traits and characteristics required in good salesman					X			
Part of college expenses earned			X					
Worked way through school				X				
If so, deserves extra credit and consideration				X				
Ability to supervise		X					X	
Ability to accept direction		X						

APPENDIX K, TABLE XI (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ability to sell .	X	X		X	X			
Leadership ability		X		X				

X denotes "yes" answer or that company investigates this item in appraising applicant.

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## APPENDIX I, TABLE XII

INFORMATION SOUGHT AND PRACTICES OF COMPANY REGARDING  
APPLICANT'S MARITAL STATUS AND DEPENDENTS

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Marital status		X	X	X	X		X	
Dependents		X	X	X	X		X	
Can he live on company rate during training			X					
Single or married				X			X	
Married men preferred				X				
Marriage situation		X		X	X			
Employer hiring married man is hiring "team"					X			
Part wife plays on "team"					X			
Wife's opinion of former job					X			
Wife's opinion of former employers					X			
Going through divorce or separation					X			
Emotional hazards that would be detrimental to best efforts as salesman					X			
Would applicant and wife move to another city if company offered promotion there					X			
How much of a factor is geographic location to wife					X			
"Real" home situation					X			
Any aspects of job with Company E wife would dislike					X			
Bearing on job satisfaction		X		X	X			

X denotes "yes" answer that company desires information or follows practice.

## APPENDIX M, TABLE XIII

INFORMATION TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN APPRAISING APPLICANT'S  
PAST ENVIRONMENT AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Past environment and family background		X	X	X	X			
Parents dependent for support				X				
What does father do for living and extent of success		X			X	X		
What do brothers and sisters do for a livelihood				X	X			
Where have parents lived from time to time		X		X	X			
Does he live in same neighborhood as parents					X			
How long has family lived there					X			
Is he greatly influenced by family					X			
What does family think of selling as career					X			
Bearing on job satisfaction					X			
Home address		X						
If college man, shows appreciation of college education by family and means to pay					X			

X denotes "yes" answer or that company desires information when appraising applicant's past environment and family background.



APPENDIX W, TABLE XIV (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Approach				X			X	
Appearance				X			X	
Manners				X			X	
Records of personality traits used (if available)			X					
Uses psychological tests	X				X			X

X designates "yes" answer that company considers trait in determining or uses method of appraising applicant's general personality.

## APPENDIX O, TABLE XV

INFORMATION SOUGHT, QUALIFICATIONS DESIRED OR PRACTICES USED  
IN DETERMINING APPLICANT'S PHYSICAL CONDITION

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Physical condition	X	X	X	X	X			
Strong physique with unlimited capacity for work		X						
Sound body and mind		X		X				
General health considered		X	X	X	X			
Is applicant sufficient for good job	X					X		
Can applicant be approved for "any work"		X						
General physical appearance		X				X		
Passed last physical					X			
Willing to take physical again					X			
Time lost last year due to illness					X			
Time lost last five years due to illness					X	X		
Veteran physical condition checked		X		X				
Any special medical treatment required						X		
Bearing of health on geographical preference						X		
Does spare time activity show him to be reasonably athletic						X		
Has he been accustomed to being on feet all day						X		
Used to walking great deal						X		



APPENDIX O, TABLE XV (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Health checked with former employer					X			
Gives physical examination	X	X	X	X				

X denotes "yes" answer that company is interested in information, uses practice, or desires qualification.

## APPENDIX P, TABLE XVI

PRACTICES FOLLOWED, INFORMATION SOUGHT OR DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS  
REGARDING APPLICANT'S SALES PERSONALITY

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Sales personality	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
No particular interest stated			X					
Uses personality tests	X				X			X
Character	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Voice and expression (Speech)		X		X	X			
Tone					X			
Good diction, grammar Pronunciation and Rhetoric				X	X			X
Checks use of Profanity				X				
Slang				X				
Unusual words				X				
Versatile vocabulary desired				X				
Ability to present self desired	X	X	X	X	X			
Does applicant have convincing demeanor			X	X				
Mental alertness (and intelligence)		X		X	X			
Ability to think quickly				X				
Ability to sell		X		X	X			
Ability to get along with others		X		X	X		X	
Emotional hazards in marriage situation					X			
Must earn own way in competition with others			X					

APPENDIX P, TABLE XVI (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Self confidence		X		X				
Speak with conviction		X						
And firmness		X		X				
In manner		X		X				
that commands respect		X						
Does applicant seem to like and enjoy meeting people, appear to be prejudiced for or against some people to extent it would be detri- mental to his selling for Company						X		
Job satisfaction	X		X	X	X			X
Can be visualized as salesman			X	X				
Could he be trained to do so				X				
Can he be visualized as admin- istrator			X	X				
Is the interviewer impressed with his manners, appearance, approach, personality					X			
Does he appear to have aptitude for hard, aggressive sustained sales work. Is his best interest in selling himself?						X		
Have qualifications which can be developed through training for successful selling						X		
Relationship of sales personality with health							X	
Is he businessman and executive type								X
Does he manifest selling instincts and interest in sales work as career					X	X		

APPENDIX P, TABLE XVI (Continued)

Item	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Does he have a keen and analytical mind and willing to invest constant effort in prolonged study required to attain perfection				X				
Would he enjoy sales work which involved analyzing problem and developing solution				X				
Enthusiasm and sincerity					X		X	
Can applicant gain liking and respect of customers					X		X	
Dress as indicator of personality trait							X	
General personality checked			X	X	X		X	

X denotes "yes" answer to whether or not company uses technique, is interested in qualification or follows practice stated.

## APPENDIX Q, TABLE XVII

TESTS USED BY COMPANIES AND HOW CHECKED  
(Also Questionnaires)

Tests	Company							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Tests	X				X			X
Psychological	X				X			X
Aptitude	X				X			X
Company designed								
Occupational Inventory	X							
<u>Wonderlic Personality</u>	X							
<u>Johnson Temperament Analysis</u>	X							
Unspecified tests for								
Mental ability								X
Language facility								X
Interest factors								X
<u>Otis Mental Ability</u>					X			
<u>Bernrueter Personality Inventory</u>					X			
<u>George Washington University Social Intelligence</u>					X			
<u>Strong Vocational Interest Blank</u>					X			
<u>Washburne Social Adjustment Inventory</u>					X			
<u>(Klein) How Perfect is your Sales Sense</u>					X			
Checked by								
Own testing service	X							X
Outside sources	X				X			X
<u>Retail sales questionnaire</u>			X					
Tests or questionnaire not deciding factor	X	X			X			X

X denotes "yes" answer to whether company employs test or questionnaire, or follows practice.

## APPENDIX R

## SAMPLE LETTER

(Date)

Personnel Manager  
The Blank Corporation  
123 Fourth Ave.  
Metropolis, Anystate

Dear Sir:

Would it be possible for me to secure some information concerning your program for selection and interviewing of salesmen?

The material would be used in a non-critical thesis I am writing for a Master's Degree in Industrial Psychology, "An Evaluation of The Methods of Selecting Salesmen in Three Major Industries."

In this, the methods and practices of each of the three representatives within each industry are analyzed and evaluated, then compared with those used by the other two representatives within that industry. Then an evaluation and comparison made between the three major industries selected.

After completion, a copy of the thesis will be bound and placed on the college library reference shelves for the use of any future student who might be interested in such an evaluation. All literature, manuals, or such from which I get material for the thesis, will be placed with the bound copy in the library, providing there are no objections from those who furnish me with the material.

I am particularly interested in any psychological tests which applicants are given and any comments which you will be willing to make as to how much credence you place in the test results and why you use a particular test or tests. I am likewise interested in your requirements as to age, education, interests, experience, special training, etc. which you desire or consider essential. Also, anything you might be able to let me have on your interview methods or technique, and any other information which you believe would assist me in my analysis and evaluation efforts.

Any information you can give me will be used as above and greatly appreciated. In the event that you charge your branch offices or interviewers for this material, I will gladly pay it.

Sincerely yours,

Lemuel D. Groom  
Department of Publications  
The Oklahoma A. & M. College

THESIS TITLE: Methods of Interviewing and Selecting Salesmen  
in Certain Industries

NAME OF AUTHOR: Lemuel D. Groom

THESIS ADVISER: Dr. Gordon D. Pred

The content and form have been checked and approved by the author and thesis adviser. "Instructions for Typing and Arranging the Thesis" are available in the Graduate School office. Changes or corrections in the thesis are not made by the Graduate School office or by any committee. The copies are sent to the bindery just as they are approved by the author and faculty adviser.

NAME OF TYPIST: Harold A. Coonrad