2013

Cultural Fit Wanted: A Content Analysis of Human Resource Generalist Job Advertisements

Kelli J. Chromey
South Dakota State University

Recommended Citation

Chromey, Kelli J., "Cultural Fit Wanted: A Content Analysis of Human Resource Generalist Job Advertisements" (2013). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 1393.
https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/etd/1393

CULTURAL FIT WANTED: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCE
GENERALIST JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

By:

Kelli J. Chromey

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the

Master of Science

Major in Communication Studies and Journalism

South Dakota State University

2013

CULTURAL FIT WANTED: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCE GENERALIST JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

This thesis is approved as a credible and independent investigation by a candidate

for the Master of Science degree and is acceptable for meeting the thesis requirements for

this degree. Acceptance of this thesis does not imply that the conclusions reached by the

candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department

Karla Hunter, Ph D.   Date
Assistant Professor
Thesis Advisor

Laurie Haleta, Ph.D   Date
Head, Department of Communication
Studies and Theatre

Dean, Graduate School   Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are so many people to thank that I am not even sure where to start. First, I would like to thank the members of my committee, Dr. Elizabeth Tolman, Professor J.D. Ackman and Dr. Mary Bowne, for their time, efforts and assistance with my thesis. A special thank you to Dr. Karla Hunter, my advisor, for her time, thoughts, and words of encouragement while making my thesis a done thesis. Without Dr. Hunter's continued support this process would have been much more difficult, and for that I give my deepest gratitude to her.

Next, I could not have been where I am today without my family. A big thank you needs to go to my mom, Diane, and my sisters Jodi, Ericka, and Tracy. The best brother-in-law a girl could as for, Ben and to my niece, Jaycie and my nephews, Maxwell, Cade, Nolan and Liam. Thank you for your understanding that I cannot always be around. My thesis was hard, but missing out on important moments has always been the hardest.

Thank you to my fellow graduate teaching assistants both past and present. Without my new found graduate school friends these past years would not have been as much fun and probably a lot more stressful. Val Kleinjan, Sarah Walker, Jade Metzger and Haley Vellinga, I appreciate your support, help studying, and all around good times we had together. I would also like to acknowledge Brian Gebhart, thank you. Kari Eliason, thanks for nothing, but also for keeping me in check and giving me a hard time. Also, thank you to Steph Buller for always having a smile in the office, a piece of advice when I needed it, giving me carbon paper, but mostly for listening.

In addition, a huge thanks to Dr. Joshua Westwick, our fearless leader. Dr. Westwick has supported my decisions, encouraged my future directions, and has made

this experience enjoyable. Dr. Westwick has inspired me to be the best teacher I can be and to "teach like I am loved". I am appreciative that not only do I get to call Dr. Westwick a mentor, but also a friend.

If it were not for the friendly folks at Cottonwood Coffee and Choco-Latte and the delicious beverages they serve, my thesis may not have been written and for that I am grateful.

Of course, I need to thank Erica Gutzmer (Quam, E) for everything that she has done for me. Our late night study sessions, shopping excursions, watching Ann Frank, taking naps, several hours of Jon and Kate Plus 8, random quotes and singing outburst are all some of my favorite memories from graduate school. Erica has picked me up when I was down, cheered me on, and was consistently there when I needed her. I really could not have done this without her. My friendships are one of my favorite takeaways from SDSU and especially my friendship with Erica Dawn.

And finally, thank you to The Quam Family. I am amazed by how just playing with Olivia or Lincoln could turn my worst days into better days. I appreciate all the free meals Ben has made for me and I so willingly ate. But of course, to my bestie, Amanda goes my biggest appreciation. I know there is nothing here that I could write that Amanda does not already know nor can I write anything that could even come close to detail the amount of gratitude I have for her generosity, kindness, support, care, and love. Going to school and living in the same town has been an amazing experience for our friendship and something that we can reminisce about for years to come. Thank you, Amanda, for everything!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

CULTURAL FIT WANTED: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RESOURCE
GENERALIST JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Kelli J Chromey

2013

This content analytic study explored organizational anticipatory socialization through job advertisements. Human Resource (HR) Generalist positions (n = 100) listed on the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) website between November 6, 2012, and January 28, 2013 were analyzed through seven quantitative categories (organizational goals, HR job descriptions, job skills and abilities, communication skills, website, mission/values, and word count/reading level). Results indicated that these listings generally included information such as company name and location, but rarely revealed organizational goals, missions and values. The addition or absence of a website, along with readability and word count were also included. Implications included the missed opportunity for companies to attract job applicants with the best fit for their organizations.

Chapter 1

Introduction

"Organizational membership can be anxiety producing even for those who are confident in their social and professional competence because so much is at stake" (Waldeck, Seibold, & Flanagin, 2004, p. 161). In addition to being anxiety producing, searching for a new job can be time consuming as well. However, newcomers to an organization are likely to feel especially apprehensive because, upon entering the organization, they are uncertain about their future performances, evaluations, organizational fit and social acceptance (Waldeck et al., 2004). "Becoming a member of an organization will upset the everyday order of even the most well-informed newcomer" (Van Maanen, 1978, p. 21).

Exacerbating the challenges of the job search and the apprehension produced by starting at a new organization is the fact that Americans hold, on average, 11 jobs during their careers (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2010). This translates to employee turnover of 3.4 percent, up from 3.2 percent in 2010. The turnover figure includes quits, layoffs and discharges, and other reasons that an employee may leave an organization. Quits are voluntary separations initiated by the employee and, therefore, the quits rate can serve as a measure of workers' willingness or ability to leave jobs. Employee layoffs and discharges are involuntary leaves initiated by the employer. Other examples of a person leaving an organization include retirement, death, disability, as well as transferring to another location within the same organization (BLS, 2013). In any case, turnover costs organizations time and money.

As cumbersome, intimidating and overwhelming as finding a new job can be for the individual, the challenges of finding new employees are amplified for the organization. According to Daniels (2004), "replacing someone who leaves generally costs four times that person's salary when recruitment and training cost are factored in" (para. 8). Also, according to a State of the Industry Report created by the American Society of Training and Development (2008), the training and development industry spends $134.39 billion per year on employee learning and development. Therefore, arguably, billions of dollars can be saved if organizations keep their employees longer. One way to increase employee longevity is by concentrating more effort on new employee socialization.

Considering the costly effects of high rates of employee turnover, as well as the high degree of new employee apprehension, it is important for both employers and employees to maintain good working relationships. Such relationships can be accomplished by employer efforts to help their employees fit into the organization. Generally, when employees are happy within an organization, they stay with the company, which is why keeping well balanced relationships is important to both parties (Waldeck et al., 2004).

Klein and Weaver (2000) report an employee's commitment to a given company, job involvement, and tenure are all directly related to how well he or she was socialized into the organization. These scholars studied orientation programs and found orientation attendance was significantly related to socialization and organizational commitment. They concluded "socialization is viewed as one of the primary mechanisms for

transmitting organizational culture" but they report finding it surprising "so few studies have examined how newcomers learn about organizational norms and values" (p. 61). Scholars can begin to fill this gap in research through studies that test the ways to enhance employee socialization and resultant job "fit."

The purpose of this study is to examine organizational anticipatory socialization through job advertisements. The researcher used Kaid & Wadsworth (1989) steps to a content analysis. Seven quantitative categories (organizational goals, HR job descriptions, job skills and abilities, communication skills, website, mission/values, and word count/reading level) from job advertisements that were examined. The findings can help reduce organizational turnover and assist potential employees with organizational fit. This chapter will include a statement of the problem, a background of the problem, definitions of key terms, and conclude with a discussion about the value of the study.

Statement of the Problem

Currently there have been changes in unemployment and layoffs due to the recent economic times. In January 2013 the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 1,328 mass layoffs. This means that at each of these businesses, 50 or more employees lost their jobs, creating a negative economic impact on over 130,000 workers. The current national unemployment rate is at 7.7 percent or 12 million unemployed persons (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013) and locally, in Brookings County, South Dakota, the unemployment rate is 3.9 percent or 725 unemployed persons (South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, 2013). Unemployment rates have recently dropped but this data shows the nature of the job market and how it is volatile. Researchers do not know enough with an

unpredictable job market. With the high costs of employee turnover and recruitment it is

beneficial for organizations to hire not only the most qualified person for the position, but

also the best fit for the organization's culture. This is important and researchers just do

not know enough about the problem of the job market. The lack of research indicates the

need for more information in this problem area.

"Given that socialization is viewed as one of the primary mechanisms for

transmitting organizational culture, it is surprising that so few studies have examined how

newcomers learn about organizational norms and values" (Klein & Weaver, 2000, p.61).

This study will extend the study of organizational socialization by examining job

advertisements, wherein potential employees may first learn of organizational norms and

values.

Background of the Problem

"On the one hand, organizations use recruiting to attract job candidates to apply

for vacant job openings; on the other hand, organizations also use recruiting ads to screen

out applicants with inadequate knowledge, skills, and abilities to do the job" (Feldman,

Bearden, Hardesty, 2006, p.123). Neely-Martinez (2002) stated that job advertisements

not only recruit employees for jobs, but also sell a corporate image. Job advertisements

brand a corporate image and convince applicants this organization is the employer of

choice. Rafaeli and Oliver (1998) even believe job advertisements can be used as public

relations strategies by relating information to both customers and potential clients. There

is much yet to be discovered regarding job advertisements; "given the widespread use of

job advertisements as a recruitment tool, it is surprising that so little is known about the

factors that make one advertisement more effective than another in attracting applicants"
(Highhouse, Beadle, Gallo, & Miller, 2006, p. 779).

There are methods an organization can take to assimilate their employees. Many
companies develop orientation sessions, as well as training and development programs.
However, companies start assimilating new employees before they even enter the
organization. The first method can be explaining the organizational culture during the
interview process; this can also be done in the job opening advertisement (Miller, 2009).

Feldman, Bearden, and Hardesty (2006) stated that past research has been
conducted on the amount of information provided to applicants, specific job descriptions
and qualifications and their study "focused on the level of specificity of the information
provided about the company, the jobs themselves and the job context" (p.124). This study
is similar in looking at job advertisements, descriptions and qualifications, but differs
from other studies as it is a content analytical study exploring seven quantitative
categories. These categories were organizational goals, HR job descriptions, job skills
and abilities, communication skills, website, mission/values, and word count/reading
level In addition to job descriptions like past studies, this study examines company name,
location, skills and abilities, organizational website, readability and word count.

Definitions

This section describes key terms in organizational communication and other
definitions from the human resource realm. The key terms to be defined are corporate
culture, organizational assimilation theory, organizational socialization theory, and the
human resource generalist position.

- Corporate culture is defined as the environment that surrounds each company and includes things such as images, characters, meanings, and beliefs (Gordon & DiTomaso, 1992). New employees can learn the culture of their organizations via different avenues including orientation and training.

- Organizational assimilation or accommodation theory highlights the notion that new employees integrate into this newfound culture and progress through learning the new norms and expectations of the culture. Assimilation into the organization is based on a series of processes beginning with organizational socialization (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1997).

- Organizational socialization occurs when the new employees are introduced to their new roles; learn the new tasks they will be completing, and how other members of their organization view them as new employees. This process develops over time and, as new tasks and employees are introduced, it continues to evolve (Van Maanen, 1978).

According to Jablin's (1982) organizational assimilation theory, adapting to a new organization begins before the employee even starts at the new organization. The first phase of the process is the anticipatory phase where the new member learns about the organization and its culture through the job advertisement or participating in an interview. The second phase begins upon completion of the interview process and once hired, the employee begins his or her new job and starts learning what the new organization is like. This continuance of change and evolving is the encounter phase. The third step consists of starting to assimilate to the group through learning skills, making

adjustments, and conforming to new organizational norms. "It is in the third phase, change and acquisition, that relatively long-lasting changes take place: new recruits master the skills required for their jobs" and "make some satisfactory adjustment to their work group's values and norms" (Feldman, 1981, p. 310). Originally named the metamorphosis stage, the change and acquisition phase is the longest lasting, and on-going throughout employment with the organization. Finally, the fourth phase is the disengagement phase which occurs when the employee leaves the organization, regardless of reason for departure (Miller, 2009). The disengagement phase is important for both the organization and the person leaving. First, the organization can gain valuable insight on the reason the person is leaving; this can be done through exit interviews. Second, it is important for the person leaving as it helps with the leaving process and adds closure to their departure (Feldman, 1981).

For the purpose of this content analysis, the position of Human Resource (HR) Generalist was selected to analyze. The position consists of numerous responsibilities that include, but are not limited to, recruitment and staffing, payroll and benefits, training and orientation, employee relations and implementing human resource policies and procedures (BLS, 2013). According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics website (2013) the entry level education is a bachelor's degree, though many institutions look for a master's degree and some will use work experience to substitute education with a high school diploma. "Employment of human resources specialists is expected to grow 21 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations" (BLS, 2013).

Value of the Study

Organizations do not often know the importance of organizational assimilation and socialization (Klein & Weaver, 2000). Therefore, it is essential for any organization to study what has been researched regarding socialization and assimilation theory. The organization could potentially gain knowledge giving them an advantage over other companies. A study by Berman, West, and Richter (2002) found the majority of city managers and chief administration officers (CAOs) allow workplace friendships and even encourage them. Though the CAOs may see value in employees being friendly in the workplace they do not always see the correlation between socialization of employees with overall job satisfaction and company loyalty. Introducing employees to the company culture within the first few months can help determine whether an employee is a good fit for the organization and whether the organization is a good fit for the employee. There are benefits to coming to a timely conclusion this was not a good fit for either.

This study is valuable, as it examines job advertisements. One way employers and employees can begin to coming to the conclusion if it is a good fit, is through job advertisements. Not only can coming quickly to this determination save the company valuable time and money, it is beneficial for the employee, saving them stress and anxiety. "Hiring the right people from the start, most experts agree, is the single best way to reduce employee turnover" (Hymowitz, 2007, para. 3). During the interview process, Hymowitz (2007) recommend examining candidates carefully to ensure that they will not only work well with co-workers and management, but also fit into the organizational

culture and have the skills required to perform tasks. An additional value from this study includes in the discussion some valuable recommendations to companies.

In chapter two a literature review of the research is presented. This will include information on organizational culture, assimilation, socialization, and how they correlate together. A gap in the research was identified, and research questions were posed. Chapter three will preview the methods that were used to draw conclusions on the research questions. Chapter four will include answers to the research questions and report the results from the study. Chapter five reviews the results of the research, recommendations, limitations and future research directions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Organizations can be viewed as "little societies" filled with socialization

processes and as their own cultural diversities. Since each organization has its own

culture and way to introduce this culture to new organizational members, their

complexities make organizations a difficult area to study (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984).

Researchers have studied institutions, organizations, and organizations' sub-units as

separate cultures with unique sets of ceremonies and traditions, and have analyzed

leadership from a cultural perspective (Tierney, 1988). Many organizations use the same

methods to introduce newcomers to the organization; however, the way they approach it

is different. For example, some organizations change their culture to fit the needs of the

employees. "One socialization format does not fit everyone; each individual brings to an

organization a unique background and insights; and the challenge lies in using these

individual attributes to build the culture of the organization rather than recruits fit into

predetermined norms" (Tierney, 1997, p. 14).

This literature review will include prior research about three theories to provide

insight of new employee socialization and assimilation to the organizational culture:

organizational cultural theory, organizational socialization and organizational

assimilation theory. The chapter will end with research regarding Person-Organization fit

and prior research on job advertisements.

The first theory is organizational cultural theory. Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-

Trujillo (1983) were instrumental in directing researchers' attention toward an expansive

understanding of organizations through their organizational cultural theory. The

theoretical principles of the theory emphasize that organizational life is complex and, therefore, researchers must take into consideration not only the members of the organization but their behaviors, activities, and stories.

Another theory that provides insight into this study is organizational socialization, which is the process by which a new employee adapts to the organization's culture. Once a newcomer is socialized into the organization they often tend to assimilate themselves into the new culture. Organizational assimilation process occurs before a person even applies for the open position, continues when a person starts the new job at an organization and keeps on evolving until the person leaves the organization. It is important to note organizational socialization also occurs when an individual is adjusting to a new or changed role within the same organization (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994). Each person assimilates differently, and each organization has its own methods for socializing its employees. In addition to explaining each theory, this literature review will focus on the importance of studying organizations, their culture, and the importance of job advertisements. Finally, the strategies in which organizations can use to assimilate their employees were detailed along with an explanation of the use of job advertisements.

Organizational Culture

In the 1970's and 1980's researchers investigated the new concept of organizational culture. "Culture is a set of functional cognitions organized into a system of knowledge and containing whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to the members of one's society" (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984, p. 203). The idea that "organizations have cultural properties, that they breed meanings,

values and beliefs, that they nurture legends, myths and stories, and are festooned with rites, rituals and ceremonies" (p. 194) was a new area of research.

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1983) describe organizations as having their own culture. This means that any given organization has a particular culture in which the meanings for things are shared between individuals. As defined in chapter one, the environment that surrounds each company is called corporate culture. These organizational ideas are developed within a company across time and are widely shared by members of the organization. However, an organization's members interpret the behavior and language of others through their own cultural biases. Each member has his or her own set of beliefs, values, and assumptions which they then perceive behavior inconsistent with his or her own biases as irrational. Members need to learn an organization's culture before fully assimilating to the new organization (Gordon & DiTomaso, 1992). For example, a person who is an avid hunter may avoid applying at People Against the Unethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), as their own behavior is inconsistent with that of the organization.

Corporations can engage in their own cultures by having corporate jargon. Just as countries can have their own languages that can be foreign to outsiders, companies can do the same. Martin and Siehl (1983) studied General Motors (GM) and identified many rituals and jargons within the company. For example, junior executives who had been paired with a top manger were given the name "dog robbers," since they were basically servants to the top tiered management. Another example derives from the layout of their headquarters, where the top team was located on the fourteenth floor, this was often

referred to "the fourteenth floor" or "executive row" (Martin & Siehl, 1983). Martin and

Siehl (1983) continue to mention that GM also developed their own set of rituals and

storytelling. As explained, many times GM executives requested to have a travel

companion, division head John DeLorean did not agree with this decision. DeLorean

claimed that travel companions interfered with work back at headquarters, and he chose

to travel alone and lead by example. Through traveling alone, this ritual of bringing a

travel companion was broken and the story remained one that executives repeated, hence

entering it into the organizational culture (Martin & Siehl, 1983).

Braddy, Meade, and Kroustalis (2006) studied the effects of organizational

recruitment websites on organizational culture. Research participants (n= 48) looked at

company websites in a lab. Participants were asked to view the website from a recent

graduate perspective and were given some background information on the websites.

Participants were also asked to view the website equally in regards to an interest in the

job, location, pay and benefits. Findings indicated that design features, organizational

policies, references to organizational culture, and other content relative to the website's

content all played part in participants' perceptions of organizational culture. The

researchers indicated that three common themes emerged throughout the study: specific

references made to culture, the use of website design features, and stated organizational

procedures and specific policies. These themes were all cited as top reasons participants

indicated that culture was associated with a particular organization (Braddy et al., 2006).

Organizational Assimilation Theory

The organizational assimilation theory attempts to explain how individuals new to an organization assimilate into the new organization by using communication. Frederic Jablin first introduced assimilation theory in 1982, as a progression by which organizational newcomers learn the rules, norms, and expectations of a culture and over time become members of that culture. Assimilation into an organization is important since new employees have difficulty performing their new jobs when they are still at a high level of unfamiliarity (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1997). Furthermore, Cable and Parsons (2001) explain that being unfamiliar with reactions and routines causes newcomers to be highly stressed and have high anxiety when entering new organizations. Cable and Parsons (2001) continue explaining that entering a new organization is reality shock, in the fact that new employees are unaware of co-worker reactions, organizational events and must investigate how others behave within the organization. Newcomers have their own tactics for learning how to fit into a new organization. These tactics include directly asking for information (overt), indirect questions or hinting (indirect), intentionally breaking rules to observe the reaction (testing), and watching others (observing) (Fonner & Timmerman, 2009). Assimilation is the responsibility of both the organization and the organizational newcomer since assimilating into an organization determines employees' ability to succeed within the organization and the overall fit to the organization. Practicing, observing, and learning the norms of their jobs and new organizations are up to the employees. Assimilating quickly reduces stress which leads to improving

employees' contributions, membership commitment, tasks, and overall satisfaction with the organization (Jablin, 2001).

The four-phases of organizational assimilation theory.

The socialization process occurs in four separate phases. According to Feldman (1981) the first phase is the "anticipatory socialization" phase and includes all the information the newcomer learns before becoming a member of the organization. The "encounter" phase begins after the employee becomes a member of the organization. While this phase is developing, the new employee learns what the organization is really like and he or she may begin to have a change in attitude and values regarding the organization. The third phase, "change and acquisition," is said to be the longest phase. This phase continues as the person maintains employment with the organization. In this phase employees learn the skills needed to do the jobs, make adjustments to assimilate with their groups and their norms, and also master their new tasks (Feldman, 1981). Disengagement is the exit stage and is important because some people leave organizations prior to retirement and even move within the organization itself (Kramer & Miller, 1999).

Anticipatory socialization phase.

The first phase includes the different socialization efforts prior to beginning at the organization (Myers & Oetzel, 2003). "Anticipatory socialization" includes several pieces like learning about the job itself and gaining knowledge about the organization in general and occurs before the individual even enters the organization. According to Miller (2009) the "anticipatory socialization" phase begins at a very young age.

Examples of early parts of this phase are when a parent takes a child to work or when a student completes their homework. For this particular study "anticipatory socialization" refers more specifically to the process of getting to understand a particular organization better. This can be done during campus career day visits, interning, and interviewing with certain organizations (Miller, 2009). Feldman (1981) concludes this phase can be seen in four processes: realism about the organization, realism about the job, congruence of skills and abilities, and congruence of needs and values. Realism about the organization occurs as a person learns the ideas and goals of the organization. Realism about the job involves learning an accurate description of new job details. Once the skills and abilities to complete tasks are learned, the congruence of skills and abilities phase has also been completed. For the purpose of this study, the primary theoretical underpinnings are derived from anticipatory socialization.

Encounter phase.

During the "encounter" phase, socialization happens through communicating with "memorable messages" (Stohl, 1986). A memorable message is defined by Stohl (1986) as a message that is remembered for a long period and had an influence on the individual's life. These can be given by other organization insiders as pieces of advice (Barge & Schlueter, 2004). By researching "memorable messages" we can learn the different kinds of messages along with how they relate to the organizational relationship. During this phase, newcomers typically learn workplace relationships (e.g. whom they can trust, whom they should stay away from), workplace norms, how their co-workers relate to one another and about their own personal abilities and challenges (Teboul,

1997). The "encounter" phase is an important phase as it clears up uncertainty the new employee may have had about the organization. In the "encounter" phase five process variables are involved: management of outside-life conflicts, management of intergroup role conflicts, role definition, initiation to the task, and initiation to the group. Management of outside-life conflicts involves finding balance between work and personal life. The person begins to see conflicts with schedules and family demands. Management of intergroup role conflicts concerns the difficulty of conflicts with one's own group and other groups (departments) within the organization. Once the job duties have been assigned and understood, the role clarification phase has been completed and the next phase, initiation to the task, takes place, which is to learn the task that was given. The final phase, initiation to the group, involves interpersonal relationships and learning the group norms associated with the organization (Feldman, 1981).

Change and acquisition phase.

The change and acquisition phase is sometimes referred to as the metamorphosis stage (Myers & Oetzel, 2003). During this final phase of engagement, individuals are still learning the ins and outs of a particular organization; the phase occurs when the employees begin to adapt to the organization. The employee will change his or her behaviors and expectations to match that of the new environment (Modaff & DeWine, 2002). Needs, desires, and skills will be directed toward the new role, and the transition from outsider to organizational insider will become apparent. This phase usually begins when an employee has been with the organization anywhere from three to six months (Myers & Oetzel, 2003), but it is ongoing throughout the individual's career. Resolution

of role demands, task mastery, and adjustments to group norms and values are the three

processes in this final phase. Resolution of role demands is an agreement that the tasks

will be performed will be on time and conflicts will be dealt with when needed. Task

mastery occurs when the person has gained self-confidence and has mostly positive

performance levels. Adjustment to group norms is the final task and involves feeling like

part of the group, feeling accepted by the group members, and in this phase the

newcomer understands and trusts his or her new peer group.

Assimilation study.

Myers and Oetzel (2003) performed a study to examine employees' assimilation

experiences. Since assimilation is an ongoing process, the research participants were in

various stages of the assimilation process and were not limited to new employees.

Participants were given a questionnaire on six dimensions: familiarity with others,

acculturation, recognition, involvement, job competency, adaptation, and role

negotiation. These dimensions were chosen since they are associated with becoming full

members of the organization. The research indicated that the participants believed

acquainting themselves with their supervisor is the first step to fitting into the

organization. The change and acquisition phase of being fully integrated into the

organization was also measured in this study. It was found in order to be fully acclimated

to and integrated into the new culture; the new employee must make personal changes in

order to fully integrate into it. "The development of a shared understanding by

organizational members is the important difference between those who are genuinely a

part of the organization and those who are not" (Myers & Oetzel, 2003, p. 449). This is

dually noted by Chao et al. (1994) who had a similar conclusion regarding those with mismatched personal values and goals of those of the organization and their likelihood of leaving. The new employee continues in this phase until they decide to move within the organization or on to a new company altogether (Feldman, 1981).

    Disengagement.

    Jablin (1994) first introduced the final stage of the organizational assimilation process as the disengagement phase. This exit stage is the "process of leaving the job/organization, whether it is moving to a new organization and position, a transfer to a new location in the same organization, retirement from work, or a job layoff" (Jablin, 1994, p. 32). It is the (un)official end to belonging to an organization (e.g., in the department, in the building, moving to a new location, moving to a new organization, retirement, etc.). "It is also the final stage of the four-step process and if chosen, a time for a recycling for the individual with a new organization. While disengagement marks the end of one cycle, a new cycle begins with anticipatory assimilation when a member moves on" (Ojha, 2005, p. 133).

    Some models conclude with an exit stage which is important because some people leave organizations prior to retirement and even move within the organization itself. Other models do not conclude with the disengagement stage, but otherwise these phases may remain essentially the same for each organization. The methods of how the organization chooses to oversee these phases are different from company to company (Kramer & Miller, 1999).

As an often overlooked addition to socialization and assimilation processes, employers can look toward job advertisements as another method to introduce newcomers to their organization. Organizations can help educate potential employees about the organizational culture before they even apply.

The processes of assimilation and socialization gradually develop over a span of time and, therefore, many scholars have created models to assist with better understanding the processes. Evaluating the process is an important part for any organization. These phases are important to take into consideration for the organization and newcomer, since each organization and person is different as well as the methods used to assimilate. For example, if an organization were to increase employee retention, then it is imperative they focus on the anticipatory and encounter phases. Since each person has his or her own values and beliefs and each organization has its own culture, taking the time to familiarize a new employee with the overall organizational culture is beneficial. While introducing the culture, new employer and employee both need to work together through the socialization process. Together the organization and new employee can work towards creating an organization that is a good fit for both by recognizing, using, and understanding the different phases (Miller, 2009).

Organizational Socialization

The terms assimilation and socialization are often used interchangeably, since they are similar in that they both encourage outsiders of organizations to become insiders (Feldman, 1981). Feldman (1976) defines organizational socialization as "the process by which employees are transformed from organization outsiders to participating and effective members" (p. 309). Recruiting and training new employees is costly for

organizations, and it is in their best interest to have employees work for them as long as possible (Chaidaroon, 2003).

People changing jobs or finding part-time employment to supplement income has become common. The amount of jobs an average American holds is on the rise from eight jobs during their career (Adkins, 1995) to the previously stated eleven (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). Therefore, people are finding themselves looking for new employment, and nervousness comes when assuming a new role at a new workplace. The expectation to be a competent communicator, to have an educational background and previous work experience adds more pressure to the job seeker. The gap between the employer's expectations and new employee's actual knowledge is a problem that affects both the new employee's performance and the organizational effectiveness as a whole (Chaidaroon, 2003).

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) state the level of stress and anxiety is often high in organizational newcomers because they no longer have customary routines and are unable to predict interactions and responses to people and the activities that surround them. For this reason, Saks and Ashforth (1997) explain that uncertainty reduction theory is often used when studying organizational socialization. Newcomers experience high levels of uncertainty during the initial organizational entry process, and like other members of the organization, they are striving to reduce their uncertainty in order for their work lives to become more predictable. "Uncertainty is reduced through the information provided via various communication channels, notably social interactions with superiors and peers" (Saks & Ashforth, 1997, p. 236). As uncertainty decreases for

the newcomers they become more skilled at performing their tasks, more content with their jobs, and more likely to succeed at their organization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Organizational socialization is the manner in which employees learn the ins and outs of a new organizational position, status, or role that is given to them by other members of the organization (Van Maanen, 1978). Organizational socialization is an important process to study as it is directly related to employee job satisfaction, employee intent to stay within a particular organization, and employee job performance (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Klein and Weaver (2000) investigated whether attending an orientation session helped employees become more socialized compared to those that did not attend the session. In the same study they researched the relationship between attendance at orientation programs and organizational commitment. The study concluded that those who attended the orientation sessions were more socialized into the organization, in that those employees had a better grasp on the goals, values, history, and language of the organization. Again, orientation programs were determined as a key factor towards organizational commitment. In another study by Wanberg and Kammeyer-Mueller (2000), relationship building was studied in connection to job satisfaction and employee orientation programs. The research indicated that "without the opportunity to interact, newcomers cannot make use of proactive socialization behavior or positive socialization climate" (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000, p. 383). Organizational socialization should result in the newcomers' personal values aligning with the new organization's causing the employee to be less likely to leave the organization, resulting in the company

receiving a return on their investment in the employee. The opportunity to interact with

other employees is directly related to job satisfaction and lower turnover. Employers can

have orientation programs, training programs and realistic job previews; however, none

would be realistically possible if they did not have applicants. The socialization process

begins with job advertisements and carries through the hiring process and the new

employee's service with the organization (Cable & Parsons, 2001).

Methods of Socialization.

There are different techniques companies use to socialize and assimilate their

employees. The first method occurs before the employee even begins employment.

Sometimes applicants gather information about an organization from reading the

advertisement for the open position. Companies can add information like their company's

mission and value statement to give an idea of what the company values. Some job

seekers choose to apply to companies based on what is written about the company and

not necessarily whether or not they meet the qualifications. As an example, if someone

believes that he or she would enjoy working for a company, he or she may choose to

apply based on previous knowledge of the company and the job advertisement, though he

or she may not meet the requested skill set or years of previous work experience. During

the interview process the job candidate receives the first glimpse of the organizational

culture and starts to decide whether or not they could integrate into that particular culture

(Miller, 2009). Beyond the formal interview, the new employee can learn about the

organization by seeing what the organization looks like, meet other potential co-workers,

observe interactions, and get a first glimpse at the culture of the organization; these are all

a part of the interview process.

Another interesting technique organizations are using to assimilate employees is the use of realistic job previews. The job applicant is given a preview of what it would be like to work at that company. During this preview the applicant may learn negative and positive aspects of the position as well as information about the organizational culture. Job previews occur during the interview phase and encourage the individual to consider carefully whether or not this organization would be a good fit for them (Phillips, 1998).

Last, oftentimes organizational storytelling is used to help socialize employees. Gargiulo (2005) asserts that after attending training and orientation the greatest source of the new employee's learning comes from conversations. These methods of socialization are used in order to make it easier for an employee to assimilate into the organization and are not just used in the corporate world but also in academia (Gargiulo, 2005).

Each organization is different though they may use many of the same methods and, often, a combination of the methods to achieve new employee assimilation into the organizational culture (Miller, 2009). There is no singularly correct way for an organization to assimilate their employees, just as there is no singularly correct way or amount of time for a person to be fully adapted into the organization (Tierney, 1997).

Despite the abundance of studies that have emphasized the importance of studying organizational culture and assimilating new employees, there is very little research on the use of job advertisements to communicate to applicants of the organizational culture. Despite the frequently held assumption that organizational culture has an impact on organizational functioning, few authors have explicitly discussed the

topic of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness in the form of job advertisements.

Much of the research done on assimilation and new employee socialization has been conducted through interviews or role orientation. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) explored role orientation and offered a theoretical explanation of how roles influence the socialization outcome. In their research they found newcomers respond to their roles differently depending on the socialization tactic that is used. These tactics shape how the information given to the newcomer is processed. Organizations can provide information, withhold information, or influence information in a particular way, manipulating how the newcomer responds and sometimes can predict their reaction (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Each organization also has its own way of introducing employees to their new culture; this is done through initial employee orientation and training sessions, which can in turn help with person-organization fit. At some organizations the orientation and training sessions are minimal.

Person-Organization Fit

Person-organization (P-O) fit is defined as "the compatibility between people and the organizations in which they work, and is a key to maintaining a flexible and committed workforce that is necessary in a competitive business environment" (Cable & Parsons, 2001, p. 1). Another defining example of P-O fit is "the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when at least one entity provides what the other needs, they share similar fundamental characteristics, or both" (Kristof, 1996, pp. 4–5).

People only apply to organizations that they think will fulfill their needs and values and essentially match their own "personalities" (Cable & Judge, 1996). Their study indicated that the employee's perceptions of the organization needed to correspond with their own values. These employee perceptions directly affected their decision to choose one particular company over other potential jobs. The authors concluded that "these findings are consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by Schneider (1987) and also confirm and extend past empirical research on job choice decisions by demonstrating that perceived values congruence affects organizational attractiveness through job seekers' subjective P-O fit perceptions" (Cable & Judge, 1996, p. 304). In a prospective applicant's attempt to find positions with the desired match, viewing job advertisements can be a valuable source of information if those ads contain information that directly or indirectly address organizational culture (Cable & Judge, 1996).

Job Advertisements

Traditionally, organizations have used newspaper ads, campus recruiting, referrals, and job fairs to attract applicants. As much as job advertisements are used, whether online or in print, "in the organizational behavior and human resource management literature, job advertisements have received relatively little attention in and of themselves" (Feldman, Bearden, & Hardesty, 2006, p. 125). The Internet boom of the 1990's created the opportunity for online organizational recruitment. A survey done by Internet Business Network, located on Recruiters Network website (2012), found that of those looking for a job, 77 percent of them use the Internet for their job search.

When online recruitment starts at the company website or provides a link to the website, the organization is able to provide more substantial information on the company. "A great deal more information can be communicated through a company's Website than has been possible with traditional recruiting materials (e.g., newspaper advertisements or brochures)" (Cober, Brown, Blumental, Doverspike, & Levy, 2000, p. 483). A study by Feldman et al., (2006) concluded that providing job applicants with detailed information about the company yielded positive evaluations of the company and the ad. These also indicated that offering job contenders specific information in a job description coincided with positive evaluations of the ad, the company, the truthfulness of the ad, the information provided and whether or not the position was applicable for the candidate.

To find past literature, the researcher searched the following databases: EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, Communication and Mass Media Complete and ProQuest. Search terms were used in various arrangements to include: organizational culture, corporate culture, job advertisements, socialization, assimilation, person-organization fit, turnover, training and development, orientation, and online recruitment.

Based on this literature review, the following research questions are posed:

Research Questions

RQ1: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online include organizational goals?

RQ2: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online include what the new duties/job will entail?

RQ3a: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online

provide a list of skills and abilities that will be needed to complete the duties

assigned?

RQ3b: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online

request communication skills?

RQ4a: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online refer

readers to a website for more information or to apply?

RQ4b: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online

include the mission and values of the organization?

RQ5: What is the average reading level and word count of HR Generalist position job

advertisements online?

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter includes details about the methods that were used to answer the

research questions. These methods include the sampling frame of the content, the

sampling method, and the instrument and procedures used to analyze the data. The

chapter concludes with a discussion about the limitations of the study.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is "any of several research techniques used to describe and

systematically analyze the content of written, spoken, or pictorial communication—such

as books, newspapers, television programs, or interview transcripts" (Vogt, 2005, p. 59).

The researcher will be looking for "elements of individual instances or general patterns"

(Reinard, 2008, p. 304) across job advertisements. The goal of a quantitative content

analysis is to count the characteristics of text inside messages. Since text already exists

and is readily available, it is an unobtrusive method. There are no human subjects making

this a technique that can be conducted quickly and without the use of the Institutional

Review Board (IRB). Another benefit to content analysis is that it can handle large

amounts of data, able to be categorized and generalizable (Macnamara, 2005).

Approaches to a quantitative content analysis entail a similar process of seven

steps, including (1) formulating the research questions to be answered, (2) selecting the

sample to be analyzed, (3) defining the categories to be applied, (4) outlining the coding

process and training the coders, (5) implementing the coding process, (6) determining

reliability and validity, and (7) analyzing the results of the coding process (Kaid & Wadsworth, 1989). This content analysis included each of these steps.

Formulating the Research Questions to be Answered

Chapter two of this thesis outlined the gaps in the research and formulated research questions to be answered. The research questions were formatted in categories to see to what extent, if any, job advertisements included organizational goals, job duties, request communication skills, skills needed to perform the job, add a website, include organizational mission and values and the average reading level for job advertisements online for a HR generalist position.

Selecting the Sample to be Analyzed

The second step was completed by finding a population of job applicants for the HR Generalist position. The researcher analyzed job advertisements for "HR Generalist" from the Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM) website. The method to determine which advertisements to analyze was chosen systematically.

Sampling frame.

According to its website, the society was founded in 1948, is the world's largest association devoted to human resource management, and currently has 250,000 members in 140 countries with offices in U.S. and Beijing, China, and Mumbai, India (The Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2012). The society's membership includes 50 percent who work in organizations with over 500 employees and approximately 35 percent of the companies are in manufacturing or service industries. Membership fees are $180 annually for full access, Internet-only memberships are $90, and a student

membership can be obtained for a $35 fee. A non-member is able to search the SHRM

website with full access for job advertisements on the website's HR job board. However,

member benefits include access to their different publications including a weekly e-

newsletter, a monthly HR magazine, and a legal report. In addition to educational

opportunities, members are also offered career resources like an HR job board,

networking, job seeker e-newsletter seminars, and career advisor chats.

Sampling method.

The advertisements were selected through a systematically-drawn, multistage,

unbiased search and were drawn by the researcher from a predetermined list. From this

predetermined list provided daily by the SHRM website, the researcher collected job

descriptions each day until 100 (n = 100) advertisements had been collected. Prior to

embarking on the data collection, the researched reviewed the website and found that five

advertisements could be gathered daily for 30 days, until 150 advertisements were

collected. The research was unable to collect 150 advertisements in the 30 day time

frame, as they were being gathered during a time frame where businesses were not hiring.

Rather the researched collected 100 advertisements in over a three month time period

from November to January. The researcher added the keywords "HR generalist" and "full

time" to narrow the search. The first five, or newest, advertisements were chosen and

printed in order to create an archive of the sampled ads. This procedure worked well to

collect the data in an organized way and ensured a narrow search.

Defining the Categories to be Applied

This content analysis has seven quantitative categories. The first six categories determined if there is a presence or absence of organizational goals, job duties, communication skills, abilities needed to perform the job, a website offered, and if organizational mission and values were included in the job advertisement. The seventh is a numerical value determining the average reading level and readability for job advertisements online for a HR generalist position.

Several of these categories were derived from Feldman's (1981) four process variables and were used to analyze the data collected. These four process variables were used to derive the research questions and each question directly correlates with a process variable. According to Feldman (1981) for the anticipatory socialization phase the four process variables are as follows:

1. *Realism about the organization:* A full and accurate picture of what the goals and climate of the organization are really like (e.g. We strive to improve the lives of youth or a great working environment with flexible working schedules).

2. *Realism about the job:* A full and accurate picture of what the new duties will entail (e.g. Recruitment, hiring and employee relations are specific duties).

3. *Congruence of skills and abilities:* The appropriate skills and abilities to successfully complete task assignments (e.g. B.A. in Human resources

with two years' experience or Ability to multi-task, work in a fast paced

environment and be able to read, write and comprehend English).

4. *Congruence of needs and values:* Sharing the values of the new

   organization and having personal needs that can be met by the

   organization (e.g. Christian based values).

Flesch-Kincaid "which is automated in Microsoft® Word and has been

demonstrated to be reliable and valid" (Paasche-Orlow, Tayler, & Bancati, 2003, p. 722)

was used to measure readability for each job advertisement. Flesch-Kincaid works by

calculating the average number of words per sentence and the average number of

syllables per word (Paasche-Orlow, Tayler, & Bancati, 2003). In an article by Sumser

(2010) he stated that a good job advertisement should be written at a ninth-grade reading

level. In order to test what level the job advertisements are written in, Flesch-Kincaid was

used to determine this information. The Flesch-Kincaid grade level can be formulated

using the following steps:

1. Calculate the average number of words used per sentence.

2. Calculate the average number of syllables per word.

3. Multiply the average number of words by 0.39 and add it to the average

   number of syllables per word multiplied by 11.8.

4. Subtract 15.59 from the result.

$$0.39 \left(\frac{\text{total words}}{\text{total sentences}} \right) + 11.8 \left(\frac{\text{total syllables}}{\text{total words}} \right) - 15.59$$

Additional questions also asked to refine the information collected from several of

the categories (see Appendix A). In order to access different organizational goals and

values, the researcher made a code sheet to see which types of goals and values are expressed in the job advertisements. The researcher added a list of common goals and values, along with an open-ended section to list any additional information. Abilities and the skills set for the position was ascertained by listing different abilities and skills needed. Again, an open-ended question allowed for coders to enter additional skills or abilities.

Organizational goals are set by companies with an intended purpose to have their current efforts produce future results. Goals are set by individuals from the company and often times produce different themes or key elements. The eight key organizational goals addressed in this study were derived from Peter Drucker. Drucker is considered a leader in the business management field. Drucker was a consultant, educator, author and creator of theories. The goals he noted included the following: (1) market share, (2) innovation, (3) productivity, (4) physical and financial resources, (5) profitability, (6) management performance and development, (7) employee performance and (8) attitude goals, and social responsibility (Drucker, 1986). An open ended "Other" category asked the coder to list other possible goals mentioned or alluded to in the ad. Definitions for the organizational goals were derived from the website for business definitions, Businessdictionary.com. BusinessDictionary was chosen because it is a leader in the online business resources. According to their website, "each definition provides a clear and concise description of the term to help our users gain a comprehensive understanding of the concept."

Like organizational goals, the mission and values statements of organizations are developed by individuals. Rather than leading them to future successes, missions and values are statements that define the interests of the organization and the overall purpose of the organization. Feldman (1981) explains while in the socialization process, employees will enter the encounter phase, in which they will begin to development a change in their own values and those values of the organization. Though there are many values to choose from, the researcher chose ten from a checklist of personal values. The values chosen were: (1) advancement/promotion, (2) recognition, (3) working under pressure, (4) working with others, (5) helping society, (6) fast living, (7) pleasure, (8) status, (9) job tranquility, and (10) loyalty. Again, an open-ended "Other" category asks the coder to list additional values in the advertisement. Definitions for the organizational values were derived from the website for business definitions, Businessdictionary.com.

Last, specific skills required were researched. For this particular question the researcher examined sample job advertisements for the HR generalist position and concluded that there were certain skills that were mentioned commonly. This study coded which of these skills were present in the advertisements. The skills included: (1) bachelor's degree, (2) experience, (3) Microsoft® Office products proficiency, (4) minimum word per minute typing requirement, and (5) bilingual speaking skills. An open-ended "Other" category will also ask the coder to list other possible necessary skills in the ad.

The Coding Process and Training the Coders

The coding process included the use of a code sheet and code book in order to enhance intercoder reliability. There were two coders; one was the researcher and the other was a current graduate student. Two coders were chosen so the researcher could be more confident in determining the accuracy of the research. Two coders allowed the researcher to assess the degree of agreement or reliability between coders. The additional coder received approximately one hour of training from the researcher and the code book. The code sheet was used with each job advertisement analyzed.

Instrumentation.

The code sheet (see Appendix A) included a list of identifying information regarding the company including the ad number, if the company name is provided, industry, and location. Once the identifying questions were answered individually, the coder began looking for more specific information regarding the HR generalist position. Minimum experience, job description, job requirements and communication skills were all examined to see if they appear in the advertisement. Following the determination of whether or not the information appeared, more detailed questions were asked. The questions asked by the researcher were to observe more precise information. This included information on organizational goals, mission/values and specific abilities required for the position. The codebook (See Appendix B) defined each category and gave detailed instructions regarding application of the coding categories as they apply to each particular advertisement. The codebook used for training purposes also included

helpful information for the coder, such as definitions and how to properly record answers.
Each of the above items was defined to give clarity and consistency to the coders.

Coders.

There were two coders, both of whom are graduate students and one was the
researcher for this study. The code sheet (see Appendix A) and code book (see Appendix
B) were both used in training sessions. First, the coders worked together and viewed the
advertisements. Each described how they would process each advertisement and
explained why they chose the answer they did for each category. Each question was gone
through and each difference explained by both coders. This process continued until 80%
inter-coder reliability is achieved.

Implementing the Coding Process

The code sheet was entered into a Question Pro © survey in order to decrease the
potential for data entry errors.

Each coder was given a predetermined number of job advertisements to analyze.
The researcher coded 90%, while the other coder coded 10% of the advertisements. The
advertisements were transferred from their original form on the SHRM website to a
Microsoft® Word document. It was transferred from its original form for two reasons.
The first reason is to have an electronic copy of the advertisements, as they were removed
from the SHRM website. Second, in order for a word count and Flesh-Kincaid to be
easily performed it first must be entered on Microsoft® Word document. The Microsoft®
Word document was used to answer questions regarding the average number of words
per advertisement in addition to Flesch-Kincaid readability tests. Flesch-Kincaid reports

their data in a grade level format. As an example a high school graduate would be represented by a 12, college graduate by 16 and a master's degree student by 18.

Determining Reliability and Validity

Prior to embarking on the bulk of the coding, the coders performed a reliability check on 5 percent of job advertisements. This was completed by double coding this portion of the sampled job advertisements. In order to achieve high levels of intercoder reliability, the coders went through coded advertisements and, in categories where discrepancies occurred, the researcher provided additional training, examples or definitions in order to make coding choices more objective and clear. Coders moved forward with coding the remainder of the sample once they had established reliabilities of at least 80 percent for each category. For this particular study, coders reached a reliability of 100 percent.

Analyzing the Results of the Coding Process

Data collected were nominal level, as each job advertisement was coded based upon whether each coded characteristic is present or absent. The data was also entered using Question Pro ©. In this database it hosted the data for each question on the code sheet.

Once all job advertisements were entered into Question Pro © the data was analyzed for the presence of absence of specific items. The data was also entered to figure the mean, median and mode for the word count and readability grade level. In chapter four the researcher will present the findings of the study for each individual research question.

Chapter 4

Results

In order to respond to the research questions in Chapter two, one hundred

advertisements were collected and analyzed using the provided code sheet (see Appendix

A). Each job advertisement collected was for a full-time position as a Human Resource

Generalist. The examination entailed a nation-wide search and included advertisements

from November 6, 2012, to January 28, 2013. There are 100 unique companies

recognized in this study, as no single company advertised more than once during the time

the data was collected. Since 100 different companies were represented no trends by

organization can be reported. In this chapter, the analysis of job advertisements from the

Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) website was reported.

Organizational Goals

Research question one asks "To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job

advertisements online include organizational goals?" This study found that 85% of job

advertisements on the SHRM's website did not include information regarding the

company's goals. Figure one represents the different goals.

Figure 1. **Organizational Goals in HR Generalist Job Advertisements. This figure illustrates popular goals represented in the job advertisements.**
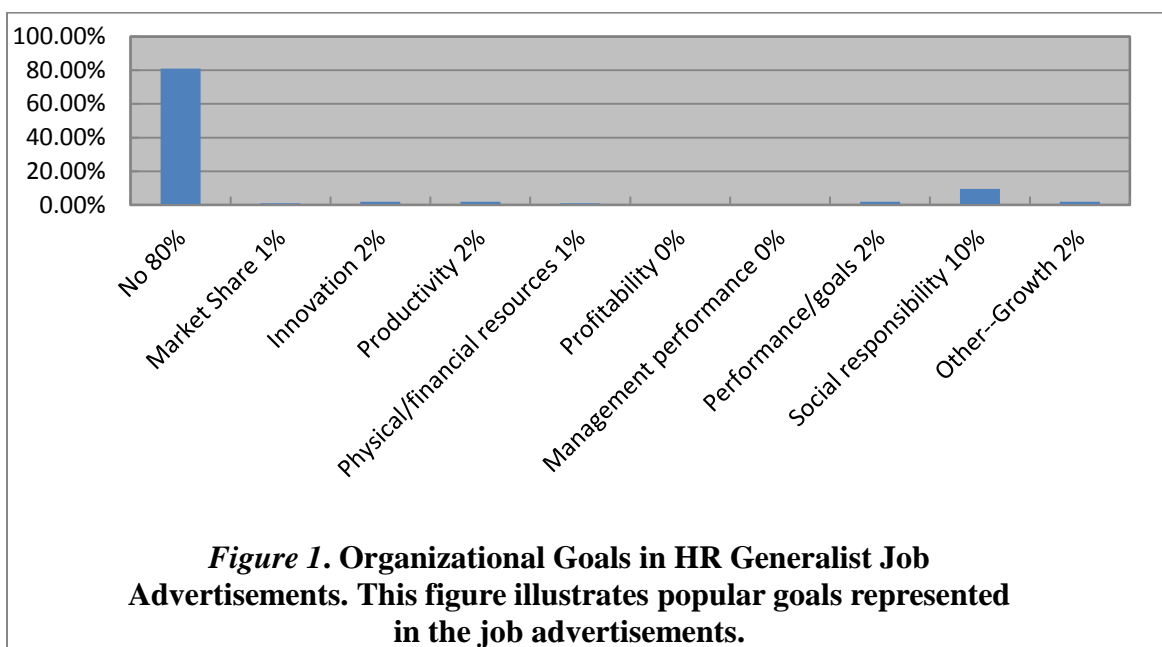
Figure one shows there were 15 advertisements that indicated goals in their job advertisement. Of the 15 advertisements that reported company goals, 10 of them indicated that they are a company working toward social responsibility. Innovation, productivity, and employee performance/goals were recognized as company goals in two of the advertisements that were studied. In the "other" category, growth was mentioned in two ads. Market share and physical/financial resources each received one mention.

Knowing the company that one is applying for can help the job seeker determine the company's organizational goals. This study looked different companies and industries that were hiring for a Human Resource Generalist position. Of the job advertisements selected for this study, 12% of them listed their company as confidential, while the remaining 88% listed their company name. Last, there were multiple industries represented by the job advertisements. A list of the most mentioned goals is presented in the table below.

Table 1

Popular Industries in HR Generalist Job Advertisements

Industry	Frequency	Percent
Health	11	12.4
Services for Profit	10	11.2
Services for Non-Profit	10	11.2
Manufacturing Durable Goods (e.g. cars, household goods, sports equipment, toys)	8	9.0
Finance	7	7.9
Manufacturing Non-Durable Goods (e.g. cleaning products, cosmetics, office supplies, clothing, paper)	6	6.7
High Tech	4	4.5
Other	12	13.5

Table one illustrates the different industries most represented in the job advertisements collected. Health was the most prominent with 11 advertisements. Services for profit and non-profit services tied at 10 ads; manufacturing durable goods represented eight; finance represented seven; manufacturing non-durable goods represented six and last, high tech represented four. The website provided employers to select an industry from a predetermined list or they could choose an "other" category as the option. The "other" category represents those organizations that listed their industry as "other" which was chosen 12 times.

Human Resource Job Description

Research question two asks "To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online include the new duties or what the job will entail?" In the advertisements the job description section details the duties themselves. What the employee will be doing, day-to-day activities, and an overall explanation of the job are all examples of what may be provided in the job description section. Some advertisements include a job requirements section which lists the qualifications needed to perform the assigned duties and the characteristics needed to be successful. In the advertisements collected, all (100%) included a job description section wherein the job was detailed. There were 63% of them that included a job requirements section in addition to the description section.

Job Skills and Abilities

The first part of research question three asks "To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online provide a list of skills and abilities to perform the duties assigned?" From the collected job advertisement samples, 92% provided information of specific skills needed or abilities required. Table 2 below represents the most sought after skills and abilities as found by this study.

Table 2		
Popular Skills and Abilities Requested in HR Generalist Job Advertisements		
Skill/Ability	Frequency	Percent
Experience	90	40.7
Bachelor's Degree	86	38.9

Microsoft Office Proficiency	12	5.4
PHR Certification	10	4.5
Associate's Degree	5	2.3
Bilingual	3	1.4

Experience was the most requested ability with 90 requests. Degrees were also required in some ads; this study found that 86 advertisements requested a bachelor's degree and 5 asked for an associate's degree. Being proficient in Microsoft Office products was requested by 12 companies, PHR certification by 10, and being bilingual was requested in 3 ads, with the language requirement in each of these cases being both English and Spanish.

In a separate location within the job advertisements, companies had the opportunity to request a minimum amount of experience. This was completed 92% of the time. The experiences ranged from 0-10 years of experience, but were based in numeric ranges as shown in the table three below.

Table 3		
Numeric Experience Ranges in HR Generalist Job Advertisements		
Minimum Experience	Frequency	Percent
0-1 Years	3	3.3
1-2 Years	6	6.5
2-3 Years	24	26.1

3-5 Years	36	39.1
5-7 Years	20	21.7
7-10 Years	3	3.3

This table represents the amount of previous human resource experience requested within the various job listings. Three listings indicated 0-1 years of experience. Six postings requested 1-2 years. Twenty-four ads requested 2-3 years of experience. Thirty-six indicated 3-5 years of experience was necessary. Twenty listings required 5-7 years and three postings sought 7-10 years of experience.

Communication Skills

The second part of research question three asks "To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online request communication skills?" In the job advertisements collected only 36% of them requested communication skills. Communication skills were operationalized by particular words or themes being present or absent within a given advertisement. Words included communication terminology such as written, verbal, or interpersonal communication skills request.

Website

The first part of research question four asks "To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online refer readers to a website?" For this study the researcher wanted to see if the companies would provide a website to obtain more information, or to apply directly for the position. Over half (56%) included a website (see

Figure 2) for the company, many advertisements redirecting the job seeker to a website

for a full job description.

***Figure 2*. Did the Advertisements Include a Website? This figure illustrates
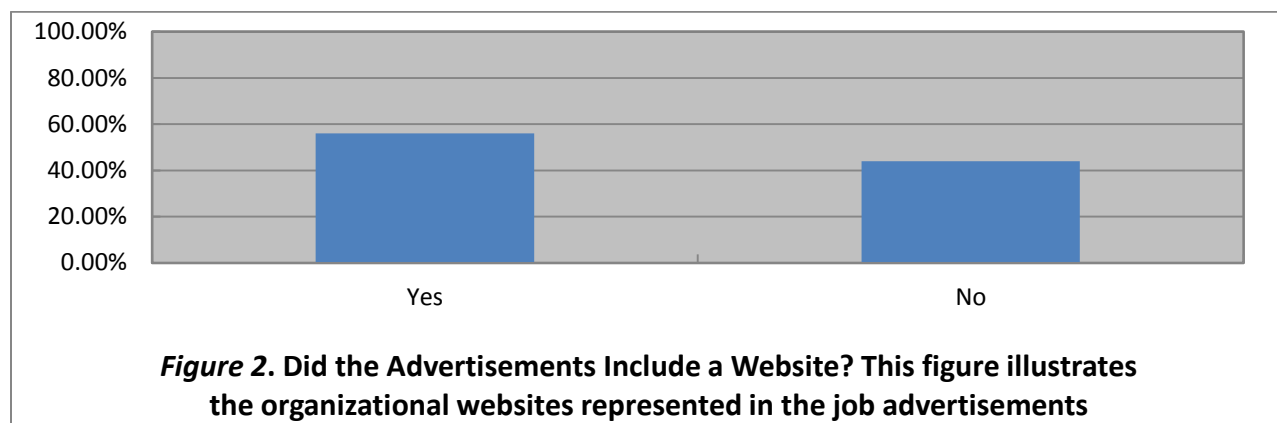the organizational websites represented in the job advertisements**

Mission and Values of the Organization

The second part of research question four asks "To what extent, if any, do HR

Generalist position job advertisements online include the mission or values of the

organization?" Mission and values statements are created by the companies to

communicate the purpose and focus of their organization. Missions and values represent

what the company does and usually remain unchanged throughout the tenure of the

organization.

***Figure 3*. Organizational Missions or Values in HR Generalist Job Advertisements. This figure illustrates missions or values represented in the job advertisements.**
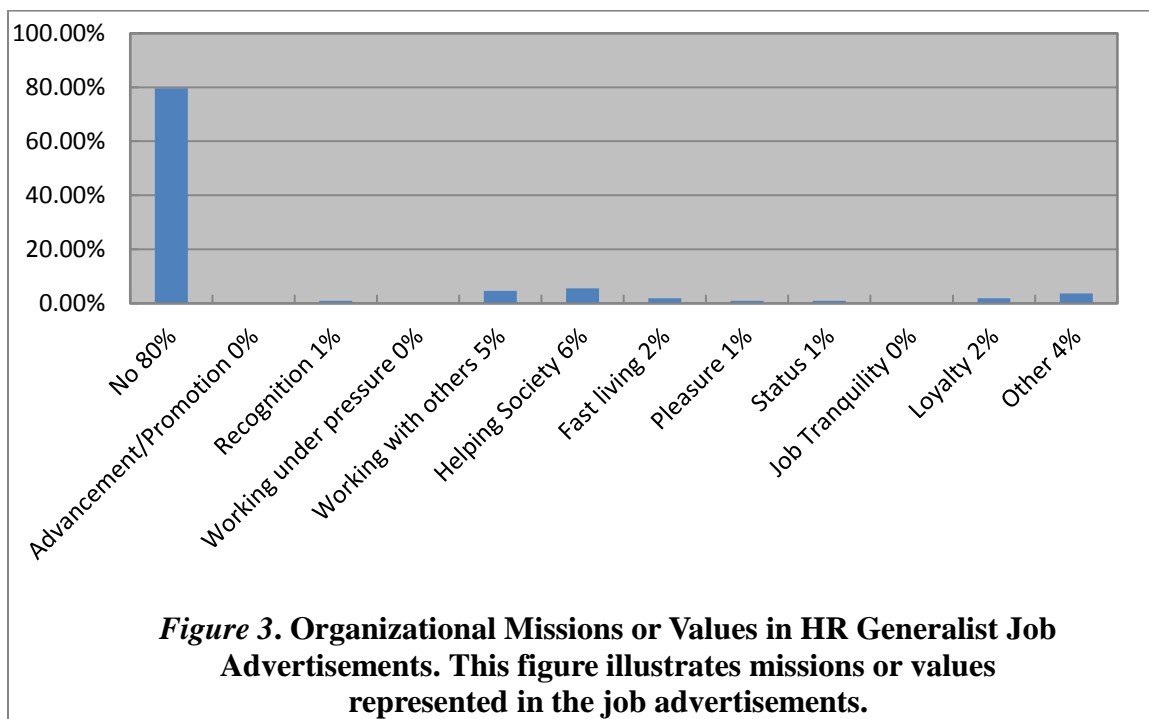
Figure three represents the organizational missions or values that were indicated in the collected job advertisements. There were 86 advertisements that did not indicate their mission or values in the job advertisement. Of the 14 that included this information, some indicated more than one mission or value. Helping society was reported as a part of the organizational mission by most with six, while working with others was discussed in five, and fast living and loyalty in two advertisements. Recognition, pleasure and status were each represented in one listing. There were four other missions or values that were coded under the "other" category, which required the coder to code open ended response. These four values were leadership; excellence; and education reform and valuing a diverse combination of ideas, perspectives and cultures.

Average Word Count and Reading Level

The fifth research question asks what is the average word count and reading level of HT generalist online job advertisements. The word count ranged from 109 words to 1,347. The highest word count was reported by the Armed Forces Services Corporation which listed their industry as government, while the lowest word count was from The City of Bridgeport in which they did not list their industry. The average word count for the advertisements collected was 257 words, the median is 14 and the mode is 164. The Flesch-Kincaid reading level ranged from 7.8 on the low scale and 37.8 as the high with an average of 15.2. The median is 14.4 with the mode be represented by two numbers, 14.4 and 14.5. The highest came from a confidential company that manufactures non-durable goods, and the lowest industry was listed as "services (profit)." The formula used to generate the Flesh-Kincaid reading level allows for over doctorate reading level, which is 22. For scores exceeding 22, the researcher recoded the advertisements and changed the reading levels to 22 in order to achieve a more meaningful mean. This new ranged resulted in 7.8 to 22 and a mean grade level of 14.9. Last, three job advertisements were unable to be processed by Microsoft work for readability to determine the Flesh-Kincaid grading level.

Chapter five discusses the information from the results of this study. Each research question is discussed, recommendations given, along with limitations and future directions.

Chapter 5

Discussion

In chapter one the researcher discusses the statement of the problem, along with its background. This includes information on the unpredictable job market and the vital problems that come along with volatility. With millions of people looking for jobs in the United States, companies are forced to search through many applications for a minimal number of positions. The background of the problem indicates that little research has been conducted on job advertisements. Though much research has been done on different methods that organizations use to communicate their corporate culture and the different techniques used to assimilate employees, still there needs to be continued research on which process is best. Chapter one included information on definitions of key terms and the value of the study. This study can be valuable to organizations hiring, as well as to Human Resource professionals who usually conduct the hiring. By producing quality job advertisements, they can ensure applicants that have a clearer understanding of the job, the company, and whether it will be the right fit for the applicants.

In chapter two the researcher introduces the literature review and presents information on organizational culture, assimilation and socialization. In addition, chapter two includes information on person-organizational fit, job advertisements, and information in corporate websites. Last, the chapter concludes with the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online include organizational goals?

RQ2: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online include

what the new duties/job will entail?

RQ3a: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online

provide a list of skills and abilities that will be needed to complete the duties

assigned?

RQ3b: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online

discuss communication skills?

RQ4a: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online refer

readers to a website for more information or to apply?

RQ4b: To what extent, if any, do HR Generalist position job advertisements online
include the mission and values of the organization?

RQ5: What is the average reading level and word count of HR Generalist position job

advertisements online?

Discussion

RQ1: Organizational Goals in Job Advertisements

Job advertisements are the first glimpse given to potential employees of the

organization for which they may be working. When job seekers begin the process of

applying for jobs, they began the first phase of socialization, the anticipatory phase. The

other phases-- encounter, change and acquisition, and disengagement-- occur once the

person is hired. Anticipatory phase begins when the employee reads the job

advertisement to gain valuable information about the job and company. The realism of

the organization begins when the job seeker learns the different ideas and goals of the

organization. When choosing which job to apply for, most often seekers choose

companies that have similar views and goals as themselves (Feldman, 1981). Chao et al. (1994) even state that those with mismatched goals from the company they work for have a higher likelihood of leaving. One way for companies to provide information regarding their company is by posting their organizational goals. This will help to inform the job seeker on what the companies' goals are and see if those goals are directly related to the job seekers'. For this study, realistic goals were selected from a list and an inquiry was done to see if these goals were also mentioned in job advertisements. Results indicate goals were not widely entered on to job postings for the sample. Only 15% of advertisements included organizational goals. When a company does not list its goals, does not list the company's name, and does not provide a website, it can be difficult to determine whether the organization is a good fit for the job seeker. This can lead to the person being hired and trained, but ultimately leaving the organization due to mismatched goals. This costs both employer and employee time and money.

RQ2: Job Description and Requirements in Job Advertisements

Feldman, Bearden, and Hardesty (2006) studied the effects of job descriptions in advertisements. Participants that viewed job advertisements with specific job descriptions regarded the ad as more informative. In addition to being more informative, the participants also had a positive attitude towards the advertisement and the company, the truthfulness of the ad, and the job's suitability for the participant (Feldman, Bearden, & Hardesty, 2006). Job descriptions were given 100% of the time in the job postings collected for this study. Describing the job, giving details regarding job functions and the scope of the position were important to each company to include the information in their advertisement. In addition to a job description section, the Society of Human Resource

Management (SHRM) website also included an option for companies to include job

requirements. These ranged from education to experience to specific HR certifications.

For this section, of the postings collected, 37% did not include this information. On the

SHRM website, descriptions and requirements are both optional fields, but some

companies chose not to include additional information on the job. Job advertisements

must be easily understandable and display the information which is most important to

employment consideration, like salary, benefits, and job requirements in order to be

considered attractive to a potential candidate (Cober et al., 2000). If this information is

not included, candidates can get frustrated and not apply for the position. Cober et al.

(2000) also stated the importance of adding job requirements; the study indicated that

more than half of the advertisements viewed included this information. For this study the

advertisements were easy to understand, but often did not include detailed information

regarding the specific requirements to complete the tasks of the HR generalist position

(see Appendix C). Upper Occoquan Service Authority is hiring for an HR Generalist, but

gives little information on what the generalist position entails. It is easy to read and

redirects the job seeker to a website to apply, but does not give additional details

regarding requirements for the position. Therefore, this aspect of the job listing may have

been a missed opportunity for pre-interview socialization by 37% of the sampled

companies.

RQ3a: Job Skills and Abilities in Job Advertisements

One way for companies to weed out unqualified persons is by listing required

skills and abilities. Hansen and Hansen (2009) stated that numerous studies had been

conducted on the top skills that companies wanted. After their search through several studies, the researchers developed a list of these critical skills. They identified analytical, computer literacy, flexibility, leadership, multicultural sensitivity and teamwork as top skills wanted by employers. With the exception of computer skills, Hansen and Hansen's list of critical skills did not match any of the skills most requested with in the job listings sampled in this particular study. However, relatable to computer skills is proficiency in Microsoft® Office products. Abilities in Microsoft® Office products were requested by 5% of the organizations with in this sample. A survey is conducted each year by The National Association of Colleges and Employers; in this survey the top five requested skills employers want from their 2013 recruits are the ability to verbally communicate to those inside and outside the organization, the ability to work in a team, decision-making and problem-solving skills, the ability to plan and organize, and the ability to obtain and process information. Again, none of these appeared in the top five for the job advertisements analyzed. This study found experience and education as the most sought after criteria. Rarely were working as a team or leadership skills requested, though, of the 100 listing sampled, they were represented by one job advertisement each. One explanation for why this study resulted in different skills and abilities requirements is likely to be due to the nature of the position. As a generalist employee, learning skills from education and past experience may be a priority over the other skills.

RQ3b: Communication Skills in Job Advertisements

Hansen and Hansen (2009) indicated the skill mentioned most often was communication skills, or the ability to listen, write and speak effectively. A study by North and Worth (2004) reported interpersonal skills to be the most commonly requested

skill found in 80% of entry-level job ads from newspapers in 10 metropolitan areas.

Additionally, they reported 49% of entry-level ads included requirements for basic

communication skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Interestingly,

however, in the 100 advertisements sampled and analyzed in the current study, 64% of

them did not request the job seeker to have learned communication skills. This could be

because the employers assumed that the job seeker would have these skills or know how

to develop them. Since many of the postings requested a combination of experience and

education, organizations may see communication as something the applicant would have

learned from their experience or education. This may offer an explanation for the lack of

request for communication skills.

RQ4a: Website Inclusion in Job Advertisements

Websites like Monster.com, Indeed.com, and the Society of Human Resource

Management are sites that companies can use to place their job advertisements.

According to Cober et al. (2000), a way to increase a company's exposure is by adding a

link to their corporate site on popular job posting websites. Companies can redirect job

seekers to their own company website for more information on the organization, the

position, and to application materials. Cober et al. randomly selected job postings from

the International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA) website.

Postings were viewed and the researchers indicated that 50% of the postings included a

web address for the organization. Comparatively, this study indicated similar results. For

this study, job postings listed websites 56% of the time. However, there was an increase

of six percent from the study done by Cober et al in 2000 and this study in 2013. This

increase may be due to an overall increase in internet communication over the course of

those years, and it may or may not be indicative of a significant increase. While this finding is resonant of past findings, it can have negative implications. Not having a website can be detrimental to the hiring organization. Previous research indicates that readers prefer job advertisements that include a website. With slightly over half of the job advertisements including a website, for those that did not include the information, it could become a missed opportunity for early socialization of a potential employee.

RQ4b: Mission and Values in Job Advertisements

Job advertisements are a way for companies to showcase information about important work-life issues. One way a company can do this is by expressing its mission and values clearly in its job advertisements. By being upfront with this information, a company may be more successful at attracting applicants who fit the organization. A company that clearly states its organizational values on its website or in a job advertisement will entice applicants to their organization who will be most satisfied within a particular organizational culture (Cober et al., 2000). Surprisingly, in this study only 14% of the job advertisements viewed included information regarding mission and values. These results are especially meaningful when compared with data from another study done by Cober, Brown, and Levy (2004); they went to websites of the "Best Companies to Work For" as listed by Fortune Magazine. The researchers indicated that, on the company's website directly, information regarding the company's values were listed 92% of the time, while the mission was listed 51% of the time. Not including a website and ensuring it is up-to-date with complete information could result in a missed opportunity of a new employee that is a good fit for the organization. An example of listing their values on the job advertisement is when Monsanto wrote, "We value a

diverse combination of ideas, perspectives and cultures" on their job advertisement (see Appendix D).

RQ5: Reading Level and Word Count in Job Advertisements

According to U.S. Department of Education (2003), there was a National Adult Literacy Survey completed in 1992, the first literacy survey, conducted in 1935, showed the average United States adult read at a 7.8 level (this means eight months into the seventh grade year). According to the survey, this number has slightly increased, but remains consistently low. The survey was completed again in 2003 reporting the average adult reads at a ninth-grade level. The survey reported 14 percent (30 million) of adults in the U.S. are functioning at below basic reading skills. Below basic reading skills are defined as not having adequate reading skills for daily life, a status which includes people who cannot read, must struggle to read, or cannot cope with unfamiliar or complex information. The National Center for Education Statistics' website, those with below basic reading skills cannot:

- Understand the instructions on a medicine container

- Read stories to their children

- Read a newspaper article or a map

- Read correspondence from their bank or any government agency

- Fill out an application for work

- Read the safety instructions for operating machinery

- Compete effectively for today's jobs

Based on this information, the target grade level for job advertisements is at a ninth-grade reading level. It should look like ten easy-to-understand words per sentence (Sumser, 2010). The Flesch-Kincaid reading level ranged from 7.8 to 37.8 with an average reading level of 15. The lowest reading level came from a company that was in the service for profit industry and requested a minimum education of a bachelor's degree. The highest came from an advertisement for an industry of manufacturing non-durable goods and requested an associate's degree. No clear pattern emerged for a comparison between word count and Flesh-Kincaid with industry. Of the job advertisements analyzed, there was an average of 257 words. The range was 109 (City of Bridgeport) to 1,347 (Armed Forces Services Corporation) words. City of Bridgeport did not list their industry, while Armed Forces Services Corporation was a governmental agency.

Recommendations

Through this study the researcher was able to analyze the results to determine recommendations for current HR professionals. Based on these findings professionals in HR world could, potentially, maximize outcomes by considering the following guidelines:

1. Consider carefully how purposefully job advertisements are written. Job advertisements can be written to ensure job seekers easily notice the company's purpose, motives and needs.

2. Professionals can maximize their results by including a link to their company website and advising job seekers to redirect to the website for more information.

3. On the website they can indicate goals, missions, values and other important information. By providing more information about the company, employers can provide a glimpse of the organizational culture and, in some ways, start socializing employees through the job posting.

4. Writing job advertisements in the appropriate reading level for the position and education requested could, potentially, increase the of the quality applicants the organization wants to hire.

Following these guidelines could lead to better person-organization fit, by finding an employee that will assimilate and socialize into the organization and its culture. This can limit turnover and save the company time and money. According to a *Wall Street Journal* article (How to Reduce Employee Turnover, 2009) the best way to reduce employee turnover is to hire the right person from the beginning. "Interview and vet candidates carefully, not just to ensure they have the right skills but also that they fit well with the company culture, managers and co-workers" (How to Reduce Employee Turnover, 2009, para. 3). In another *Wall Street Journal* article, the author notes that most frequently good employees leave if they do not get along with their boss (Hymowitz, 2007).

Limitations and Future Directions

Limitations

One limitation of this study occurs due to an economic downturn. Some companies have instituted hiring freezes or are changing what they want in an applicant, like doing more work, but with less pay. This may limit the researcher's ability to easily secure a variety of job advertisements, which is why a nationwide search was conducted.

The job advertisements were collected for a three-month time period. This time period was from November to January. This period is during a time where there are several holidays. Many companies shut down for a time period during holidays, and when companies are not open, they cannot write advertisements and post them.

An additional limitation may occur due to the fact that job advertisements selected came from only one website. This can limit the variety of advertisements analyzed. Only companies that are familiar with this website, are current members, or choose to advertise on this website were the only companies selected for this study. Some companies choose not to advertise online, causing another limitation to the study.

In addition, only Human Resource Generalist job postings were chosen. This limited to only one specific position being analyzed since each position could call for different skills, abilities, and provide various organizations with different values and goals. Different results for education, experience, skills, abilities, and requirements could be determined for a different position. Though it was not initially coded, the study found several companies wish to hire candidates with specific certifications (SPHR) or licensure for the HR Generalist position.

These factors all warrant investigation, and content analysis cannot speak to effects of underlying motives from the company's perspective. Certain limitations stem from the content analytic methodology, itself. Though content analysis can reveal to what extent the information is presented; it cannot speak to the reason the organization chose to include or not include items (Macnamara, 2005). This data are also limited to the categories and framework that the researcher chose for the analysis. The researcher based

the categories upon previous frameworks and narrowed the focus, limiting research that could have been done in other content areas.

Future Directions

For this study the researcher had 100% inter-coder reliability. This is important to note as future studies could use the same instrument. The instrument used found promising results with high reliability. Other fields, other than human resources, could also use this instrument. Other researchers could use the instrument to compare job advertisements for one position to job advertisements for another position. Future studies could test the outcomes of job descriptions with certain characteristics, readability, and skills or abilities.

In addition to using the instrument again, the researcher could use the dataset that has already been collected. This data could be used in a comparative analysis of public and private organizations, compare location and industry, along with salary or requested skills. Location could be used to view Midwest or Western or Eastern job advertisements to one another.

Other future directions could be a longitudinal study from the time the person viewed the advertisements, through the hiring process and complete with an interview after being employed at the company for six months. Interview questions could surround the idea of the accuracy of the job description to the actual position.

Focus groups with HR Resource professionals could be a valuable study for future directions. Looking at job advertisements in a focus group to generate ideas of what makes for a good job advertisement. The types of information to provide in a job advertisement to add clarity and description to find the best fit could also be discussed.

Different strategies for the interview process, mentoring and writing mission and value statements could also be addressed in the focus group. Using their different ideas, everyone can work together to find the best candidate for the company and the best company for the candidate.

Final Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore what is communicated to potential job candidates through job advertisements. This is important for three main reasons: (1) to explore the relationship between organizational anticipatory socialization and job advertisements along with organizational culture when it comes to assimilating and socializing employees, (2) to assist with person-organization fit, and (3) to potentially save time and money for both hiring organizations and job seekers. This study indicated that though companies may state their company name and industry, most often they do not reveal the organizational goals, missions or values. Communicating what is important to and for the organization, such as working environment, skills, and abilities required can help determine the compatibility between the person and the company. Finally, by considering the recommendations derived from this study and placing more information in the job advertisement, companies may be more likely to attract and hire ideal candidates. This practice could maximize hiring outcomes, potentially leading a company decreased employee turnover by hiring employees who are already aware of the company's organizational culture.

References

Adkins, C.L. (1995). Previous work experience and organizational socialization: A longitudinal examination. *Academy of Management Journal 38*(3), 839-862. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/256748

Allaire, Y., & Firsirotu, M.E. (1984). Theories of organizational culture. *Organizational Studies, 5*(3), 193-226. doi: 10.1177/017084068400500301

Barge, J.K., & Schlueter, D.W. (2004). Memorable messages and newcomer socialization dissent. *Western Journal of Communication, 68*(3), 233-256. doi:10.1080/10570310409374800

Berman, E.M., West, J.P., & Richter, Jr., M.N. (2002). Workplace relations: Friendship patterns and consequences (according to managers). *Public Administration Review, 62*(2), 217-230. doi: 10.1111/0033-3352.00172

Braddy, P.W., Meade, A.W., & Kroustalis, C.M. (2006). Organizational recruitment website effects on viewers' perceptions of organizational culture. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 20*(4), 525-543. doi: 10.1007/s10869-005-9003-4

Bureau of Labor and Statistics; U.S. Department of Labor. (2010). Number of jobs held, labor market activity and earnings growth among the youngest baby boomers: Results from a longitudinal study. [News release]. Retrieved from http://www.bls.gov/news.release/nlsoy.nr0.htm

Bureau of Labor and Statistics; U.S. Department of Labor. (2013). Mass Layoffs

    Summary: [Economic News release]. Retrieved from

    http://www.bls.gov/news.release/nlsoy.nr0.htm

BusinessDictionary.com. (2012). Online Business Dictionary. Retrieved from:

    http://www.businessdictionary.com/

Cable, D.M. & Judge, T.A. (1996). Person-organization fit, job choice decisions, and

    organizational entry. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes,*

    67(3), 294-311. doi: 10.1006/obhd.1996.0081

Cable, D.M. & Parsons, C.K. (2001). Socialization tactics and person-organization fit.

    Personnel Psychology, 54(1), 1-23.

Chaidaroon, S.S. (2003). How managers give effective instructions to new employees:

    Some sample scenarios for teaching supervisory communication. *Association for*

    Business Communication, Retrieved from

    http://www.businesscommunication.org/conventionsNew/ProceedingsNew/2003

    New/PDF/23ABC03.pdf

Chao, G.T., O'Leary-Kelly, A.M., Wolf, S., Klein, H.J., & Gardner, P.D. (1994).

    Organizational socialization: Its content and consequences. *Journal of Applied*

    Psychology, 79(5)**,** 730-743. Retrieved from

    http://www.fisher.osu.edu/~klein_12/Chao%20et%20al%20JAP%201994.pdf

Cober, R.T., Brown, D.J., Blumental, A.J., Doverspike, D. & Levy, P. (2000). The quest

for the qualified job surfer: It's time the public sector catches the wave. *Public*

Personnel Management, 29(4), 479–494.

Cober, R. T., Brown, D. J., & Levy, P. E. (2004). Form, content, and function: An

evaluative methodology for corporate employment web sites. *Human Resource*

Management, 43 (2-3), 201-218.

Daniels, C. (2004). Young, gifted, black—and out of here. *Fortune*, *149*(9), 48.

Drucker, P.F. (1986). *Managing for Results.* New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers

Eisenberg, E.M., & Goodall, Jr., H.L. (1997). *Organizational communication: Balancing*

creativity and constraint. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press

Feldman, D. C. (1976). A contingency theory of socialization. *Administrative Science*

Quarterly, 21(3), 433-452. Retrieved from

http://www.jstor.org.excelsior.sdstate.edu/stable/pdfplus/2391853.pdf

Feldman, D. C. (1981). The multiple socialization of organization members. *The*

Academy of Management Review, 6(2), 309-318. Retrieved from

http://www.jstor.org/stable/257888

Feldman, D. C., Bearden, W. O., & Hardesty, D. M. (2006). Varying the content of job

advertisements. *Journal of Advertising*, *35*(1), 123-141.

Fonner, K.L., & Timmerman, C.E. (2009). Organizational newc(ust)omers: Applying

organizational newcomer assimilation concepts to customer information seeking

and service outcomes. *Management Communication Quarterly, 23***,** 244-271.

doi: 10.1177/0893318909341411

Gargiulo, T.L. (2005). *The strategic use of stories in organizational communication and learning.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe

Gordon, G.G., & DiTomaso, N. (1992). Predicting corporate performance from organizational culture. *Journal of Management Studies, 29* (6)**,** 783-798.

doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6486.1992.tb00689.x

Hansen, R.S. & Hansen, K. (2009). What do employers really want? Top skills and values employers seek from job-seekers. Retrieved from http://www.quintcareers.com/job_skills_values.html

Highhouse, S., Beadle, D., Gallo, A., & Miller L. (2006). Get'em while they last! Effects of scarcity information in job advertisements. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 28* (9), 779-795. doi: 10.1111/j.1559-1816.1998.tb01731.x

How to reduce employee turnover. (2009). Lessons in leadership guide. *The Wall Street Journal,* Retrieved from http://guides.wsj.com/management/recruiting-hiring-and-firing/how-to-reduce-employee-turnover/

Hymowitz, C. (2007). Best way to save: Analyze why talent is going out the door. *The Wall Street Journal,* Retrieved from http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119058709501136713.html

Jablin, F.M. (1982). Organizational communication: An assimilation approach. *Social cognition and communication*. 255-286.

Jablin, F.M. (1994). Communication competence: An organizational assimilation perspective. In L. van Waes, E. Woudstra, & P. van den Hoven (Eds.), *Functional communication quality* (pp. 28-41). Amsterdam: Rodopi

Jablin, F.M. (2001). Organizational entry, assimilation, and disengagement/entry. In F. M. Jablin & L. L. Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods*. (pp. 732–818). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kaid, L. L. & Wadsworth, A.J. (1989). Content analysis. In P. Emmert & L. L. Barker (Eds.), *Measurement of communication behavior* (pp. 197-217). New York: Longman.

Klein, H. J., & Weaver, N.A. (2000). The effectiveness of organizational-level orientation training program in socialization of new hires. *Personnel Psychology, 53*(1), 47-66.　　doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2000.tb00193.x

Kramer, M. W., & Miller, V.D. (1999). A response to criticisms of organizational socialization research: In support of contemporary conceptualization of organizational assimilation. *Communication Monographs, 66*(4), 358-367. doi: 10.1080/03637759909376485

Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person–organization fit: An integrative review of its

conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology, 49***,**

1–49.

Macnamara, J. (2005). Media content analysis: Its uses, benefits and best practice

methodology. *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*, *6*(1), 1– 34.

Martin, J., & Siehl, C. (1983). Organizational culture and counterculture: An uneasy

symbiosis. *Organizational Dynamics, 12*(2)**,** 52–64. doi: 10.1016/0090-

2616(83)90033-5

Miller, K. (2009). *Organizational communication: Approaches and processes.* Boston,

MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Modaff, D.P., & DeWine, S. (2002). *Organizational communication: Foundations,*

challenges and misunderstandings. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

Myers, K. K., & Oetzel, J.G. (2003). Exploring the dimensions of organizational

assimilation: Creating and validating a measure. *Communication Quarterly,*

51(4), 438-457. doi: 10.1080/01463370309370166

National Association of Colleges and Employers (2013). The skills and qualities

employers want in their class of 2013 recruits.

http://www.naceweb.org/s10242012/skills-abilities-qualities-new-hires/

Neely-Martinez, M. (2002). Breaking the mold. *HR Magazine*, *46*, 82-90.

North, A. B., & Worth, W. E. (2004). Trends in selected entry-level technology,

    interpersonal, and basic communication SCANS skills: 1992-2002. *Journal of*

    Employment Counseling, *41*, 60-70

Ojha, A.K. (2005). Jablin's organizational assimilation theory and humor: A closer look

    at the ontological and epistemological issues of how humor can be used to

    assimilate into an organization. *Journal of Organizational Culture,*

    Communications and Conflict, 9(2), 131-146. Retrieved from

    http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Jablin%27s+organizational+assimilation+theory+a

    nd+humor%3A+a+closer+look...-a0166935417

Pacanowsky, M., & O'Donnell-Trujillo, N. (1983). Organizational communication as

    cultural   performance. *Communication Monographs 50* (2), 126-147.

    doi:10.1080/03637758309390158

Paasche-Orlow, M.K., Tayler, H.A., & Bancati, F.L. (2003). Readability standards for

    informed consent forms as compared with actual readability. *The New England*

    Journal of Medicine, 348, 721-726.

Phillips, J. M. (1998). Effects of realistic job previews on multiple organizational

    outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Academy of Management Journal*, *41*, 673-690.

Reinard, J.C. (2008). *Introduction to Communication Research.* New York, VY:

    McGraw-Hill.

Rafaeli, A., & Oliver, A.L. (1998). Employment Ads: A configurational

    research agenda, *Journal of Management Inquiry, 1*, 342-358.

Recruiters Network. (2012). Employment Recruiting Related Stats. Retrieved from

    http://www.recruitersnetwork.com/poll/stats.htm

Saks, A.M., & Ashforth, B.E. (1997). Organizational socialization: Making sense of the

    past and present as a prologue for the future. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 51*,

    234-279.

Society of Human Resource Management. (2013). *Jobs.* Retrieved from:

    http://jobs.shrm.org/home/home.cfm?site_id=1612

South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation. (2013). *Labor Market Information*

    Center, South Dakota Department of Labor and Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S.

    Department of Labor Retrieved from: http://dol.sd.gov/unemploymentrate.aspx

State of the Industry Report. (2008). The Society for Training and Development.

    Retrieved from: http://www.astd.org/Professional-Resources/State-of-the-

    Industry-Report

Stohl, C. (1986). The role of memorable messages in the process of organizational

    socialization. *Communication Quarterly, 34*, 231-249.

Sumser, J. (2010). Finding the right talent: 7 ways to a better job ad. *HRExaminer*

    Retrieved from: http://www.glassdoor.com/blog/finding-talent-7-ways-job-ad/

Teboul, J. B. (1997). "Scripting" the organization: New hire learning during

    organizational encounter. *Communication Research Reports, 14*(1), 33-47.

    doi: 10.1080/08824099709388643

Tierney, W. G. (1988). Organizational culture in higher education: Defining the

essentials. *The Journal of Higher Education, 59*(1), 2-21. Retrieved from

http://www.jstor.org/stable/1981868

Tierney, W. G. (1997). Organizational socialization in higher education. *The Journal of*

Higher Education, 68(1), 1-16. Retrieved from

http://www.jstor.org/stable/2959934

U.S. Department of Education (2003). National Center for Education Statistics, National

Adult Literacy Survey, 1992   and 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy.

Van Maanen, J. (1978). People processing: Strategies of organizational socialization.

Organizational Dynamics 7, 18-36.

Van Maanen, J. & E. H. Schein. (1979). Toward of theory of organizational socialization.

Research in Organizational Behavior, *1,* 209-264.

Vogt, W.P. (2005). *Dictionary of statistics & methodology* (3rd. ed.). Thousand Oaks,

CA: Sage.

Waldeck, J. H., Seibold, D.R., & Flanagin, A.J. (2004). Organizational assimilation and

communication technology use. *Communication Monographs, 71*(2), 161-183.

doi: 10.1080/0363775042331302497

Wanberg, C. R., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D. (2000). Predictors and outcomes of

proactivity in the socialization process. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 3,* 373-

385. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.85.3.373

Appendix A

Code Sheet

1. **Coder number:**
   Researcher
   Additional Coder

2. **Ad number:** _____

3. **Does the ad list the company as confidential?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i. If yes, list the company name:

4. **Does the ad list the company's industry?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i. If yes, list the industry:

5. **Does the ad list the location of the company?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i. If yes, list the location:

6. **Does the ad require minimum experience?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i. If yes, what experience range is requested:

7. **Does the ad include a job description section?**
   a. No
   b. Yes

8. **Does the ad include a section on job requirements?**
   a. No
   b. Yes

9. **Does the ad include a request for communication skills?**
   a. No
   b. Yes

10. **Does the ad include organizational goals?**
    a. No
    b. Yes
       i. If yes does it include any of the following goals (choose all that apply):
          1. Market Share
          2. Innovation
          3. Productivity
          4. Physical and financial resources
          5. Profitability
          6. Management performance and development
          7. Employee performance/goals
          8. Social responsibility
          9. Other
             a. List others:

11. **Does the ad include organizational mission or values?**
    a. No
    b. Yes
       i. If yes does it include any of the following words (choose all that apply):
          1. Advancement/Promotion
          2. Recognition
          3. Working under pressure
          4. Working with others
          5. Helping Society
          6. Fast living
          7. Pleasure
          8. Status
          9. Job Tranquility
          10. Loyalty
          11. Other
             a. List others:

12. **Does the ad include specific skills or abilities required for the job?**
    a. No
    b. Yes
        i. If yes does it include any of the following words (choose all that apply):
            1. Bachelor's degree
            2. Experience
            3. Microsoft® Office products proficiency
            4. Minimum word per minute (wpm) requirement
            5. Bilingual (English/Spanish)
            6. Other
                a. List others:

13. **How many words did the ad have?** _____

14. **What was the Flesch-Kincaid grade level?** _____

Appendix B

Code Book

1. **Coder number:**

    (1) Researcher
    (2) Additional Coder

Record the number assigned to your name

2. **Ad number:** _____
    Record the job ID from the advertisement. The job ID is located in the first box
    under the job title. It is the first item listed on the left hand side.

3. **Does the ad list the company's name?**

        a. No
        b. Yes
                i. If yes, list the company name:

Record no (0) if the company is listed as confidential or yes (1) if the company's
name is listed. List the company's name if it is listed. The company's name is located
in the first box under the job title. It is the third item listed on the left hand side.

4. **Does the ad list the company's industry?**
        a. No
        b. Yes
                i.   If yes, list the industry:

Record no (0) if the company's industry is not listed or yes (1) if the company's industry
is listed. Record the company's industry if it is available. The company's industry is
located in the first box under the job title. If listed it is the fourth item on the left hand
side. If it does not appear, it was not listed on the advertisement.

5. **Does the ad list the location of the company?**
        a. No
        b. Yes
                i.   If yes, list the location:

Record no (0) if the company's location is blank or not listed or yes (1) if the company's location is listed. Include the company location if one is given. The location is positioned in the first box under the job title. It is the last item listed on the left hand side.

6. **Does the ad require minimum experience?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i.   If yes, what experience range is requested:

Record no (0) if the company does not request minimum experience or it is blank or yes (1) if the company lists minimum experience.   Record the given experience range if answered yes. The experience is located in the first box under the job title. It is the fifth item listed on the right hand side.

7. **Does the ad include a job description section?**
   a. No
   b. Yes

Record no (0) if the job advertisement does not have a job description section or it is blank or answer yes (1) if the advertisement includes a job description section. The job description is located as the third box under the job title and near the bottom of the page.

8. **Does the ad include a section on job requirements?**
   a. No
   b. Yes

Record no (0) if the job advertisement does not have a job requirements section or it is blank or answer yes (1) if the advertisement includes a job requirements section. The job requirement is located as the fourth box under the job title and at the bottom of the page.

9. **Does the ad include a request for communication skills?**
   a. No
   b. Yes

Record no (0) if the company does not require communication skills or answer yes (1) if the company requests communication skills. Communication skills should be stated under the job requirements section. The job requirement section is located as the fourth box under the job title and at the bottom of the page.

10. **Does the ad include organizational goals?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
      i. If yes does it include any of the following goals (choose all that apply):
         1. **Market share:** The percentage of total sales volume in a market by a company.
         2. **Innovation:** The process by which an idea or invention is translated into a good or service for which people will pay, or something that results from this process. To be called an innovation, an idea must be replicable at an economical cost and must satisfy a specific need.
         3. **Productivity:** A measure of the efficiency of a person, machine, factory, system, etc., in converting inputs into useful outputs.
         4. **Physical and financial resources:** Using the company's physical and financial resources in the most efficient way possible.
         5. **Profitability:** The state or condition of yielding a financial profit or gain.
         6. **Management performance and development:** Providing management with training, along with opportunities for professional growth and development.
         7. **Employee performance/goals:** The job related activities expected of a worker and how well those activities were executed.
         8. **Social responsibility:** A company's sense of responsibility towards the community and environment (both ecological and social) in which it operates. Companies express this citizenship (1) through their waste and pollution reduction processes, (2) by contributing educational and social programs, and (3) by earning adequate returns on the employed resources.
         9. **Other**
            a. List others

Record no (0) if the company did not add their organizational goals or answer yes (1) if the company added their goals. If yes, please include which word(s) were included or other variations of the word(s) in the organizational goal by including the corresponding number next to the goal. Please see the following sheets for a definition/description of each word.

11. **Does the ad include organizational mission or values?**
   a. No
   b. Yes
       i. If yes does it include any of the following words (choose all that apply):
           1. **Advancement/Promotion:** Advancement in job rank, generally at higher pay.
           2. **Recognition:** Communication between management and employees which rewards them for reaching specific goals or producing high quality results in the workplace
           3. **Working under pressure:** Working under and urgent claim or demand.
           4. **Working with others:** Working with other members in or out of the organization.
           5. **Helping society:** Assisting or better the lives of individuals or groups in the community.
           6. **Fast living:** Risk tasking
           7. **Pleasure:** A feeling of happy satisfaction and enjoyment.
           8. **Status:** Social standing, prestige, high rank.
           9. **Job Tranquility:** Feeling untroubled at work, or serenity within the chosen profession
           10. **Loyalty:** The feeling of being supported and also supporting.
           11. **Other**
               i. List others:

Record no (0) if the company did not add their organizational mission and/or values or answer yes (1) if the company added their mission and/or values. If yes, please include which word(s) were included or other variations of the word(s) in the organizational mission/values by including the corresponding number next to the mission/value.

12. **Does the ad include specific skills or abilities required for the job?**
    a. No
    b. Yes
        i. If yes does it include any of the following words (choose all that apply):
            1. Bachelor's degree
            2. Experience
            3. Microsoft® Office products proficiency
            4. Minimum word per minute (wpm) requirement
            5. Bilingual (English/Spanish)
            6. Other
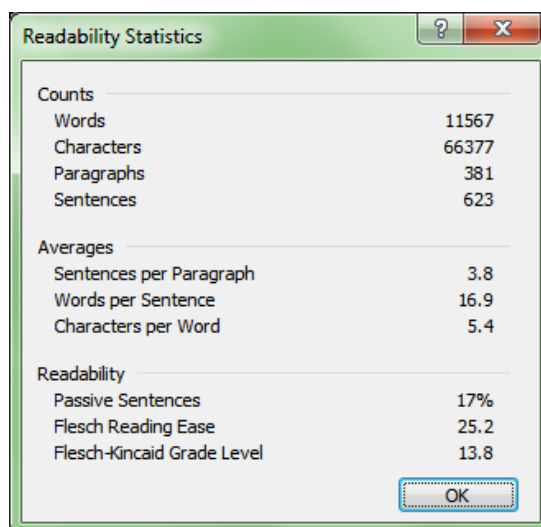   i. List others:

Record no (0) if the company did not add specific skills or abilities or answer yes (1) if the company added specific skills and abilities needed for the job. If yes, please include which word(s) were included or other variations of the word(s) in the skills or abilities by including the corresponding number next to the skill/ability.

13. **How many words did the ad have?** _____

After running a spelling and grammar check readability statistics will show. Record the word count.

14. **What was the Flesch-Kincaid grade level?** _____

After running a spelling and grammar check readability statistics will show. Record the grade level.

Appendix C

HR Generalist Job Advertisement (Upper Occoquan Service Authority)

HR Generalist

Job ID:	11364124
Position Title:	HR Generalist
Company Name:	Upper Occoquan Service Authority
Company Industry:	Utilities
Job Function:	HR Generalist
Entry Level:	No
Employment Type:	Full-Time
Location(s):	Centreville, Virginia, 20121-2506, United States

Posted:	November 8, 2012
Job Duration:	Indefinite
Relocation Costs paid:	None
Min Education:	BA/BS/Undergraduate
Min Experience:	3-5 Years
Required Travel:	0-10%
Required/Preferred Certifications:	PHR

Research Tools:

See Location on Map   Learn More About Location

APPLY FOR THIS JOB
Contact Person: Human Resources Manager**Email Address:**
Apply URL:http://Goodjobs@uosa.org
Save JobEmail JobPrint Job
Job Description

Human Resources Generalist

Why not join the leader in water reclamation and reuse in the Northern Virginia region? The Upper Occoquan Service Authority is looking for a Human Resources Generalist with three to five years of experience supporting all operating units of the plant. If you are interested, please go to www.uosa.org to apply.

Appendix D

HR Generalist Job Advertisement (Monsanto)

HR Generalist

Job ID:	11362490		
Position Title:	HR Generalist	**Posted:**	November 8, 2012
Company Name:	Monsanto	**Entry Level:**	No
		Employment Type:	Full-Time
Company Industry:	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	**Job Duration:**	Indefinite
Job Function:	Communications, Employee Relations, Employment/Recruitment, HR Generalist	**Min Education:**	BA/BS/Undergraduate
		Min Experience:	3-5 Years
Location(s):	Soda Springs, Idaho, 83276, United States		

Research Tools:

See Location on Map   Learn More About Location

APPLY FOR THIS JOB
Apply URL:http://jobs.monsanto.com/HRLead
Save JobEmail JobPrint Job
Job Description

HR Lead - Chemistry Manufacturing

Soda Springs, Idaho

Monsanto is seeking a highly motivated individual.

Job Requirements

Required Skills/Experience:

- Bachelor's degree in HR, Management, Business Administration or related field
- Knowledge of HR laws, policies, practices and programs
- Strong interpersonal, leadership, and project management skills
- 3+ years of progressive HR experience.

To apply visit **jobs.monsanto.com/HRLead**

Monsanto is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse combination of ideas, perspectives and cultures. EEO/AA EMPLOYER M/F/D/V