A Qualitative Study of Northwest Suburban Chicago School District Hiring Practices

Raymond J. Kuper
Loyola University Chicago

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A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NORTHWEST SUBURBAN CHICAGO SCHOOL DISTRICT HIRING PRACTICES

Hiring excellent teachers is a significant and important task that all schools are involved in. This study was undertaken to carefully isolate the procedures and people involved and their roles in the teacher hiring process. The guidelines that were used by the sampled school districts were pinpointed and analyzed. This study also organized comprehensive systematic procedures and activities that were needed when hiring teachers.

Ten Northwest Suburban Chicago school districts were purposely selected and an interview questionnaire was composed. The superintendent, personnel director or other central office administrator, principal, and a newly hired teacher were interviewed face-to-face to collect the data.

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. What are the current hiring procedures being used in the school districts being studied?
2. What is the purpose of each step in the procedure?
3. Why are these procedures the way they are?
4. Who are the people involved and what are their roles in the hiring procedures?
5. What formal or informal ways are used to assess the hiring procedures?
6. What frames of reference are used and are the basis
in determining hiring procedures?

7. What role can business hiring practices play in teacher selection practices?

The school districts studied all used the following components to some extent when hiring teachers. They were recruiting, examining resumes, credentials, transcripts, and letters of recommendation, application forms, interview(s), and a job offer. Three other components - phone references, job descriptions or job analysis, and work samples (portfolios, videos, or teaching demonstrations), were used more sporadically.
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NORTHWEST SUBURBAN CHICAGO SCHOOL DISTRICT HIRING PRACTICES

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BY
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You all share in this great accomplishment.
VITA

The author, Raymond J. Kuper, was born in Chicago, Illinois. His elementary school education was obtained at St. Matthias grade school in Chicago. He attended Amundsen High School in Chicago where he graduated in 1965.

In September, 1965, he entered Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, receiving a degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in instrumental music. The author received his Master of Music Education degree from DePaul University of Chicago in 1974.

Raymond Kuper currently serves as Superintendent in Union Ridge School District 86 in Harwood Heights, Illinois. He is married and has two children.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................ iii
VITA .................................................. iv

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION. ........................................ 1
   Need for the Study ..................................... 1
   Purpose of the Study .................................. 2
   Research Questions .................................... 3
   Limitations of the Study ............................... 4
   Research Design ....................................... 5
   Organization of the Study ............................ 29

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH ... 30
   Public School District Hiring Practices ............. 30
   Related Areas of Hiring ................................ 43
   Business Hiring Practices ............................. 54
   Summary ............................................... 65

III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA ............... 66
   Introduction .......................................... 66
   Research Question I ..................................... 67
   Research Question II ................................... 111
   Research Question III .................................. 112
   Research Question IV .................................. 113
   Research Question V ................................... 116
   Research Question VI ................................... 118
   Research Question VII .................................. 121
   Summary ............................................... 123

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ....... 124
   Summary ............................................... 124
   Conclusions .......................................... 127
   Recommendations ...................................... 139
   Recommendations for Further Research ............... 150

REFERENCES .............................................. 151
Appendix

A. ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE . . . . . 158
B. NEW TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE . . . . . 163
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

One of the most important tasks and responsibilities administrators have is the hiring of teachers. They are constantly involved in some aspect of this process. These aspects include analyzing the positions that need to be filled, finding places to locate and recruit potential candidates, recruiting and interviewing candidates, and ultimately getting the "right" candidate for the position available. It has been estimated conservatively that for every new hire a school district makes, there will be an investment over one million dollars in the twenty to twenty five years that person will work in the district.

Need for the Study

Hiring teachers is an ongoing administrative activity that is significant and important to the educational field. There is little formal training available that helps school personnel with hiring procedures. More specifically, these procedures probably include the following: recruitment, a job description, applicant paper screening, interviewing, a teaching demonstration, examining a candidate's portfolio or video, offering the applicant the position, and officially hiring the applicant. Furthermore, there are very few studies of school districts that attempt to outline clearly
which procedures should be involved in hiring teachers, what
the benefits of each procedure are, who should be involved,
and for what reasons.

Many businesses have much better formalized information
and available formats in personnel hiring procedures.
Numerous books have been composed with specific procedures
and guidelines that are written and prepared by professional
"headhunters", psychologists, and personnel specialists.
The schema for specific activities and a specific system of
hiring is available. Educational hiring could benefit from
the same.

**Purpose of Study**

The study carefully attempts to isolate procedures and
people involved in the hiring process and their roles. It
seeks to pinpoint the guidelines that actually result in
hiring the kind of teacher wanted by a specific school
district. The characteristics of applicants needed by
school districts were ascertained and then related to the
procedures used to hire them. An evaluation of the
components of sampled school district hiring systems and
their importance in hiring good teachers was included in the
study. An additional purpose of this study was to organize
a comprehensive systematic procedure, including the
activities needed in a complete hiring system, and to
present the options, components, and importance of these
steps that are deemed excellent and successful.
In summary, this study determined the different procedures and components used in a sample of Northwest Suburban Chicago Elementary Public School Districts when they hire teachers. It included the people involved in these procedures, their roles, responsibilities, and decision making power. Also, it learned why the procedures and components that school districts are using are that way, and the purpose of each step in those processes. And, lastly, it determined the components of good hiring procedures, and thoroughly designed a comprehensive program for school districts to use when hiring teachers.

Selecting teachers is an involved and comprehensive activity that when done correctly takes many hours of investment both with personnel and money. To have a formalized system based on good research and correct hiring activities saves both time and money. Furthermore, excellent results should come with the implementation of a comprehensive system.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the current hiring procedures being used in the school district being studied?

2. What is the purpose of each step in the procedure?

3. Why are these procedures the way they are?

4. Who are the people involved and what are their roles in the hiring procedures?
5. What formal or informal ways are used to assess the hiring procedures?

6. What frames of reference are used and are the basis in determining hiring procedures?

7. What role can business hiring practices play in teacher selection practices?

**Limitations of the Study**

Although this study was conducted by a researcher experienced in the hiring of teachers and use of the interview process, there is always some question concerning the data's reliability and validity. How to skillfully administer the questions to the respondents without subtly divulging how one wants them to answer is always a challenge. The hiring process is considered a subjective process even though many objective techniques are used. Qualitative research is best suited for this kind of study because it represents the very process of seeking validity and reliability through explanation and deep understanding of the research question(s). However, even though the outcomes and themes that result from this research are explanatory and insightful, one cannot generalize that all the data are predictive or specific to another situation.

Therefore, this study's aim was to interpret data collected while generating themes that come from the collection of information, using the interview process. Interviewing different administrative personnel within
school districts (superintendents, personnel directors, principals, and a newly hired teacher), gave a balance to the data so that interpretations, insights, and understanding were comparable and useful.

Research Design

This qualitative study carefully isolated procedures and people involved and their roles in the hiring process. Open-ended interviews with the school superintendent, the personnel director, a principal, and a newly hired teacher in each of ten Northwest Suburban Chicago Elementary School Districts were the primary data-gathering procedures. Triangulation of data was used to give further evidence and understanding to the research.

Therefore, the research design of this study is based on qualitative data determined from interviews and document collection.

Qualitative Study - Interview

A major focus in the hiring process is the use of the interview as a hiring tool. In fact, research shows that the interview is considered the most important procedure in the entire process and the major determiner in the final decision of selection. Using a qualitative research model with the interview as the major data gatherer was most appropriate because a major focus of the research included using interview techniques in the investigation. Face-to-face interviews with open-ended questions allowed the
researcher to be in direct touch with the research. A methodology was being used to investigate such a method.

Bernard (1988), states that qualitative analysis is the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain the existence of those patterns. Furthermore, Miles and Huberman (1984), state that qualitative data are attractive. They are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, assess local causality, and derive fruitful explanations. Findings from qualitative studies have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader than pages of numbers ability. Also, there is flexibility to pursue items discussed with the interviewee that elicit in depth information. Continual probing to clarify and elucidate the questions being asked can be accomplished immediately, because of the interaction of the interviewee and interviewer.

Bernard (1988), further comments on the use of the face to face interview. If a respondent does not understand a question in a personal interview, the researcher can fill him or her in and, if the researcher senses that the respondent is not answering fully, he or she can probe for more complete data. Also, Bernard further states that personal interviews can be much longer than telephone or self-administered questionnaires. A one to two hour long
personal interview can be relatively easy. It is next to impossible to get respondents to devote two hours to filling out questionnaires that show up in the mail.

Fowler (1990), states that the interview facilitates an interaction that brings the interviewer and respondent together. It is a kind of "play within a play". Beatty (1986), describes the interview process as a two-way discussion between a "job applicant and a prospective employee".

Glesne and Peshkin (1992), also remark that face to face interviews are the predominant distinctive feature of qualitative research. However, they also caution the researcher about becoming too entwined with the people being studied, so that the data are not contaminated through personal involvement. Researcher objectivity is of utmost concern.

In summary, as a final way of showing that qualitative inquiry and the face-to-face interview is the best method for the study of school district hiring practices, Miles and Huberman (1984), describe the researchers with following characteristics as being best for this kind of inquiry.

- some familiarity with the phenomenon.
- strong conceptual interests.
- good investigative skills.
- a multidisciplinary approach as opposed to a narrow grounding or focus in a single discipline.
These characteristics describe this researcher well.

**Triangulation**

Triangulation is a methodology used to give more validity and understanding to research data. There are a number of kinds and types of triangulation. These include data, methodological, theoretical, and investigator triangulation. This research used data triangulation.

**Data Triangulation**

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) state that the qualitative researcher draws on some combination of techniques to collect researcher data, because there are more sources tapped for understanding which help present more believable findings. These techniques are likely to:

1. Elicit data needed to gain understanding of the phenomenon in question.
2. Contribute different perspectives on the issue.
3. Make effective use of the time available for data collection.

In summary then, the use of multiple data collection methods (triangulation) contributes to the trustworthiness of the data.

Miles and Huberman (1984), state that triangulation is one way to look at internal indices that provide convergent evidence. By checking an item (document, etc.) against an already validated one and they concur, the new item test has good "concurrent validity". Triangulation supports a
finding by showing that independent measures of it agree or at least do not contradict. They go on further to say that triangulating is a state of mind. If one self-consciously sets out to collect and double check findings using multiple sources and modes of evidence, the verification process will largely be built into the data gathering process and little more will need to be done than to report on one's procedures.

In summary, by the use of data triangulation, the examination of the written forms, policies, procedures, etc. collected from the representative school districts gave further evidence to support, clarify, or deny the data gathered and the concepts proposed in the interviews. This further enhanced, verified, and generated findings in this research study.

**Data Collection**

The collection of the data was accomplished in two ways. As was stated before, face-to-face interviews were used together with collection of documents in the participating school districts.

**Construction of Interview Questions**

The interview questions closely followed the research questions mentioned previously at the beginning of the Chapter. Two instruments were constructed, one for the administrators that hire the teachers, and one for a newly hired teacher.
The administrator's interview document asked questions concerning demographics of the school district and personal information. Twelve open-ended questions, along with many predetermined probes, followed so that maximum information could be gathered and obtained. Also, follow-up questions that sought depth and clarity of the information in the answers were used consistently. The perspectives of the interviewee, together with his/her thoughts, feelings, insights, impressions, and opinions, were documented. The thoughts, answers, and ideas were written as the respondent talked.

An interview often can be characterized as issues needing explanation rather than questions seeking answers. The face-to-face interview format allowed for much flexibility, as it gave the questioner freedom to arrange the probes, so that the most significant information from the respondent was obtained.

The final interview question asked the administrator to consider the following components of the hiring process and to rank them one through seven in order of importance. It should be added however, that the interviewees were allowed to use a number more than once. Most administrators chose that option. The categories were:

1. Recruiting
2. Job Description or Job Analysis
3. Credential Review
The newly hired teacher’s instrument was constructed in much the same fashion. Four open ended questions with follow up probes were the predominant data gathering device. The researcher was aware of the potential nervousness of newly hired teachers, and judiciously framed and reframed the questions and probes to get the most clear data in return. Special self-awareness was pursued so as to keep the questions non-biased and clear. Also, the teacher was asked the same final question as the administrator; that is, to rank the seven hiring categories from one to seven. The same option of using a number more than once was offered.

The intent in using separate questionnaires was for a variety of purposes.

1. The researcher wanted to see if the goals of the administrators conducting the hiring procedures were also identified by the newly hired teacher.

2. The researcher wanted to compare the administrator’s perceptions of the hiring process, and those of the person recently hired.

3. The researcher wanted to ascertain if contradictory
information was evident from the administrator and the teacher.

4. The researcher sought to learn how much of the information acquired agreed with the collected research.

As listed in the questionnaire that was composed for the administrators, the goal in questioning the newly hired teacher was to obtain, clarify, unearth, and uncover information that would give further insight and understanding to the overall research project and research questions. The inclusion of the newly hired teachers as research participants accomplished that goal.

**Sample**

Ten school districts in Northwest Suburban Chicago were selected as sample sites. Twenty-five administrators and ten newly hired teachers were interviewed. These interviews took place during the time period of August, 1994 through November, 1994.

Miles and Huberman (1984), comment on multiple site sampling as being appealing because...they can be purposely sampled and thereby make claims about a larger universe of people, settings, events, or processes than single site studies.

A wide variety of considerations in the staffing of the sampled schools influenced the selection of teachers. Some of these included the financial abilities of the districts, and the racial, cultural, and bilingual populations of the
Northwest Suburban Chicago was selected because the schools are considered excellent. All the districts covered scored better than state average on the Illinois Goal Assessment Profile which is a testing program given to the State of Illinois Public School students.

The second criterion was finding districts that would commit to the extensive interviews needed to do this study, and to allow this researcher access to the superintendent, personnel director, principal, and a newly hired teacher. Also, providing the written policies, documents, and forms used in hiring for use by the researcher were necessary.

The researcher personally contacted each superintendent in the Northwest Suburban districts based on recommendations of other superintendents and criteria previously noted, to participate in this study. Fifteen districts were asked, and ten agreed to be part of the study.

In many ways the research sample reflected well the demographics of Northwest Suburban Chicago. It was a varied group that was most representative. Very wealthy districts to very poor districts were included, together with some which had enrollments of five hundred to three thousand five hundred. Ethnically and racially diverse districts were also included.

Choosing selected sites as a sample, as is the case of this study, is often called purposive sampling. Bernard
(1988), comments that purposive sampling when backed up by ethnographic data are often highly credible. Babbie (1975), refers to purposive sampling wherein a selection is made from observations which the researcher believes will produce the most comprehensive understanding of the subject being investigated.

The interviews of the superintendents, personnel directors, principals, and newly hired teachers were done over a period of three months. Each interview lasted from one to two hours. The written forms, policies and other written materials to be used in the study, were collected over the same period of time.

The administrators themselves brought a wide variety of experiences to their positions. The superintendents had been in place from one to eight years. However, even the newly hired superintendents had experience in other superintendencies for at least three years. One district and superintendent was asked to participate in this research because of a special hiring model he had developed. This model will be used as part of a frame of reference upon which this study will be based upon.

Dr. Darrel Lund, former superintendent of East Williston, New York, was recommended by the Rand Corporation as having implemented a highly successful hiring system while he served in that district. Rand recommended in their study that this system be replicated by others. Dr. Lund is
the current superintendent in North Shore School District, a suburb close to Chicago. He was asked to be part of the sample, both to see if he had installed the East Williston model in the North Shore District, and to get further information about its use as a reference and comparison study with other districts.

Again, the use of the purposive sample is described by Patton (1990), wherein he writes that the logic and power of purposive sampling permits the selection of information that are rich cases that can be studied in depth. He further states that these typical cases are effective samples because the information obtained can be generalized. And, such cases often reveal a great deal of information which is important to the purpose of the study.

There were personnel directors or other central office administrators that participated in the hiring process in five of the ten districts studied. In the five districts that did not have personnel directors the hiring was done by the superintendent and principal. The range of experience of the five personnel directors was one to twenty years. Again, these administrators came from a variety of backgrounds.

The principals interviewed also represented a varied group. Although seven of them had a minimum of fifteen years in their current position, two were in their second year, and the other had been a principal for five years.
Eight of the newly hired teachers interviewed were in their first teaching positions. The other two teachers were experienced and had worked in other school districts.

In summary, the interview sample included the superintendent, personnel director, principal and newly hired teacher in ten Northwest Suburban Chicago School Districts. The superintendent selected the people who would participate in the interview except for the teachers, who were chosen by the principal. The one-to-two hour interviews were conducted at the school site.

**Pilot Study**

A pilot study was undertaken in one school district as a way of checking the pre-designed questionnaire and discovering if the interviewees could offer any suggestions for improvement. Glesne and Peshkin (1992), stated that pilot observations and interviews should be as close to the realities of the actual study as possible. Ideally, pilot study participants should be drawn from the target population.

The researcher was interested in gathering information from the respondents to see:

1. If they believed that there were any additional interview questions or probes needed.
2. If the chronology of the questions was logical and appropriate.
3. If the questions themselves would elicit thought-
provoking and rich responses.

4. If they thought the questions covered the subject of hiring completely, and encompassed the goals of the research.

Katz (1953), refers to the pilot study and its purposes. The pilot study develops procedures for applying the instrument to test the working of the questions so that they are suited to the understanding of the audience, and to ensure that the specific questions really reach a variable for which a measure is needed.

The pilot study results helped the researcher re-clarify a few questions and change the order of two of the questions, so that the flow of information from the respondents improved. Tuckman (1978), states that the pilot study is useful and highly desirable in that it provides a basis for the revision of questionnaires and interview guides. Glesne and Peshkin (1992), state that the idea of the pilot study is not to get data per se, but to learn about the research process, interview schedule, observation techniques, and one's self.

The pilot study reordered the research for the gathering of the data. The research plans were completed, the questions polished, and a scheduling of the respondents began. A time frame for the interviews was able to be implemented, and the calls were completed to the contributing school districts.
Analysis of Data

The analysis of the data occurred simultaneously as it was gathered. Because the interviews were done over a three month period, the researcher had the opportunity to recreate each interview and to add or delete from the notes taken during that time. Also, as Glesne and Peshkin (1992) emphasize, data analysis does not refer to a stage in the research process, but is a continuing process that starts as soon as the research begins. Data analysis done simultaneously with data collection enables one to focus and shape the study as it proceeds.

Miles and Huberman (1984), characterize data analysis as a three part process that included:

1. Data reduction - refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the "raw" data.

2. Data display - the organized assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action taking (usually written narrative).

3. Conclusion drawing/verification - from the beginning of data collection, the researcher is beginning to decide what things mean, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions.

Since this research was based upon comparing the collected data to a frame of reference based on Pinsker’s
PIE model and Lund's East Williston model, the researcher was continually able to compare the data taken during each interview. The data from all the interviews and thoughts, ideas, explanations, and processes and components of hiring were reviewed constantly. Additionally, memoing or writing down ideas, concepts, and possible analysis of the data was followed continuously throughout the collection process.

By writing memos to one's self or keeping a reflective log, one's thoughts can develop by taking ideas down as they occur, no matter how preliminary or in what form. The researcher becomes part of the process. Memo writing also frees the mind for new thoughts (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

Recording memos is a very helpful tool in data analysis. As Miles and Huberman (1984), state: memos are always conceptual in intent. Memos do not just report data, but they tie different pieces of information together in a cluster, or they show that a particular piece of data is an instance of a general concept.

Another data analysis device used during the research was coding. Coding for the qualitative researcher has four important functions.

1. It reduces large amounts of data into a smaller number of analytic units.

2. It puts the research into analysis during data collection, so that later information can be more focused.

3. It helps the researcher build a cognitive map, an
evolving schema for understanding what is happening locally.

4. When several researchers are engaged in individual case study work, it lays the groundwork for cross-site analysis by surfacing common themes and causal processes (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

The coding helped organize the data into manageable amounts by using major codes and subcodes. This system helped to give meaning to the data and assisted in the analysis.

In summary, the interview notes were used to elicit major themes. These themes were coded and referenced with the other interview notes. These data were then examined in relationship to the research questions and the frame of reference. This data gathering and analysis occurred simultaneously and followed Miles and Huberman's three part characterization of data analysis which compared and analyzed patterns, themes, and categories of each interviewee.

**Frames of Reference**

A frame of reference based on two different hiring systems, acted as models in viewing the research data collected. They were the East Williston, New York model as developed by Superintendent Dr. Darrel Lund, and the "PIE" (Profile, Interview, Evaluate) model of Richard Pinsker. Dr. Lund's East Williston model is an education model while Richard Pinsker's PIE model is a business model.
East Williston Model

Both Lund and Pinsker's premise is that the best predictor of future performance by an individual is their past performance.

East Williston's process has been compared to those modeled by leading universities in the hiring of their faculties. Comparisons have also been made to the hiring practices of leading businesses and government agencies.

East Williston defines positions, advertises their availability, evaluates and compares candidates, and selects the best available teacher (Wise, Darling-Hammond, Berry, Berliner, Haller, Schlecty, Praskad, & Noble, 1989a).

East Williston has a reputation for academic excellence; its reputation helps it attract excellent teachers. But, in all fields of endeavor, excellent institutions are distinguished by selection procedures that result in the hiring of excellent members. In turn, those members give the institution its excellence (Wise, Darling, et al., 1989a).

The East Williston process encompasses a wide search for candidates, the involvement of teachers currently on staff, an actual teaching performance (sometimes defined as a work sample) school level selection other than central office selection, and continual and thorough communication by all members of the selection team.

East Williston has many factors that make it an excellent place to work. It is a very wealthy area and teacher pay is very high. Students perform very well on SAT and ACT tests as do the elementary students on their
standardized tests. Support staff in curriculum (curriculum associates) are available to the teachers for support and inservice help (Wise, et al., 1989a).

The actual responsibility for hiring belongs to the principal of the school needing a new teacher. The steps involved are:

1. The principal appoints a team made up primarily of teachers. Their first job is to describe the job.

2. An advertisement is placed in the New York Times. At the same time, the availability of the position is made known in the district and, through word-of-mouth, around Long Island, New York.

3. The team then screens the 150-300 application letters and resumes. Formal applications are then requested from approximately fifteen to twenty persons.

4. These fifteen to twenty persons are then interviewed by the team and the number narrowed to three or four.

5. References are then called and the field narrowed to one or two.

6. The team then visits the finalists' school to observe the candidate teaching and to gather information from teachers and others. Where this is not possible, the candidate is invited to East Williston to teach demonstration lessons.

7. A recommendation is then made to the superintendent
who interviews the finalist or finalists (Wise, et al., 1989a).

One area of the hiring system that should be examined is the theory that teachers will behave in the future as they have in the past. Because newly certificated teachers’ past performance in teaching is limited, other methods are used to follow their philosophy in hiring. Therefore, when new teachers are hired in East Williston, the district gathers substantial evidence. Especially good candidates include the student teachers that taught in the district and the teacher aides who have worked in East Williston. The demonstration lesson is scrutinized very carefully as an attempt to make valid the appraisal of a new teacher as a future employee (Wise, et al., 1989a).

East Williston has other criteria that are used after a new teacher is hired to decide whether the new employee is really the candidate the district wants. A systematic program for new teachers includes staff development, three formal evaluations the first years and subsequent years to tenure (year three), mentoring by experienced teachers, and help from the curriculum associates (Wise, et al., 1989a).

The East Williston model has proved very effective in hiring the kind and quality teachers the district wants. The only drawback is when the process must be abbreviated, as vacancies occur so near to the start of school, or in the middle of summer when the veteran teachers are not
available.

The cost of hiring substitutes in order to give the teachers on the hiring committee time to do some of the screening work is an add on and needs to be evaluated. If other districts are in financial problems, they may have difficulties giving release time, and need to do this work after or before the regular teaching day. The need to anticipate vacancies is as important as the rest of the process. This impacts the ability to see through to the end of the entire hiring process, because of time limitations.

No doubt, the East Williston model is an effective and highly organized hiring process. The ability to attract top quality candidates because of its reputation and good salaries cannot be underestimated. But, hiring excellent teachers that best fit the position continues that reputation and perpetuates an excellent hiring system (Wise, et al., 1989a).

Additionally, the leadership provided by the Superintendent Darrel Lund, cannot be over emphasized. He implemented this model and worked with the entire staff in seeing that it was followed. Also, the resemblance to the Pinsker PIE system is quite close and the two combined make for an excellent framework to be used by school districts in hiring teachers.

**PIE Model**

Richard Pinsker’s PIE (Profile, Interview, Evaluate)
system comes from his book entitled, Hiring Winners. The system is based on the premise (as mentioned before) that people usually will behave in the future the way they have in the past. The components of the three step system include:

1. Profile - the profile defines the requirements of the job. It identifies the jobs that need to be done and the results expected from the performance of the hiree. In looking at the profile and the performance expectations, a definition of the kind of person needed for the job can be identified.

Pinsker identifies this step as being the key to the whole selection process while at the same time stating that this is often overlooked by the hirer. Pinsker furthermore specifies what is meant by performance expectations. The first step in developing a workable Profile is to list the performance profiles. What will filling this position actually accomplish? What will be the desired results? (Pinsker, 1992).

Pinsker states that results are synonymous with accomplishments, whereas job descriptions merely reflect activities, which may be "blue smoke and mirrors" designed to disguise or hide an employee's confusion and ineptitude. However, listing goals - "Today, I am going to get a $50,000 order and develop a new customer, or I am going to find a method to reduce the cost of manufacturing this by five
percent" - means talking about results and accomplishments, not mere activity (Pinsker, 1992).

Using the PIE system, candidates can be questioned and given a copy of the performance expectations so that they know beforehand what is expected of them.

As Pinsker goes on to describe what he calls the "Blueprints of a Winner", he lists the characteristics both personal and professional of excellent candidates.

1. Look for success patterns - what have they done in the past?

2. What past experiences of the candidate fit into the needs of the job performance expectations? Is there a match?

3. List a number of personal characteristics that are important to the company and the specific job. These should be developed by a team at the place of hiring.

Furthermore, all of these characteristics should be put into categories of Absolutes - those that a candidate must have to be hired, and Pluses - those characteristics that are a bonus.

The author also mentions the importance of recruitment and places to consider. He identifies looking within the system, recruiting from other firms, setting up networks, and using specific publications that cater to specific jobs as places to recruit (Pinsker, 1992).

The second main part of the PIE system is the
The interview is based on the previous work of the profile, performance expectations, and characteristics both absolutes and pluses that have been gathered. The profile needs to be studied so that all interviewers are familiar with it and know the requirements for the job.

The interview setting should be comfortable and the interviewer should make the applicant as much at ease as possible. Pinsker remarks that a comfortable candidate will open up and the interviewer will be able to find out what is needed (Pinsker, 1992).

Pinsker encourages the interview to be started with the early history of the candidate. The interviewee will often reiterate answers to many of the questions that were to be asked and developed.

Pinsker develops an agenda for an interview thusly:
1. Make the candidate feel comfortable and at ease.
2. Explain the agenda for the day (timetable).
3. Tell the candidate where you would like him/her to begin discussing his/her background.
4. When you are satisfied that you have tracked the success patterns and personal characteristics, review the yellow flags to make sure all your questions have been answered.
5. Make certain that the candidate knows what the job entails.
6. Obtain his/her reaction to the position including what he/she feels it offers and what he/she can contribute.
7. Ask if he/she has any questions about the company.
8. Discuss compensation.
9. Close the interview.

The author reminds the interviewer to keep the candidate talking and to take plenty of notes for reference later when candidate evaluation is finished.

The third part of the process is the candidate evaluation. How are the candidates distinguishable and who is best? The purpose of the evaluation according to Pinsker is:

1. To rate the candidate's success patterns and personal characteristics against the Profile.
2. To match the evaluation of one candidate against that of another or others.
3. To compare the evaluations of several people who have interviewed the same candidate (Pinsker, 1992).

If one looks at the Candidate Evaluation Form (Pinsker, 1992) it is evident that all the important criteria are listed which are needed to evaluate potential hires. Also, Pinsker tells the hirer not to ignore intuition. Facts are important, but the use of intuition based on fact and experience is invaluable and a powerful force in hiring
In summary, Pinsker's PIE system is a framework that uses the same basic components as the East Williston model. Although some of the basic steps are different, the two systems merged together provide an excellent hiring model for use as a comparison and group of components and techniques as a tool in hiring teachers. When the data are presented in Chapter III, this frame of reference will be used as a model and a check point in formulating an excellent teacher hiring system.

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into four chapters. Chapter I consists of the introduction, need for the study, purpose of the study, limitations of the study, research design, data collection, construction of the interview questions, sample, pilot study, analysis of data, and frame of reference. The review of related literature makes up Chapter II, while Chapter III presents a detailed presentation and analysis of the study's findings. Chapter IV includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Only a limited number of studies have covered the entire spectrum of school district hiring practices. There have been, however, many studies that viewed specific areas in hiring i.e., teacher induction, using objective examinations when hiring teachers, or discriminatory practices in hiring. Also, much research has been done on the interview process and its relationship in hiring good teachers. In addition, many of the articles have been devoted to the hiring of principals or superintendents, and the hiring of personnel at the college level.

An area closely related to school hiring procedures concerned the employment practices of businesses. A variety of studies and hypotheses in personnel selection were presented which stimulate thought and deserve study when examining their relevance and use in hiring teachers.

Therefore, this chapter reviews the literature in the three different areas mentioned; that is, school district hiring practices, the related areas of hiring, and hiring practices used in business.

Public School District Hiring Practices

A study prepared for the National Institute of
Education and RANDS Center for the Study of the Teaching Profession, Effective Teacher Selection: From Recruitment to Retention - Case Studies (1987), and its companion, Effective Teacher Selection (1987) by Wise, Darling-Hammond, Berry, Berliner, Haller, Schlechty, Praskac, and Noble, (1989), was directed at two audiences: school districts that will soon be seeking large numbers of new teachers (as Illinois is now because of the 5 + 5 Retirement Program) and those who want to understand the effects of teacher selection practices.

Six districts were studied across the U.S. and were chosen based on their highly developed selection practices. These districts were Durham County, North Carolina, East Williston, New York, Hillsborough, Florida, Mesa, Arizona, Montgomery County, Maryland, and Rochester, New York. Specifically, these districts were chosen predicated upon the following criteria:

1. The district had a person in charge of selection or a clear organizational structure for selection decisions.

2. The district had a selection procedure that has been publicly articulated or at least could be precisely described.

3. The district had been using its procedure in recent years; that is, had been hiring a significant number of teachers.

4. The procedure had been in use for at least several
years.

5. The district received multiple nominations.

6. Study team members had knowledge of state policies and labor market conditions affecting the district's teacher selection process (Wise, Darling, Hammond, Berry, Berliner, Haller, Schlechty, Praskac, & Noble, 1987a).

Additionally, other criteria used in the selection were district size, enrollment trends, community type, pupil population, region of the country, labor market conditions, types of selection tools and processes, and degree of centralization/decentralization of the selection process (Wise, Darling-Hammond, Berry, et. al, 1987a).

The case studies were organized into six sections in which results and recommendation were noted. These six sections were considered the areas in which teacher selection activities were involved. They were: Recruitment, Screening, Hiring, Placement, Induction, and Evaluation. Also, the studies went beyond those six areas into one called The Induction School. By the Induction School, the authors proposed that a teacher did not become fully prepared unless he/she were supervised and mentored throughout the starting year by seasoned teachers who could be a positive influence.

The true purpose of this study was to assess teacher selection practices with a view to analyzing how teacher selection could be used to improve the quality of the
teaching force (Wise, et al., 1987).

Findings of the study included ten conclusions and twenty recommendations listed under the headings above. The one district to which special recognition was paid was East Williston, New York.

East Williston's premise, which was research based was that the best predictor of future performance by an individual was his/her past performance (Wise et al., 1987a). East Williston was led by their Superintendent, Darrel Lund, in their special selection process. The process involved its regular staff in the selection of new teachers on an on-going basis. The author recommended this process as an inexpensive and thorough way of hiring. It had two additional benefits, in addition to hiring excellent teachers; the teachers acted as professionals, which had positive influences on their own working conditions, and this attitude was transmitted to the prospective employees.

In summary, school districts in this study assessed candidates academic qualifications, interpersonal skills, and teaching performance by reviewing certification and college transcripts, checking professional references, conducting formal standardized interviews, testing basic and subject matter skills, conducting school level interviews, consulting informal networks, and observing actual teaching performance (Wise, et al., 1987a).

Also, other factors revealed that although districts
appeared to use similar processes in hiring, there were also wide differences. These included criteria in selection tools, weighing of indicators of teaching ability, centralization or decentralization of decisions, and manner of treatment before, during, and after hiring.

The authors summarize that an effective selection program was one that resulted in the hiring and retention of the kind of teacher the district valued, rather than the type who merely happened by and stayed (Wise, et al., 1987a).

Additionally, East Williston's selection procedures may be looked at as exemplary and as a model when comparing their procedures, practices, and policies to the results of the study being undertaken.

A study of the perceptions of elementary principals in the area of interview techniques and the hiring of competent teachers was done by Pinsoneault (1990). The purpose of his study was to determine if elementary principals in Northern Lower Michigan felt adequately trained in interview techniques (Pinsoneault, 1990). His research deduced that most principals were not trained in interviewing techniques, but were interested in receiving training and felt there was a need for it. The study included information collected from seventy Michigan principals.

Other data derived from the research showed that most of the principals in the study used a team approach to
interviewing, and that structured interviews were used most often when interviewing candidates.

Owens (1992) did a qualitative study in Minnesota on the selection and hiring of effective teachers. The purpose was to investigate how school districts were currently selecting teachers and whether these practices were concurrent with the valued competencies of effective teachers within these school districts (Owens, 1992).

Owens proposed that since the interview was the major determinant in employing teachers, the importance of gathering correct information about the process was paramount (Owens, 1987). The areas that pertained to the selection process were Interview Characteristics, Applicant Characteristics, Interviewer Training and Experience, Position Characteristics, Interviewer Behavior in the Interview, Applicant Behavior in the Interview, and Impressions of Previous Applicants. The study found that Minnesota school districts spent little effort on two of the areas mentioned; that is, Applicant Characteristics, and Interviewer Training and Experience. These two areas according to the research were considered very important parts in teacher selection.

The Owens study recommended that teacher processes be examined at a national level, and that graduate schools include instruction in teacher selection for future administrators. Additionally, school district
administrators should develop such processes within their school districts, based on personnel selection research.

Brown (1993) studied employment practices in the secondary schools of Arkansas. These practices were examined through the use of a questionnaire given to principals, assessing their attitudes about methods of hiring as used in their school district.

Results of the research can be summarized by the following:

1. Principals placed importance on motivational techniques used by teachers as well as discipline strategies.

2. They understood the need to check thoroughly the background of the candidates, especially to "weed out" child abusers.

3. Principals had little training in hiring teachers, but felt this training was necessary.

4. The training should be ongoing because they saw the hiring of personnel as one of the important parts of their job.

Broberg (1987), looked at using a Delphi Technique in ranking criteria for hiring new teachers. This nationwide survey was sent to two hundred eighty chief hiring officers in school districts. Sixteen professional and sixteen personal criteria were identified. The top three professional criteria identified by the hiring officials
were understanding of children, knowledge of teaching skills, and ability to motivate. The top three personal criteria were ability to work with students, communication skills, and enthusiasm.

Butler (1992), *A Study of the Role of the Personnel Administrator in the Recruitment and Selection of Teachers in South Carolina*, was a study of all ninety-one public school districts in that state. Butler analyzed four selected categories of tasks of the personnel administrators to determine if these personnel tasks were performed, how often they were followed, the perceived proficiency of performance, administrators perceptions of the importance of the tasks, and their perceived need for inservice training (Butler, 1992).

Curaton and Cook (1988) proposed a criterion-related approach to hiring teachers; that is, comparing performance on a test with an independent measure of validity. Their goal was to match the right person to the right job. The criteria used as suggested by Anastasi (1988), included a job analysis, selecting or constructing a test to assess the job characteristics, correlating the test with appropriate criteria for job performance and formulating a strategy for personnel decisions. Anastasi (1988), further proposed the idea that teachers should be evaluated in the areas of skill competence, personality characteristics, and interpersonal skills when looking at them as possible new hires. The
position being offered should be looked at individually and the requirements in the three areas noted above be adjusted for the special needs of that position.

Cureton and Cook (1988), further discussed a statewide conference in Ohio that brought together thirty six college professors with the following goal. Could a "fit" be identified by way of a statistical model utilizing the perceptions of the various educations' professionals, representing several universities and colleges throughout Ohio (Cureton & Cook, 1988)?

Agreement was reached as to what a successful teacher does. These descriptors can be summarized as:

1. Supervise students including making decisions.
2. Examine and evaluate data.
3. Start, stop, control, and adjust various machines and equipment designed to help them accomplish their tasks.
4. Perform ordinary arithmetic, algebraic, and geometric procedures in standard practical applications.
5. Demonstrate language ability to conduct opinion surveys.
6. Have knowledge of a field of study dealing with abstractions, as well as concrete variables.

The outcome for this symposium of college personnel was that each college or university teacher education program would need to develop its own model, taking into consideration the special circumstances and/or needs of that
university, together with the characteristics of the individual. A "fit" between them resulted as they prepared the students for future teaching positions.

Shelton (1989), in a paper presented for the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration presented procedures for school administrators to use in selecting teachers. Additionally, she stated that these procedures would be useful for college educational administrator departments to use in training future administrators who employ teachers (Shelton, 1989). The selection procedures were defined as Pre-interview (Position Analysis, Applicant Paperwork, Advertise Position, Teacher Recruitment, and Credential Review) Interview - (Interviewer's Characteristics, Interviewer Training, Interview Teachers, Interview and Teacher Selection) and Post Hiring - (Process Evaluation and Conclusion).

Other articles pertinent to this section of the literature review included: Bredenson (1985), presented a compilation of a personnel selection process that covered decision theory, the "impression" formation theory, and a rating theory. He stated that they all interact during the various stages of the selection process (Bredenson, 1985).

The author recommended that the rating of the potential hiree should not be done until all the components of the interview process (gross paper screening, fine paper screening, telephone reference checks, interviews, and
examination of work samples) were completed. He also suggested that the administrator weigh the varied information so that the conclusions would be unbiased and would lead to identification of the best candidate.

Jensen's (1987) premise on hiring was that it should be viewed as an opportunity to improve teaching, and add to the skills of the organization. The author believed that school districts needed to recruit year around and to publicize their interest in hiring quality teachers. Recruiters for the district should represent qualities and characteristics of the district and community (Jensen, 1987). A summary of selection techniques that were discussed in previous articles was also presented.

Kahl (1980), isolated the following descriptors as predictors of hiring quality teachers. These included performance as a student teacher, communications skills, and key personality traits. Contrary to those skills and traits, items such as IQ scores, NTE Exam scores, academic credentials, and individual philosophies of education were not relevant. Kahl wanted school districts to develop a list of procedures and criteria for selecting new staff. This standardized approach must be tailored to the unique goals, values, philosophies, and needs of each district or school (Kahl, 1980).

Kahl further suggested that the hiring process could be made more reliable by involving administrators, teachers,
parents, and school board members in the process, while providing training so that increased objectivity could be obtained in the selection.

Heynderickx (1987) recommended that school officials use selection procedures that resulted in candidates of mediocre ability being chosen. He noted that the teacher selection process was the logical place to address the issue of incompetent teachers (Heynderickx, 1987). He cited researchers as stating that the process was not simple or automatic. The teaching act was involved and consisted of skills, traits, and personal items. Multiple sources of information must be used when selection was being made.

The final article in this section was by Webster (1988). He presented a quasi-quantitative study of the Dallas Independent School District in which a series of studies over five years attempted to validate a teacher selection system. This system's goal was ultimately designed to improve instruction in the schools, with the students being the beneficiaries.

The traditional selection criteria used by the district consisted of:

1. An analysis of employment applications.
2. An analysis of the applicant's transcript.
3. An analysis of the applicant's certification.
4. An evaluation by the applicant's sending principal.
5. An evaluation by the applicant's cooperating
teacher (for recent graduates).

6. An evaluation by the applicant's college supervisor (for recent graduates).

7. Recommendation by a district tri-ethnic screening committee.

8. An analysis of the applicant's personal and professional references (Webster, 1988).

Additional criteria were added to the selection process that included a test of verbal and quantitative ability, an essay response to a structured questionnaire, and a verbal response to a structured interview.

In evaluating the results of new components of the hiring process, the district found that relationships between verbal and quantitative ability, and quality of classroom instruction were demonstrated at the elementary level. At the secondary level, correlations between students' standardized test scores and teachers' verbal and qualitative abilities were listed.

The study also found that scores given during interviews and essays needed to be validated. The premise used for compatibility was student test scores. In summary, the district found that the Wesman Personnel Classification Test, which is the test the district used to measure verbal and quantitative abilities appeared to be the best predictor of teacher success in the classroom.

The author cautioned that using a test as the
predominant way of hiring teachers was narrow, since in other studies the interview was the most important predictor in the hiring process. However, the test had merit and should be considered in the teacher hiring process.

This preceding section of the literature review outlined studies that examined the hiring process holistically; that is, all the processes and procedures that encompass hiring. Although the individual studies were all different and used various conceptual frameworks with regard to the term hiring process, they all in some fashion examined the many characteristics, topics, sub topics, and compositions of personnel selection. In analyzing the meaning of these studies, attempts to identify the important personnel processes, policies, and procedures were improved by that literature. Additionally, prioritizing and weighing these criteria and then implementing them into a cohesive hiring program would result from studying this literature.

**Related Areas of Hiring**

An area discussed in the literature as an important part in hiring teachers was to observe them actually teaching, either in simulations, or in actual classroom situations. Letendre (1989) did a study on the use of work samples when hiring teachers. The author described five types of work samples that could be used in hiring. They were:

1. A mock lesson taught to a panel of adults.
2. A demonstrator lesson taught to a classroom of students.

3. An observation in the candidate's own classroom.

4. Substituting.

5. Student teaching (Letendre, 1989).

The study consisted of interviews and a survey in the San Francisco Bay area. Included also was a case study of one district and its use of work samples. The reasons the district used such samples as part of the hiring process was the knowledge that they helped to select a better qualified candidate.

When the author concluded her study, she recommended the following:

1. Conduct a careful job analysis prior to designating the work sample exercise and judgment criteria.

2. Standardize the process as much as possible.

3. Formally train judges.

4. Use only those work samples that realistically allow candidates to display taught behaviors.

5. Use multiple judges.

Halseth (1989) did a study on the use of intuition by human service administrators. The author interviewed a number of administrators known to use intuition in their process of selection, and revealed that nonrepressive organization climates facilitated intuitive thought (Halseth, 1989).
The author proposed that intuition was a valuable tool in the hiring process and gave the following findings from her study. Intuition could be defined as influences by experience, familiarity, and global knowledge and had four stages - preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. The use of intuition was enhanced through interaction with others, which increased the opportunity to "pick up clues" about problems and possible solutions. Intuition played an important role in the hiring process, and in sensing and resolving personnel problems (Halseth, 1989).

Rockwell (1989), in a qualitative study, specifically looked at the use of the interview process in selecting Elementary Principals in Wisconsin. The author considered the decision making process in making those selections. The research questions the author attempted to answer were:

1. How was the interview developed for use in the selection process?

2. What political influences became evident during the planning phase or utilization of the interview?

3. How were faculty, staff, parents and citizens utilized in the development of the interview process and the interview itself?

4. What elements of personnel selection (e.g., selection criteria, number of interviewers, job analysis, job description) were used in the selected districts'
interviews?

5. What factors were presented by the candidates during the interviews that may have increased or decreased their potential in the eyes of the interviewer(s)?

6. What questions were used to determine the suitability of the candidates, were there specific answers for the questions, and what were the sources used to obtain the questions?

7. What suggestions could the hiring officials interviewed offer to improve the use of the interview in selecting elementary school principals, and what benefits or by-products did they feel resulted from the interview (Rockwell, 1988)?

The study recommended that the following skill areas be considered when hiring a principal. They were human relations, communication, community relations, administrative technical, decision making, research, curriculum development, and change strategy. Some questions recommended by the author that help elicit information on the above were:

1. What would you tell the interviewers about yourself?
2. How do you see the role of the principalship?
3. How do you perceive the role of the principal in relation to the school district?

Additionally, the following suggestions were made. A
written job description and performance criteria for the vacancy should be completed. Recruitment efforts should help in drawing a good pool of applicants.

This study provided much information about the interview process and would be helpful in the compilation of questions for the research interview.

Martin (1993), referred to the importance of the interview in her article and the atmosphere during that interview. She stated that it was the interviewer's responsibility to see that there was an inviting atmosphere that encouraged the person being interviewed to partake in the process. Martin said that an effective interview required adequate preparation, a comfortable setting, and clear communication. The trained interviewer must be aware of this and should be able to identify what could be learned about the interviewee, and what the interviewee wanted to know about himself/herself (Martin, 1993).

The author, furthermore, gave three steps that were important in having an effective interview. They consisted of establishing an atmosphere of acceptance and interest, the interviewer becoming an active listener, and not anticipating what was going to be said by the interviewee. Also, it was important to make sure that the purpose of the interview be known so that direct leads, questions, and focus could be attained.

Additionally, the author identified six kinds of
questions that should be used in an interview based on research from the Association for School, College, and University Staffing. They were:

1. What if? These hypothetical situation questions allowed the interviewer to determine values, to see if the interviewee had orderly thought processes and was clear-minded.

2. Describe your philosophy of education. This helped the interviewer to consider how and what the interviewee hoped the students would learn, and how he/she had integrated philosophy into teaching.

3. How would you set up a program (such as reading)? Look for one-to-one student/teacher communication, a set of quick checks and balances for assessing mastery, a plan to monitor and re-vamp the plan, where to seek resources, how to meet the needs of all students and their differences.

4. What are your weaknesses? An example of a productive answer was for the interviewee to admit that anyone could learn. Also, it allowed the interviewer to see that the interviewee did not think he knew everything.

5. Define the principal's role. Look for those applicants who could see the principal fulfilling multiple roles, such as, a resource for research, training, and staff development; a facilitator; an objective observer; a mentor; an instructional leader.
6. Describe yourself. Look for enthusiasm, warmth, caring, emotional maturity, leadership skills, and a willingness to learn (Martin, 1993).

Khanis (1986), wrote about using structured interviews when hiring. The author believed that a set of questions determined beforehand and used with all candidates was the best way of evaluating these candidates.

Khanis quoted Beach (1980), stating that the structured interview provided a higher inter-relater reliability than other interview forms, greater opportunity for interviewees to talk, and covered intended material consistently, helping interviewers to withhold judgment until the close of the interview.

The success of this approach resulted in Project Empathy. Project Empathy used eight themes - relationship, democratic orientation, rapport, empathy, pupil orientation, acceptance, pupil success, and work and professional orientation. Questions for the interview were developed around these areas.

Project Empathy was based on the Teacher Perceiver Interview (TPI) by Selection Research, Inc. (SRI) and developed a set of questions and answers which they said were strong predictors of teacher success. (SRI will be discussed in more detail later in this section).

Khanis concluded his report on Project Empathy by stating that the structured interview using the Empathy
procedures could contribute to a high quality of pupil learning by improving the selection of teachers, facilitating in-service course developments, and supervising experienced and inexperienced teachers (Khanis, 1980).

Goldstein (1986), stated that the two most important procedures in the selection process were the use of credentials and the interview. The author further said that for a successful interview, the full concentration of the interviewer was needed. Also, the interviewer needed to be aware of the candidate's feelings and emotions.

The following guidelines for interviews were given:
1. Ask questions that elicit explicit answers.
2. Ask questions that involve complex situations that are real life.
3. Ask questions that necessitate a candidate to use his/her abilities to analyze situations, explain conditions, and recommend a course of action.

Young and Henneman (1986), using laboratory simulation, studied and explored how individuals as job seekers and applicants reacted to recruitment and selection procedures. Through the use of simulated interviews in which an administrator interviewed a teacher, reactions of the "future" teacher were recorded.

The teacher reactions were positive when the interviewer was aware of the candidate's feelings and projected personal warmth to him/her. Additional findings
from the study suggested that the interviewer's handling of the interview could significantly influence the applicant's decision to accept or reject a job offer (Young & Henneman, 1986).

Selection Research Incorporated used perceiver tests to help school districts select teachers and administrators. The company, located in Lincoln, Nebraska, used predetermined questions in the interviews that were scored by the company. SRI was perhaps the first group who, on a large scale, had a plan to identify the very best teaching talent. The perceiver interview has questions of three kinds: situation, observation, and personal. Anderson (1977), Chalker (1980), Cook (1981), Cormine (1980), Fowlkes (1984), Halfele (1978), Jones (1978), Lasker (1976), Mauser (1986), Miller and Gardner (1977), Mills (1986), Moody (1973), Miller (1978), Overman (1981), and Simmons (1976), all did studies on SRI or some part of their program. Although various findings came out that were inconclusive, the idea of the importance of the interview, the case for validity and reliability, and the search for excellent educational personnel are highlighted by SRI. Even though the SRI process is only used now, by some school districts, their research certainly provided impetus for further study and investigation into hiring processes.

use of the National Teacher's Exam (N.T.E.) as it related to
hiring teachers and/or predicting their success as
employees.

The findings in summary stated that the scores did not
correlate well with actual teacher performance. In Brown
and Rankins study, they found that the ratings of the
student teachers' supervisors had much higher ratings of
reliability in predicting who would obtain teaching
positions, and cognitive ability was a secondary
consideration in selecting teachers.

Their further evidence supported the hypothesis that
professional educator's opinions were more accurate
predictors of selection than cognitive test scores (Browne &
Rankin, 1986). These findings gave further impetus to the
importance of good screening and interviewing processes and
procedures.

Other related areas that impinged on the selection
process included Miller and Sidebottom (1985), on teacher
recruiting, Schlechty and Vance (1983) on teacher retention,
and Young and Ryerson (1986), and Sandler, Hughes, and De
Mouy (1988), on discrimination and the legal issues of
hiring.

The final section of Part II had to do with studies on
Teacher Selection and induction with regard to hiring for
college positions. These studies included Cooper (1990),
Donaldson (1990), Cureton and Cook (1989), Watts (1993), and

Two important concepts came out of these articles. In order to find the "real person" behind the candidates, a "Holistic" approach in which every aspect of each candidate's qualifications needed to be used (Cooper, 1990). Also, descriptive questioning in which questions focused on how the candidate has actually behaved in a real situation, rather that vague philosophical and hypothetical issues helped determine the best candidates (Coady 1990). Additional suggestions coming from this literature included the use of committees for hiring and interviewing, and teaching simulations where the candidates actually taught a lesson. Also, other recommendations included having the candidate respond in writing to a list of questions that would give further information about abilities, and answers to specific questions that were related to the job.

Although college teachers had different responsibilities from elementary teachers (which is the focus of this study), many of the processes and procedures were similar and provided guidelines and suggestions for hiring elementary teachers.

The specific activities followed in school district hiring procedures were examined. They gave further evidence that hiring was an involved and important task. Many facets were uncovered that dealt with this process, and would provide further information as the study took place.
There is much literature that has been written about business hiring practices, with many firms specializing in the recruiting and hiring of personnel for business and industry. Much of this literature was published and endorsed by AMACON, a division of the American Management Association.

One of the first impressions that was received when reviewing the literature in the personnel hiring area was the importance to which this task was given. It was stressed over and over again how crucial this endeavor was. The cost in dollars and time in getting quality employees in particular areas was repeatedly reinforced. These tasks included testing, recruiting, legal issues, processes, procedures, and recruitment. They were all considered and scrutinized in business attempts to find the best employees.

**Business Hiring Practices**

Perhaps the most complete and up-to-date literature on business hiring that would form a major part of the conceptual framework useful in the research study being undertaken was by Richard Pinsker.

Pinsker (1991) is an experienced manager and executive recruiter and has his own hiring firm. He proposed using his Profile, Interview, Evaluation (PIE) process for "Hiring Winners".

Although his system was designed for business, the formulas were easily transferrable to hiring teachers.
Specializing in searches for specific employees, his firm and others have developed systems and conducted studies on hiring excellent employees or "winners", as Pinsker calls them.

Pinsker began by asking what results were needed from the new hire. By injecting the results into the profile, the interview could be done with the interviewer knowing what he/she wanted. The candidate was evaluated according to how he/she matched the desired profile. Using his indepth formulas as a basis for teacher hiring and comparing them to school district procedures could be most helpful and insightful.

Pinsker's main issues, as he saw them with regard to recruiting or promoting employees, were:

1. Thought needed to be given to the specific accomplishments expected of the new hiree. A definition of the results would help provide a method by which candidates could be compared.

2. Hiring officials should think about how the job they were listing had changed. Position requirements never stayed the same, and this needed to be carefully considered when seeking to fill a position.

3. Unless an ample amount of time and energy were given to selecting the right person, the chances of selecting a "winner" decreased. The additional cost of time and money actually would increase because the process would
become repetitive, since rehiring would have to be done.

Using Pinsker's system, the following objectives should be fulfilled.

1. Sources for finding quality candidates would be expanded.
2. The interviews would be controlled and comfortable.
3. Probing questions useful in interview would help in getting through the facade of the candidate.
4. The most important questions to ask each candidate would be learned.
5. Perfect "fit" employees specific to the position being hired would be employed (Pinsker, 1991).

The most important factor upon which Pinsker based his entire hiring system was that people would behave in the future the same way they had behaved in the past. So, based on that behavioral theory, the way that components of teacher hiring were used could take on new meaning and significance if Pinsker's theory were used.

Gatewood and Field (1987), recommended that the following items be included in teacher selection processes:

1. Job analysis; this included tasks, results, materials, individuals and the environment that characterized the job.
2. Identification of relevant job performance dimensions; This included supervisor's judgment, observations, attendance, and staff development programs.
3. Identification of knowledge, skills, abilities necessary for the job; these were the characteristics the employee needed to perform his/her job successfully.

4. Development of assessment devices to measure knowledge, skills, and abilities; these included, applications, references, interviews, ability tests, personality tests, and simulations.

5. Validation of assessment devices.

Robert Half (1993, 1985), wrote two books on the subject of hiring. They are Robert Half on Hiring, and Finding, Hiring, and Keeping the Best Employees. Half indicated in both books the importance of good hiring procedures, from identifying the positional need to the striking of the closing deal with the candidate. Half is another consultant or "headhunter", whose system or suggestions were aimed at businesses, but were most appropriate for use when hiring teachers or other educational personnel. Some of the important characteristics that were important to look for in candidates numbered:

1. Personal work style and habits, quality of skills and knowledge, and quality of work.

2. Ability to conform, loyalty to an employer, appearance, and sharing an employer's values and goals.

3. Background characteristics, including gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity, and religion.
4. Education, including the reputation of the university attended, and grades (Happ, 1993).

Swan (1989) titled his process as *How to Pick the Right People Program*. Most emphasis was given toward interviewing, preparing for interviewing, and various kinds and styles of interviews. These included panel interviewing, individual interviews, or successive interviews where a candidate meets several different interviewees. Interpreting the results of the interview and the legalities of interviewing were also discussed.

While most of this book was related to the interview, the author used some time in accentuating the importance of analyzing the job for hire. He provided a job analysis worksheet to be used in completing that task. When the job analysis was completed, the information culled from it was provided to help formulate the questions that would be used in the interview. Important criteria were then evaluated into identifying characteristics or talents the candidate must have, what characteristics would be a plus, what were not important, and what were "knock out issues". These characteristics etc. then were translated into "behaviors"; that is, something that could be measured and would be meaningful to the specific job (words like motivation, adaptability, flexibility, energy, maturity, etc.).

Swan recommended using a structured interview that involved four categories. They were Work Experience,
Education, Activities and Interests, and Self-Assessment.

The use of these four categories helped the interviewer go beyond a narrow range of information to allow a more complete look at the candidate. Swan stressed that just reviewing the recent work experience and education of a candidate was incomplete and that history should be considered and evaluated as far back as possible in order to obtain a good "portrait" of the individual.

At the end, Swan provided an interview analysis work sheet that helped to summarize the evidence collected. The sheet was divided into two sections that included a summary of assets and developmental needs. The final section had the overall summary and recommendations.

Arthur (1986), discussed the entire process of personnel selection as she saw it through her Recruiting, Interviewing, Selecting, and Orienting New Employees. This book was also published through AMACON.

Arthur emphasized the need to recruit in the right areas and to keep a constant source of candidates on file. The importance of knowing the details of the job for hire was of paramount importance and could not be over-emphasized.

The importance of the interview, checking references, orientation of new employees and an appendix of forms were provided to help one do a thorough and complete job in hiring excellent personnel.
Uris (1988), emphasized the interview process in business hiring in yet another AMACON publication. The book entitled, *Eighty Eight Mistakes Interviewers Make and How To Avoid Them*, brought to the attention of the interviewer the many pitfalls that could occur during an interview and the important components that should be standard in all interviews.

Some of the hazards mentioned by the author included letting oneself be conned by a professional interviewee, giving in to the charmer, not knowing what to listen for, failing to listen for meaning and feeling, allowing chaos in a problem-solving interview, ignoring the group interview, being victimized by the non-stop talker, letting stereotypes ruin your people judgments, rushing the hiring process, and asking questions that are were not result-oriented.

Through the author's use of listing these various "mistakes", many, many interview options were brought out. With this, a kind of check list of do's and don'ts in the hiring process was provided.

Although this publication would seem to be specifically oriented to the interview, other parts of the hiring process were covered. Some of these areas included employee terminations, pressure to hire a friend, making snap judgments about people, auditioning, resume' reading and usage, and the use of interviewer ESP or intuition.

Middlemist, Hitt, and Geer (1983), discussed the whole
concept of personnel management. This holistic approach put
the hiring act into a larger context i.e., personnel
management.

This book helped one to see the larger scope of hiring
and how it fits into the bigger picture of organizations and
people within them. Areas that were pertinent to the study
being undertaken and which the authors included were:

1. Personnel Departments and Personnel Management
2. Job Design and Nature of People
3. Job Analysis and Its Uses
4. The Logic of Selection
5. Human Resource Planning and Recruiting
6. Selection Tools - Validity and Reliability
7. Legality and Selection Procedures
8. Selecting Managers and Professionals
9. The Logic of Training
10. Orientation and Training
11. Compensation

It is evident from the titles listed above that the
very large picture involved personnel. This was important
to keep in mind so as not to isolate one procedure i.e., the
interview, as the only important one in the hiring process.
The authors reinforced the idea that for professional hiring
the specifics of the job being hired, and identifying the
kind of person needed, were of paramount importance.

The authors established the importance of the use of
the interview and discussed the unreliability and validity of predictive testing for professionals.

Yates (1994), wrote another "how to" book on interviewing. He dedicated his publication to "those for whom hiring is critical to survival" (Yates, 1994). Yates suggested the reasons for bad hires were:

1. Poor analysis of job functions.
2. Poor analysis of necessary personality -skill profile.
3. Inadequate critical screening.
4. Inadequate interviewing techniques.
5. Inadequate questioning techniques.
6. Poor utilization of "second opinions".
7. Company and career/money expectations were over or inappropriately sold.
8. References were not checked (Yates, 1994).

The three most important areas that Yates looked for in his hiring program involved getting people who can do the job, who want to do it, and who are manageable once on the job.

Herman (1994), viewed the following criteria of hiring - job analysis, recruitment, selection, reference checking, and contracting. She believed in a systematic approach to finding the best people.

The author said that hiring was one facet of human resource planning, and reviewed it in the same way as
Middlemust et al. - in the larger organizational context. Herman attempted to impress upon the hiring agent that the future hire be considered as a whole person, not just someone doing a job.

Stidger (1980) talked about looking for competent employees. The research involved workers, supervisors, and executives. Basically, the author described excellent employees as having the following characteristics:

1. They put family or loved ones first in what was important to them.
2. They take great pride in their work.
3. They work long weeks.
4. They have college degrees.
5. They think money is important, but not nearly as necessary as the satisfaction of doing a good job.
6. They think accuracy is the most important element of a job well done (Stidger, 1980).

Additionally, the following characteristics of outstanding employees as surveyed by the authors were: Accuracy, getting along with clients, completing assigned work, sticking to the job until completed, creativity, improving work methods, increasing one's salary, increasing company profits, and improving one's own status in the company.

Matheny (1986), who is president of a consulting firm specializing in executive and technical searches also
emphasized a systematic approach to hiring. This meant that the process was defined before recruiting and screening were begun (Matheny, 1986). The three areas that comprised the system were company-related, job-related, and candidate-related situations. These three areas were net-worked together and used as a basis to find the best employee.

The literature published which related to business or industry hiring was useful as a model for hiring teachers. These systems were developed over time and a central agency AMACON centralized the publishing of much of that literature.

It may be noted that the emphasis and importance personnel hiring was given transfers into dollars, which was the bottom line in business and industry.

A compilation of this literature emphasized the importance of all the components of hiring from recruitment through retention and training. All areas should be considered and thoroughly scrutinized as the hiring process goes through those steps.

Pinsker's system had much value as a model which could be used and transferred to the process of hiring teachers. A conceptual framework, using Pinsker's plan, made great sense, and even though hiring teachers was not the same as hiring accountants or salespersons, excellent hiring strategies could be transferred to the educational field.
Summary

The three sections reviewed in this chapter all played an important part in considering teacher-hiring practices. There were many factors that influenced hiring procedures and practices as the literature has shown, and all should be followed and used in a comprehensive hiring program.

As this research study progresses, the related literature will be invaluable as the investigations are analyzed. What components of the reviewed literature are present and what components are absent will be evident.

Two special studies need to be mentioned again. Pinsker’s hiring system and East Williston, New York’s hiring system together provide a combination model and conceptual framework in which comparisons and contrasts will be made and used as a basis for the research that was done in this study.
CHAPTER III
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to carefully isolate the procedures and people involved in teacher hiring processes in ten selected elementary school districts in Northwest Suburban Chicago. The study was guided by the following questions throughout:

1. What are the current hiring procedures being used in the school districts being studied?
2. What is the purpose of each step in the procedure?
3. Why are these procedures the way they are?
4. Who are the people involved and what are their roles in the hiring procedures?
5. What formal or informal ways are used to assess the hiring procedures?
6. What frames of reference are used and are the basis in determining hiring procedures?
7. What role can business hiring practices play in teacher selection practices?

These questions provided guidelines and a frame of reference to use in bringing the collected data into focus, thus providing a meaningful picture of hiring practices in
the ten districts sampled.

A qualitative approach with open-ended interview questions was used to collect the data. The interview questions used are provided for the reader in Appendix A.

The information in Chapter III is divided into seven sections. These sections will present the data and analysis for each research question followed by a comparison to the East Williston and PIE (Profile, Interview, Evaluate) frame of reference.

Research Question I

What are the current hiring procedures being used in the school districts being studied?

Every school district studied used the following components to some extent when hiring teachers. These components are recruiting, examining resumes, credentials, transcripts, and letters of recommendation, an application form, interview(s), and a job offer. Three other components - phone references, job descriptions or job analysis, and work samples (portfolios, videos, or teaching demonstrations), were used more sporadically.

Recruitment

The manner in which school districts implemented and used the hiring procedures can be categorized two ways. Three of the ten school districts in the sample aggressively recruited candidates, and seven of the school districts recruited to some degree.
The seven districts that did some recruiting, while counting heavily on unsolicited resumes and applications, also advertised their positions at universities. They would send out advertisements to approximately 20 key colleges, which distributed their recruitment bulletins nationally. For middle school positions, the school districts would recruit candidates from several midwestern universities because of their special middle school teacher training programs.

The three districts that recruited very heavily used a variety of techniques that included attendance at job fairs, newspaper advertising, and networking.

One of the aggressive districts recruited very creatively this past year by sending recruitment letters to the 20 finalists for Teacher of the Year award in Illinois. The district also called these teachers and provided additional information about the positions. When asked if they would be interested in joining the district, six of the 20 teachers responded and were interviewed. Two were offered positions; one declined and the other was hired.

The district that initiated these contacts had some advantages over others because they could individually negotiate starting salaries. This district was probably the wealthiest one sampled, and although only a one-school district, had a tremendous reputation and advantages to offer a new hiree. As the principal stated: "We can afford
the people we want and recruit on a national scope. Finding good people is the key to this school."

An informal network of candidate recommendations is another recruitment method used by districts. This is usually implemented in two ways at the principal's level. One way is for the principal to call others asking for names of people they could recommend. A second way is for a principal who is trying to find a candidate a job to phone the receiving principal, giving him/her that information.

Another way in which school districts recruit candidates is by promoting teacher aides or teacher assistants who have worked within the district. Many districts see this option as a kind of apprenticeship program where they can observe a candidate and evaluate him/her in a less responsible role.

Recruiting, more often than not, is organized and managed at the central office level, especially in the larger multi-school districts. In these districts the superintendent or personnel director acted as the organizing agent for the schools. They usually checked and collected paper work, and kept lists of candidates for member schools.

In summary, teacher recruitment results in different degrees of emphasis from the sampled school districts. These differences can be described as, "we have more candidates than we need," to a more aggressive proactive stance that includes advertising and recruiting on a
national level.

The emphasis or lack of it in recruitment did not have anything to do with the size of the district or its wealth except in the one case mentioned. What did seem to make a difference was the attitude of the administrator in deciding the importance or necessity of recruitment. The interpretation of the word recruitment can also be examined. Recruit means to go out and bring in, which would indicate a pro-active defined process of securing candidates. Just inducing people to apply on a kind of reactive basis scarcely indicates recruitment. The more formalized processes in districts where advertising, recruitment fairs, and networking were done, actually indicate a recruitment program. In the less formalized hiring processes, a more haphazard "recruitment" was attempted, and a kind of reactive process was the result.

Interestingly, the issue of recruitment was emphasized strongly in both the East Williston model and the PIE model. Darrell Lund (East Williston Model) related his insights and impressions on recruitment as he states: "We are required to find the very best." Those who were retiring from East Williston were expected to help find replacements. The goal of all district staff was to locate the very best teachers and to report back to the district so they could recruit and hire them.

Pinsker's PIE model emphasizes that the candidate
search should begin as early as possible so that one is able to uncover a large potential field. Furthermore, he encouraged recruiters to look within their own organization for candidates, and develop a network of contacts that will recommend candidates. He also suggested that hirers should look to recruit from newspapers and trade magazines such as Education Week, school placement offices, professional associations, competitors, professional conventions, search firms, open houses, other recent hires, and employment agencies (Pinsker, 1991).

It is obvious that the idea of recruitment from our frame of reference plays an important role in the hiring process. The plan of starting the whole process early, especially in hiring teachers, is an important aspect in seeking excellent candidates. In order for that to happen, school districts need to identify their personnel requirements early in the year, so the "August forced choice" does not need to be implemented. Although it is unrealistic to believe all positions will be filled early, careful planning will allow an easier and time-efficient hiring process.

**Resume**

The second component used by all ten districts sampled was the examination of the resume. All 25 administrators interviewed mentioned this as an important part in screening candidates. Except for one district that actually assigned
a rating of one-through-five on the resumes, there were no
formal criteria used to evaluate them. An informal
assessment process was the modus operandi; that is, the
reader used the resume as one way to help formulate a
picture or profile of the candidate. That information
together with other data was used to expand that profile.

Also, some of the respondents mentioned that one
objective criterion used when examining the resume was to
compare it to the job requirements or job description.
However, of all the components used in hiring teachers, the
use of the resume was one of the least formal steps in the
entire process. Every respondent mentioned its importance,
but no one could concretely describe an evaluative process
that was more concise than just stating "it paints a
picture."

Pinsker mentions a number of criteria that should be
used when studying a resume. These include:

1. Looking for red flags and obvious inconsistencies.
2. Looking for yellow flags - areas where it would be
   wise to pursue clarifying information.

Furthermore, he states that the job of resume reading
is to go through and scrutinize it closely. The questions
that arise must be probed during the interview (Pinsker,

More specifically, the significant things one needs to
consider in resume reading include the time spent between
jobs and an accounting for job changes. These changes should indicate an upward progression and an increase in responsibility not a move backwards. Also, ambiguous statements should be examined and clarified (Pinsker, 1991).

Yellow flags should be noted and employed as an important part of the interview where specific questions can be asked. Also, the Absolutes and Pluses that were identified in the job profile should be matched with the information from the resume. In this way a more objective and formal method can be applied to scrutinize resumes.

Transcripts

The third component that each of the school districts used in their hiring process was the candidate’s college transcripts or grades. While there was a disparity in the importance of transcripts when used for hiring, eight of the ten districts did not put much credence in their usefulness. In most cases transcripts were an unimportant criterion in hiring, especially for elementary school teachers. They were only examined closely when looked at for content area specialization.

Many of the administrators mentioned that they do not have the transcripts available before the actual interview, and some do not refer to them at all. They state however that transcripts must be submitted and are a requirement, but are not one of the top areas that are considered when hiring.
In two districts, transcripts played a more important factor in the hiring process. One superintendent believed he paid more attention to transcripts than the principals in his district. When an area of concern was identified by the superintendent, he shared it with the principal interviewing. It was expected that the principal would inquire about the superintendent's concern. The superintendent placed an emphasis on grades and intelligence because of the high education level of the parents in the community. One of the principals in the district used transcripts to search for "good" students, their class selection, and red flags. Red flags were considered incompletes or withdrawals from classes.

An additional interpretation on using transcripts came from a personnel director who believed that transcripts became a part of the whole picture of the person and was therefore very useful. He also alluded to the philosophy that a person who had to struggle for grades would often have more empathy for student's struggles.

In summary, there are varied opinions and usages of transcripts in the hiring process. Obviously transcripts must be used to prove candidates meet the legal requirements and are qualified. However, the sampled administrators perceived the use of transcripts as adding another "piece of the picture" to the hiree's portrait. There was no formal process or rating sheet applied by the administrators when
evaluating a candidate's transcripts.

This use of transcripts by the districts supports the findings of the research on grades and their relationship to success as a teacher; that is, there is little relevancy that good grades equal good teachers. Therefore, their use as a part of the entire portrayal of the hiree is probably the best practice.

**Credentials and Letters of Recommendation**

Credentials and letters of recommendation were the next components used by all the ten school districts as part of their criteria in hiring. Credentials or college placement papers usually consist of some statement of philosophy of the candidate, a listing of college courses and, most importantly, letters of recommendation.

The administrators all requested letters of recommendation, but placed varying degrees of importance on them from very valuable to questionable. Those that thought letters of recommendation provided good data, used them to get a sense of the individual. They believed that these letters would give them background on how the candidates functioned as teachers or student teachers, what their instructional abilities were, how they worked in the classroom, and how they handled pressure. Also, administrators looked for child centered comments from the writer, and that "something extra" that a candidate might have, while another did not.
Personal attributes and personal qualities of the candidates were often described in the reference letters. The administrators looked carefully for them. Probably the phrase that was deemed most important in a letter of recommendation was, "I would want my own child in that teachers classroom."

Administrators that were unsure or skeptical of written recommendations believed that all recommendations were good since an individual would not ask someone to write a letter that was not positive. In this case many administrators looked for superlatives in recommendations since good recommendations were routine.

Besides looking for superlatives, the administrators would key into phrases such as "room to grow", or "a brighter future" as negative comments or red flags that should be looked into and pursued during the interview.

Almost all the administrators mentioned that they looked for letters from people they know. It was easier for them to follow-up with a phone call to those persons, and helped them better ascertain the objectivity of the writer's recommendations.

None of the administrators used a rating sheet or had a formal method for evaluating recommendations.

If the administrators were more aware of the research on letters of recommendation, they would know that letters from student teacher college supervisors would have the most
reliability and validity. This factor would even be more reliable if a network of university and district hiring agents were established.

In summary, the essential part of the letter of recommendation was to serve as another unit in gathering a portrait of the candidate. The significance of the letter had much more value if the reader knew the writer. The real importance was the utilization of this letter as an impetus for a personal call to the reference so that more detailed information and questioning could be accomplished. Additional information and the importance of recommendations and their relationship to our frame of reference will be done later in this chapter.

**Application**

The formal district application form had multiple and varied uses in the sampled school districts. The basic form used in four of the ten districts simply listed one's work experience, school experience, a few personal and professional interests, and personal facts about the candidate. The resume served the same purpose and in some cases was more succinct and complete.

In six districts an additional component, responses to questions, was introduced in the application. This was done in two ways. First, three applications allowed a limited essay on the form itself. The others permitted expanded answers and attachments with answers requiring more breadth
Sample of types of questions on the application are:

1. What attributes, both professional and personal, do you possess which makes you the best candidate for the position?

2. Do you feel you should participate in curriculum development? If so, in what manner and to what degree?

3. Why did you want to become a teacher?

4. What do you consider your chief accomplishments in your previous job or student teaching?

5. For what reason do you want to change your current position, or why do you want to join District ___?

6. What were the most significant and satisfactory accomplishments of your recent teaching experience?

An additional expectation in a few districts was to require applicants to hand write their responses. The hirers believed this was another method where the candidate reveals him/herself with the results being more spontaneous and personal. Also, one district requires that applicants come into the office and fill out the application on sight by hand. This requires them to answer the questions more spontaneously.

Only one district had a formal procedure when evaluating applications. That district rated on a basis of one to five. However, the superintendent remarked, that the rating is done on a "gut" level. None of the other
districts had any kind of formal assessment tool in evaluating applications. In fact, some of the districts did not have the candidates fill out the application until after their interview. Some were completed at the end of the process.

The East Williston model used the application to compare it to some basic tenets that had been established as criteria for the job. No inexperienced or new teachers were considered, (they wanted experience) as were no former teachers who had left the field and were returning, (they felt there was too much new information in education that had passed them by) and no one without a Master's degree. In this way reduction of the applicant pool was done in a consistent way (Wise et al., 1987a).

Because business usually uses the resume rather than an application form, and PIE does not address the application, Pinsker does not discuss this area in hiring. However, his ideas on reading resumes are comprehensive and complete.

In summary, use of an application form in hiring by the sampled districts had varying importance. Some districts used the resume in place of the application, while in other circumstances the application played an important part in the process. The questions requiring written answers were very important and useful to some of the districts and were actually used as a screening device. In other districts perusal of those questions was done haphazardly and had
little influence on the hirer in screening candidates. Additionally, as was stated before, many times the application was not applied at all as a screening device and was only filled out as an afterthought near the end of the hiring process. It was used to complete the paper trail and file of serious candidates only.

**Interview**

The interview unquestionably was considered the most important part of the hiring process. This was reinforced by every district in the study and had the most influence as to whether or not a candidate was hired. This finding agrees with the wealth of research that the interview is the most significant factor in hiring.

A variety of interview procedures and practices were discovered in this research. There was no one way to interview, either in the content of the interview questions, the number of interviews, or the people included in the interview itself. The best way to describe the process and components is to give a synopsis of each of the districts sampled.

School district one is a one school district where only the superintendent and principal interview candidates. They usually spoke to the candidates separately but if time was short they screened the candidates together. The questions were not prepared in advance, but the goal was to persuade the candidate to talk using open-ended questions.
The principal of District One stated that in the interview process he had a framework he followed. He tried to listen carefully and follow-up on gaps or questions that arose. He did not ask the same questions of all candidates, but would seek specific information in different ways. Also, the principal did not feel there were any certain behaviors he looked for during the interview, but tried to concentrate on what the candidate had to say.

District two is a three school district with a very formalized hiring process. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, personnel director, and principals all interviewed the candidates together with teacher committees. The interview process consisted of a screening interview done by the superintendent and personnel director. This interview lasted about fifteen minutes. Basically, the screening interview, according to the personnel director answers the question, do I want to know more about this person?

After the screening interview, the candidates that were invited to return were seen by the principals and teachers on the interview committee. A rule in this district is that before a person is hired, he/she must be interviewed by all administrators. So sometime during the process as the candidate pool was pared down, the final candidate would have as many as four interviews.

The superintendent perceived that the benefit of
multiple interviews was that it helped the administrators themselves reach consensus. When they started talking about the candidates they had wildly different opinions. This changed as the number of interviews increased. They were looking for a good match, and it became more obvious when they repeatedly interviewed the candidates.

The questions for the interview come from a "stock" set. However, the intent was to use open-ended questions to start the candidates talking. In the second and third interviews, candidates were asked to respond to scenarios and questions composed by the teachers for the candidate.

The administrators did not look for particular candidate behaviors during the interview. However, they did mention many of the personal and professional characteristics in candidates that were important to them.

District three is a seven school district with three thousand five hundred multicultural students. The economic status of the families ranged from very high to very low, while the district itself was financially stable. The hiring process was formalized and flowed through the district personnel director. This director tried to see if the candidate "fit" into the culture of the district. Since the intent of her interview was to screen, she did not ask many content questions. She believed this was best done at the local level. This director ranked the candidates from one to ten and wrote down impressions on post-it notes so
they later could be thrown away. Also, she kept a list of everyone she had interviewed and their rating.

After the screening interview by the personnel director, the principal and his/her team interviewed the candidates selected. Each building in the district selected its own interview team. All the hiring teams included teachers from the building that was hiring. In cases of specialized position (music, art, etc.) it could include teachers from other schools in the district.

The teams met before the actual interview to brainstorm and identify specific questions they wanted to ask. The principal had the charge at the building level to organize and lead the team in formulating questions and arranging interview times.

The reason the district had pre-conceived interview questions was the belief that this added continuity and fairness to the hiring process. In this way questions were identified that were more in keeping with the position description and needs of the school.

This school district often identified the importance of keeping the candidate relaxed and comfortable during the interview process. None of the administrators were specific about candidates' behaviors during the interview other than the candidates' comfort level. Most of the administrator's descriptions of the candidates such as creative, animated, and enthusiastic, were descriptions of personal qualities
rather than actual candidate behaviors or mannerisms.

In summary, District three had a formalized interview process that included teachers in the formulation and implementation of the interview. Although the personnel director formally ranks each interview, the school reached consensus on the quality of a candidate's interviews through discussion and debate.

District four is a large multicultural school district with ten schools. The district's community was economically diverse while the district's economic status itself was stable.

This district operates its interview procedure strictly at the local school level, even though there was an assistant superintendent/personnel director. She helped to advertise positions and collect resumes and to design the writing sample. This process was used because the superintendent wanted to involve the staff. Also, this procedure was suggested by the teacher's union. The superintendent's goal was to involve parents in the interview process in the near future.

The perception of the superintendent was that interview committees help to eliminate the hiring of friends or politically-connected candidates. This helped implement a fairer and non-partisan process.

The questions for the interview were designed by the hiring committee and were nearly the same for all the
candidates. On completion of each interview, the committee gathered together to "compare notes". The principal goal of this meeting was to see how each person on the interview team perceived the candidate would fit in, and match the district’s beliefs. Also, they wanted to know if the candidates were prepared for what the district wanted them to accomplish.

Furthermore, if there were any additional questions that were unanswered, the committee invited the candidate to return for a third interview. Also, if two different schools in the district were interviewing the same candidate, they would have to come to a consensus as to who would get first choice.

In describing candidate behaviors, the principal and superintendent discussed the demeanor of the candidates during the interview. They both referred to looking for passion in the individual, his/her flexibility, sense of humor, and negative mannerisms that might be observed by students. The candidate’s ability to communicate was of paramount importance.

District five is a one-school district in perhaps the wealthiest suburb of Chicago. The interviewees were selected by the principal and interviewed by her. She then had a group of her staff interview the final candidates. Although she believed hiring was a collaborative effort, basically the selection was hers. The final candidate(s)
was presented to the superintendent, who may or may not have interviewed that person.

The interview protocol in this district was quite informal. The principal had a preset bank of questions that had been developed over the years. But again, the interview or conversation between the staff and the candidate was less formal with no preset questions composed. This hiring process has been continuously used for many years, and the staff is very experienced in hiring. They were pleased with their hiring system and results, and believed there was no reason to change.

Additionally, district five looked for social grace and a sense of humor in their candidates. The one comment the principal did not want to hear from a candidate, was negative talk about a previous employer.

District six is a three-school district that is financially sound and serves high economic clientele.

The initial screening interview was completed at the school level by the principal. The second interviews were completed by the principal and a team of teachers selected by the principal. The team did not rank or rate the candidates but gave feedback to the principal.

The principal’s questions followed a basic format that was the same for all the candidates. The candidates were asked to describe themselves, questioned why they wanted to teach, and asked how they would be described by someone
else.

The committee's questions were quite informal although this process had been used for some time. The teachers who were involved in interviewing were experienced in the hiring process.

The superintendent interviewed the final candidate but permitted the principal to select. The superintendent had a preset list of questions that followed the same format as the principal.

The superintendent and principal looked carefully at the candidate's mannerisms. These mannerisms were used to assess the candidate's ability to communicate and maintain a professional demeanor. They believed their school community demanded teachers who were "fast on their feet" and they specifically looked for that ability during the interview.

District seven is a five-school district of two thousand three hundred students and still growing. Economically, it served a middle to upper class community. Financially, the district operated in the black.

The philosophy of this school district was to use a short interview to screen as many candidates as possible. They believed that preliminary step was much better than a paper screening. The first screening interview lasted from ten to fifteen minutes and was conducted by a committee consisting of the superintendent, principal, curriculum director, and business manager.
Although the superintendent did not require committee interviews that included staff, he recommended it. Most schools in this district followed his suggestion. Committees usually interviewed one or two times. The final interview of two candidates was completed by the superintendent who made the choice.

It should be noted that no one was hired in that district without the opportunity to meet with current staff. Although the staff gave feedback and input, no recommendations or votes were requested by the superintendent.

The superintendent had prepared a set of interview questions that were specific for most teaching positions in the district. He believed that there were certain questions that needed to be asked, so one could compare "apples to apples". He believed their system worked great, especially with the large number of interviews they completed. Also, the superintendent did follow-up telephone calls to interviewees if there were certain areas that needed further clarification or additional information.

The superintendent mentioned that discomfort in a candidate was a "red flag" to him. He was concerned that it might be a sign during an interview the candidate would be uncomfortable with parents. In his demanding district, he believed that a teacher must be able to communicate with parents comfortably or he/she would be "picked apart".
This superintendent also watched for eye contact to ascertain if the candidate was listening as well as talking. Also, he accentuated the importance of a candidate's personal appearance.

District eight is a six-school district that is seventy percent multicultural and serves an economically diverse community. The district's financial difficulty is reflected by its ten million dollar debt.

Interviews began at the school level and were arranged by the principal who decided if teachers would be involved in the interview process. Each school "did their own thing" as far as interview teams were concerned. Four out of six principals did not use teacher-help in interviewing but used multiple interview sessions in arriving at their final two candidates. The final interview was conducted by the personnel director, if he chose to do so.

There were a number of different interview techniques adopted by the principals in this district. Two principals mentioned doing screening interviews over the telephone to help save time and accelerate the process. Another principal described his interviewing technique as a set of issues to which he asked the interviewees to respond.

Additionally, the principal mentioned above had been SRI (Selection Research Inc.) trained and had many years of experience. He portrayed his interviewing style as having used many different techniques. He had written out a
format, but generally had a guided scheme that included the areas of instruction, class management, communication, parent and staff relations, how people view their job, growth potential, depth of the candidate, and personal and professional attributes. He tried conscientiously not to reveal biases to the candidate so they would better reveal themselves to him.

After the interviews were completed, the principals were encouraged to fill out the district interview description form. This form was sent to the personnel director and was used both as an objective measure of the candidates strengths and weaknesses and as a guide for the personnel director.

The superintendent and personnel director both had a list of questions and ideas they covered during the interview. The personnel director had his questions on concept cards. The superintendent had an interview list which had been developed through years of experience.

When asked about candidate behaviors during the interview, a variety of comments were gathered. The personnel director did not care about a candidate's looks or how he/she was dressed. The principal felt just the opposite about that issue, while emphasizing the importance of a candidate's confidence in him/herself. All three administrators described personal and professional attributes of candidates that were significant. They stated
how important it was to make candidates comfortable during interviews, and move beyond the superficial to the "real" person.

District nine is a five-school district with middle to lower economic families. Financially, the district is struggling and is currently trying to pass a referendum to raise its tax levying ability.

The superintendent in this district was SRI (Selection Research Inc.) certified but had not implemented this system in the district. Rather, he personally used a Ventures in Excellence structured interview model. He believed that the interview, while being the most important component in the hiring system, was only one part in "getting to know" the candidate.

The interview process began at the local school level and was managed by the principal. The superintendent expected that teachers and parents be included in the interview of candidates. A recommendation form was sent to the superintendent who completed a final interview.

In actuality, there was little parental involvement in the process and limited teacher input at the elementary level. Teachers more actively participated at the middle school.

The system had little formality except for the superintendent's use of the Ventures in Excellence model. Teachers who were involved did not formally organize
questions and had little direction from the administrator. The staff's input seemed of little value to the principal and appeared to be more perfunctorily performed than of substance.

When describing candidate behaviors, none of the administrators looked for anything in particular, but did mention the candidate's ability to communicate and how important this was.

District ten is lead by Superintendent, Darrell Lund, who composed and lead the East Williston model used in our frame of reference. The school district he is currently leading is newly reorganized from three separate districts. He was superintendent in one of the previous three districts. The East Williston model was well on its way to being adopted in that district. Now he is introducing those guidelines to the new district and administrators.

Because the East Williston hiring model is school-based and includes teachers in the process, the schools were at different levels in understanding the philosophy and steps in the model. Dr. Lund is intent on adopting and adapting the model to this district. He has implemented the curriculum associates system who help with the hiring of new staff, together with an assistant superintendent who also directs the process.

The associate superintendent/personnel director described their hiring system as being decentralized. He
stated that principals can do screening interviews or the committee can do such interviews. Whatever the procedure, the final decision was the principals.

The associate superintendent had developed ten questions that were used for all candidates when he interviewed. Although he often altered the structure of those questions, his main purpose was to get to know the candidate as a person. Over the years, he had placed emphasis on hiring "people persons" first and content people second. Also, he strongly believed committee interviews must be structured. Having curriculum associates as part of these committees brought content expertise to the process. Regular classroom teachers usually did not have that background.

The principal who was interviewed had his hiring committee conduct the screening interview and present him with one to five candidates. After the principal interviewed the candidates, he met with the hiring team and they made the final decision together. The principal used a preset group of questions he had developed over a period of time.

Candidate behaviors were described as "looking for a presence" by the associate superintendent. By this he meant looking for eye contact and self-confidence in the candidate to see how he/she would interact with a child or parent. The principal alluded to the importance of a candidate's
dress and the general feeling he or she portrays.

Dr. Lund believed that mixed committees (teachers, parents, and administrators) rather than administrative committees were more insightful because mixed teams can better observe the dimensions of the candidate.

Dr. Lund described his feelings and thoughts on the process of interviewing:

There should be an initial set of questions asked of all candidates. After that set, the interview should just flow. This is why teachers and administrators need training. The goal of the interview is to get the candidate relaxed and to get at the real person.

Dr. Lund referred to candidate behaviors as important. He had found that most unsuccessful teachers failed because they lacked people skills. Therefore, this was an area he evaluated closely. With that thrust in mind, he looked for candidates who were endearing and interesting and who ultimately would be a positive addition to the district.

In summary, the interview was considered the most important step in the hiring process. This was the hiring district's opportunity to put a name and a face to a resume, application, or reference letter. While the interview afforded an opportunity for communication where questions could be addressed, it also permitted the candidate to reveal him/herself. Almost all the administrators discussed getting a "portrait of a person". That is, each piece of the selection process helped to define that portrait. The interview is considered the most important piece of data
that helped to construct that portrait.

When the researcher interviewed the newly hired teachers in the sample, seven of the ten stated that the interview was the most important component of the process. Additionally, two thought it was second most important, while the other thought it third most important.

Two overwhelming themes came out of these new teacher interviews:

1. It was critical that the candidates be made comfortable during the interview so they could communicate who they were and what they knew. Too much formality by the interviewer became intimidating to the candidate and did not allow for a comfortable exchange to occur.

   Many of the new teachers commented about being tense and unsure. They were more worried about a right answer than being themselves when this occurred.

   One of the principals interviewed, confirmed the perception that formality can have negative results. He thought he could get a better feel for the candidate by probing and pursuing an avenue rather than following a preset group of questions.

2. For experienced candidates who are being recruited, a different atmosphere in the interview needs to be established. Selling the candidate on the merits of the job and district must be part of the interview. While allowing all candidates time to ask questions during the process is
important, understanding that experienced candidates will ask more pointed questions about job benefits should be expected. Again, an experienced teacher needs a good reason to change jobs. This must be understood, arranged for, and accommodated.

For Pinsker’s PIE program, the interview is the second step and an extremely important part of the hiring process, as was mentioned.

A summary of those procedures is as follows:

1. Make the candidate feel comfortable and at ease.
2. Explain the agenda for the day (timetable).
3. Tell the candidate where you would like him/her to begin discussing his/her background.
4. When you are satisfied that you have tracked the success patterns and personal characteristics, review the yellow flags to make sure all your questions have been answered.
5. Make certain that the candidate knows what the job entails.
6. Obtain his/her reaction to the position, including what he/she feels it offers and what he/she can contribute.
7. Ask if he/she has any questions about the company.
8. Discuss compensation.
9. Close the interview.
The author reminds the interviewer to keep the candidate talking and to take enough notes for reference later when candidate evaluation is finished (Pinsker, 1991).

Three major questions underlie the interview process in the East Williston model. They are:

1. To what extent does the candidate share the school district’s educational values?

2. Is the candidate capable of performance as an independent professional?

3. Will the candidate complement the strengths already present in the faculty?

One area that tends not to be covered during the interview is subject matter. "Subject-matter competence is assumed" for those who have reached the interview stage.

At this point in the process, according to one teacher, candidates "have recommendations, experience, grades. What we must do is make a subjective leap based upon an appraisal of personality factors". When teachers speak of personality factors, they implicitly incorporate educational approaches, attitudes, skills. "They look for people like themselves--people who share their values--people who will admire them," said one informant. Very important is the candidate's perceived rapport with students. "This is judged by details about how they describe how they relate to students. We look for a person with a commitment to students" (Wise et al., 1989).
decision needed to be reached. The following data were gathered concerning that process.

1. In six districts the principal decided on the final candidate. Five of these six used and expected input from their hiring team on this decision.

2. In two districts the hiring team and principal decided together and a consensus decision was made.

3. In one district the superintendent and principal decided together.

4. In one district there was disagreement on who decided. Since the final two candidates were interviewed by the personnel director and he then contacted the principal, there was usually consensus on the choice. However, if there was disagreement, the personnel director believed that the principal had final say, and the principal felt that the personnel director had final choice.

The actual job offer was presented by the superintendent in seven districts, by the personnel director in two districts, and by the principal in one district.

While the input from hiring committees was invaluable, a number of superintendents and principals were very cautious having them make the final decision. They thought hiring committees had a tendency to pick people that "fit" with them, and not necessarily the best candidate. This was especially true for inside candidates. A very interesting quote that merits mentioning is from a personnel director
who stated you "need to know the difference between consensus of the group and wisdom of the group."

When reaching a final decision, an important factor that influences the decision is the use of intuition. Despite all the data that is compiled objectively, there is a subjective factor or an intuition that is used when evaluating a candidate's suitability for the position.

There were a variety of responses from the administrators when asked what part intuition played in choosing a teacher. These responses can be divided into three categories.

1. Intuition does not or should not play a part in selection. Two of the twenty-five administrators could be characterized as being in this category. They believed that intuition should not be used in selection.

2. Intuition plays some part in selection. Three of the twenty-five administrators could be characterized as being in this category. These administrators used intuition in selection only some of the time, but realized its benefits. One administrator referred to the time she chose a candidate on a hunch. She realized this hunch was correct when the other candidate had a tantrum when told he/she was not hired. Another administrator talked of using intuition with "qualifiers". This person referred to having a good foundation of facts and then using intuition to help make the final decision.
3. Intuition plays a significant part in selection. Twenty of the twenty five administrators could be characterized as being in this category. Many thoughts on the positive contribution intuition can have in selection were related. The administrators believed intellectualization could only be used so long and then intuition needed to "take over". The instances of administrators using "hunches" when hiring certain candidates were repeated often. The final decision that these administrators reached, according to them, was highly intuitive.

Dr. Lund also referred to intuition and its importance in the hiring process and in making the final hiring decision. He believed that intuition should be used at the end of the process. When the final two or three candidates were selected a "gut" level feeling would give the final answer. He believed wholeheartedly that one can intellectualize only so far and then needed to allow intuition to "take over".

Pinsker encouraged the hiring agent to listen to intuition, because he stated it played an important part in the hiring process. He believed that intuition was a powerful force in business. True, everyone needed facts in order to make wise decisions, but some intuition was always involved. One should not ignore intuition. It was important (Pinsker, 1991).
When reaching a final decision, Pinsker encouraged a review of the final candidates Absolutes and Pluses, phone references, success patterns, interview, and personal characteristics (Pinsker, 1991).

In summary, twenty out of twenty five administrators were influenced by intuition when they made the final decision. The study found that most hiring was decided by the principal alone or principal in consultation with the superintendent or personnel director. In only a few districts did a team make the final choice.

**Position Analysis - Job Description**

The area of position analysis or job description is one of the most important components in the hiring process. A thorough examination of the requirements of the position and the qualities and characteristics of the person needed to fill that position, will help lead to the best hiring decision.

The East Williston model stated that the first duty of the hiring committee was to describe the job (Wise et al., 1989a). Pinsker’s PIE model identified the job profile as being the key to the whole selection process. He furthermore stated that the first step in developing the profile was to list performance expectations and the desired outcomes. Also, the profile listed personal and professional characteristics wanted together with previous experiences that were specific to the job. These
characteristics were divided into Absolutes - those characteristics the candidate must have to be hired, and Pluses - those characteristics that are a bonus.

The sampled districts use of job descriptions, job analysis, or job profiles was intermittent. Although all the administrators were aware of the need for a position analysis, the actual formulation or a set process of doing so was haphazard. Within the districts themselves, the administrators were not sure how this happened. The superintendents and personnel directors believed it was the principals and or hiring teams responsibility to do this task, however, this was not clearly understood by that group.

Two of the ten districts stated they examined the position carefully and formulated a profile. They believed the new position was closely scrutinized with the goal being to balance what each person would bring to the position. Also, the principal and superintendent discussed with each other their position needs. Again, each individual position was analyzed specifically and the candidate was selected to meet those particular needs.

Three districts stated that they did not compile job descriptions or specifically analyze the open position. There was a realization that this could be important, but there was no attempt to do so.

The third group can be characterized as knowing that
formulating job profiles is important. However, these five districts have no specific systems for doing this task and when it is attempted, is done haphazardly. The districts understood they should definitely sort out their needs and analyze their open positions. While some districts discussed a position analysis informally, they did not formulate specific position descriptions that were used in the hiring process.

In summary, it was found that position analysis or identification of a specific job description was accomplished at different levels. The need to do this task was critical to the hiring process and should be a required standard procedure.

**Work Samples**

Work samples were used differently by the school districts. They can be identified as any or all of the following: candidate portfolios, candidate videos, a teaching demonstration in the hiring district, or visiting and watching a teaching demonstration at the school where the candidate was employed.

This issue was not addressed specifically by Pinsker, but was an important part of the East Williston model. The process called for an observation of teaching, preferably in the candidate’s current school. The visit was made by the team that assessed the finalist’s ability to teach. Less threatening for the candidate, but considered less value by
East Williston, was a demonstration lesson by the candidate in the East Williston schools. The alternative was pursued only when a visit to the candidate’s school was not possible. Paradoxically, although the East Williston processes focused on assessing teaching performance, by the time performance was actually assessed, the step was a near formality. Still, it had great symbolic value as the focal point of the selection process. And, it did provide a final check. That is, someone who looked disastrous in the classroom, would not be hired (Wise et al., 1987a). Dr. Lund furthermore stated that visiting candidates in their own setting was crucial, and that it was the "telltale sign".

The use of sample teaching lessons by the school districts that were surveyed can best be described as sporadic or intermittent. Only one district used demonstration lessons as a mandatory part of the hiring process. This activity was done as the last step in the procedure. The building administrator set up the teaching demonstration. It was a half-hour lesson that took place in the same grade or subject level the candidate would be teaching. The candidate had a choice to continue a lesson that the class had been doing, or do his/her own lesson. The interview panel and administrator(s) viewed and evaluated this demonstration. Although this district might visit a candidate at his/her own school to watch him/her
teach, this was unusual and the process above was used.

One district had never used a teaching demo lesson either at their own school or at a candidate's. The other eight districts could be characterized as sometimes using teaching demonstrations as part of their process. Although all the administrators responded favorably to the concept, they were not dedicated to it being a significant factor in the hiring process. They understood that the more criteria one used to make the choice, the better. Also, teaching demonstrations provided excellent feedback when looking for certain process behaviors. One could observe this when the classroom observation was completed.

Interestingly, in Dr. Lund's new district only one of the schools used teaching demonstrations as part of the selection process, and that was to break "ties" between candidates.

While the administrators agreed that teaching demos gave good information in finding the best candidates, it was used very sporadically even when there was time. More information on this subject will be discussed in the next chapter.

The use of videos or portfolios in the selection process was also used intermittently by the school districts. A mixed review of their worth was noted by the administrators. Those that felt videos or portfolios had merit believed they helped in the selection process and
provided further information for the candidate to discuss. Also, it was perceived that taking the time and letting people talk about their materials revealed their beliefs and values.

The administrators that did not use these items believed that videos were too staged and not real. There was a concern that those materials were too prefabricated. Neither activity is referenced in the PIE or East Williston model.

Conversely, the new teachers were very positive about their portfolios and videos and thought they were an important component in the process. It let the hirers know more about them. In fact eight out of ten rated work samples in the top three most important components in the hiring process. The candidates wanted the administrators to request their portfolios so they could be shared. They believed their portfolios represented them well and the administrators could learn more from them.

The use of portfolios and videos are new to the teaching profession and increasingly being compiled by the candidates. Their addition can add a dimension of understanding of the person being considered for a teaching position. This component of hiring will need to be further studied.

**Telephone Reference**

The final component that is used in hiring teachers is
the telephone reference. This method of reference is not completed in three of the ten sampled districts, since some rely only on reference letters. Since this is the case, the merits of calling for candidate references is considered differently in each district.

Both the East Williston model and PIE strongly believe that the phone reference should be a mandatory procedure in hiring. Reference letters, while having merit, are considered too generic to have much value. Dr. Lund wanted to obtain and build a set of contracts and references so the district could call off the record and get the "real story".

In East Williston, where written references had sufficed in earlier stages of the process, only personal contact would suffice at the end. East Williston believed that a more reliable assessment can be obtained by asking questions of subordinates and peers. Calls were typically made by the principals who felt most assured of reliable assessments when they used their informal networks to obtain information (Wise et al. 1987a).

Pinsker's PIE model considered reference checking simply another form of interviewing. Skillful checking of references could save big trouble down the road (Pinsker, 1991).

Pinsker (1991) further went on to say that the key to reference checking was listening properly. The caller needed to listen for hints and be able to distinguish
between opinions and facts, and delve, dig, and probe to get at the "truth".

The following is a list of questions that should be asked about each candidate.

1. How and when did you know the candidate, and what was your relationship?

2. Trace the candidate’s progress/relationship with you/your company.

3. What were the candidate’s most significant accomplishments? (You want individual results, not departmental accomplishments)

4. What were the major strengths you noted in the candidate?

5. We all have some shortcomings or areas that can be improved upon. What were the candidate’s shortcomings, and how did he/she accommodate them?

6. Why did the candidate leave your company? (Or why might he/she be thinking of leaving?)

7. How would you describe the candidate’s relationships with others? (This includes peers, subordinates, customers, and any others who might be appropriate.

8. We are considering the candidate for a position that involves - (describe the performance expectations). From your experience working with the candidate, how do you feel he/she would contribute to and meet these performance
expectations? And why?

9. In summary, how would you describe the candidate's employment with your company and how would you rank the candidate in comparison with others in similar positions? Would you want to work for or with this person again? In what kind of environment?

10. Who else in your company should we talk to about the candidate (Pinsker, 1991)?

There were three levels of usage of telephone references by the sampled districts. Three districts had fully implemented a procedure to always call references and check backgrounds. Only one of these districts had a form to use when calling, and none had a predetermined set of questions to ask.

Four districts understood the importance of reference checking, and did telephone on most occasions. However, there was not always agreement on who was to do the calling and who was to be called. There was no set procedure.

Three districts did not consider phone references as being an important part of their hiring procedure. It could be assumed that calls were made to check references, but not on a regular basis. Interestingly, one of these three districts marked phone references as the second most important procedure in the hiring process. Another marked it third, and the last marked it fourth.
Summary

The sampled school districts identified recruiting, examining resumes, credentials, transcripts and letters of recommendation, application forms, interviews, job offers, phone references, job descriptions or job analysis, and work samples as being components of hiring systems. While not all the districts identified every component, there were no additional areas mentioned by any school district.

Different emphasis and importance were given to each step in the process by the districts. Implementing, adapting, and evaluating these steps either formally or informally were accomplished in a multitude of ways.

Research Question II

What is the purpose of each step in the procedure?

The predominant theme throughout the research was that each component of the hiring system helped paint a portrait or a picture of the candidate. The idea of having multiple data sources to obtain information on a candidate was the impetus for the districts to use the different steps. Although each component's information had a different effect on the final decision, each part played an important role in developing profiles of the candidates.

Both the PIE and East Williston model accentuated the idea of gathering as much information as possible about candidates. Their procedures worked diligently at formulating a true portrait of the individual by using all
the hiring components mentioned in research question one.

There was total consensus among the administrators, the frames of reference, and the newly hired teachers about gathering data on the candidates, and obtaining a complete portrait of the individual. In fact, all the newly hired teachers emphasized that the additional information they could have shared with the hiring district, would really tell them, "who they were and what they knew".

**Research Question III**

**Why are these procedures the way they are?**

In four cases the current hiring system was implemented by the superintendent in the last two years. In four other cases the system had been in place for many years and was implemented by previous superintendent(s) or personnel directors. In two cases the system was implemented by the previous superintendent but was refined by the current superintendent.

Usually the procedures that were changed were done to move hiring responsibility to the school level. This responsibility included the use of team interviews, principal screening, multiple interviews, and local decision making. Also, more formality was instituted to see that all the procedures were followed, that adopted forms were used, and preset interview questions were written. The districts wanted to emphasize that hiring was one of the most important responsibilities in their school district.
Research Question IV

Who are the people involved and what are their roles in the hiring procedures?

Superintendents, personnel directors or other central office staff, principals, teachers, and candidates were all involved in hiring at different levels in the school districts studied. Although there was mention of including parents and possibly board members in the process, in actuality this did not occur in many of the districts. The breakdown is as follows:

1. District one involved the principal and superintendent only. They did all the screening and interviewing. The decision was usually reached collaboratively on the final choice.

2. District two included the superintendent, central office, principals, and teachers in the process. The central office completed the initial screening and interview. The principals (from all the schools) and teachers then interviewed and evaluated a teaching demonstration by the candidate. For selection to be complete all the administrators had to reach consensus. One dissenting opinion by an administrator meant no hire. The teachers input was advisory.

3. District three included the personnel director, the building principal, and the teacher committee. Candidates were screened and interviewed at the central office by the
personnel director. Second and third (optional) interviews were completed by the principal and teachers. The teachers’ role was advisory. Selection was made by the principal.

4. District four included the central office administrator, the principal, and the teachers. Central office organized the paper screening and selected candidates from which the principal could choose. Interviews were completed by the principal and teachers and they needed to reach consensus on the final candidate.

5. District five included the superintendent, the principal, and the teachers. The teachers’ role was advisory. The principal and superintendent both interviewed the final candidate(s), and made the final decision together.

6. District six included the superintendent, the principal, and the teachers. The teachers’ role was advisory. The principal usually decided on the final candidate; however, the ultimate decision was the superintendent’s, who interviewed the final candidate(s).

7. District seven included the superintendent, the central office staff (at times), the principal, and the teachers. The teachers’ role was advisory. The final selection was usually the principal’s, but the ultimate decision was the superintendent’s, who interviewed the final candidate(s).

8. District eight included the principal, the
personnel director, and the teachers (optional). The teachers' role (if involved) was advisory. The personnel director interviewed the final candidate(s) and had the ultimate decision, however, the principal usually made the final choice.

9. District nine included the superintendent, the central office (at times), the principal, and the teachers, (if involved). The teachers' role (if involved) was advisory. The superintendent had the ultimate decision, but the principal usually made the choice.

10. District ten included the central office (hardly ever), the principal, the curriculum associates, and the teachers. The teachers' role was different at individual buildings. Consensus decision making with teachers and the principal was used in some of the schools. Involving teachers only in an advisory role was the other option. In all cases, the final decision was made at the school level.

In summary, there were a variety of ways in which people were involved in the hiring process. Although there was input from teachers at all different levels in the process, and this input ranged from advisory to decision making, there was no formal way the districts selected which teachers would participate. This was always left to the school principal to decide. Therefore, the number of teachers, or their discipline and grade level was different at each school.
Only one of the districts used parents in the process. However, this was being considered in two districts. There was no plan to include board members in the hiring process at any level except to formally approve the final candidate.

The East Williston model proposed that teachers be deeply involved in hiring, along with the principal. The model proposed that it was the superintendent's responsibility to provide leadership and training for their staffs in hiring. Also, the superintendent should always be involved in the process and in the smaller districts, help interview.

Research Question V

What formal or informal ways are used to assess the hiring procedures?

Only one district had formally evaluated or assessed its hiring procedures. This was completed at a number of administrative meetings lead by the superintendent, because of a newly installed hiring system.

The balance of the districts assessed the systems informally. This was accomplished at varying levels. Usually, informal discussions centered around the types of candidates that the districts needed to interview, and the characteristics they were looking for in teachers.

Informal networks set up by the principals to discuss hiring were mentioned frequently. They spoke of meeting two or three times a year to evaluate their hiring process, and
the benefits of that activity. The superintendent was not involved in those conversations.

One of the most important parts of the PIE hiring model was evaluation of the selection system and the candidates hired. The whole process was based on a formal systematic way of hiring and conducting PIE workshops. These workshops reviewed the tenets of the program. Therefore, formal evaluation of the hiring procedures according to Pinsker should be done continually. Dr. Lund’s East Williston model assessed the system by the quality of the candidates who were hired. However, constant evaluation of what was being done, as compared to what should be done, was an integral part of that program.

In summary, most of the districts assessed their hiring procedures informally. Some of the assessment was initiated from the superintendent’s office, while other administrators set up their own network of contacts for evaluation. None of the administrators mentioned asking teachers to help evaluate the procedures. Neither the interviewing teachers or the newly hired teachers were involved.

A number of administrators did individually reflect on the hiring system they used. Their thoughts on how to improve the system and evaluate it was an issue they dealt with frequently.

The newly hired teachers were asked to give the strengths and weaknesses of the hiring process they had
currently completed. Their comments were illuminating and interesting and would be an excellent source for evaluative information.

Negative reaction from that group resulted from all the paperwork that needed to be completed for the application process. Also, not being informed of the hiring steps and timelines, was mentioned by many of the candidates. Wait time, administrators not calling when they said they would, and not returning phone calls were very disconcerting to the candidates and caused them great stress.

The most positive components of the hiring process, according to candidates, were comfortable semi-formal interviews and interviews where administrators encouraged them to talk and be themselves. Allowing the candidates to talk about themselves, their beliefs, and their professional aspirations was highly important to them.

In summary, newly hired teachers and teachers involved in hiring would be excellent sources for information when examining hiring systems. Again, none of the school districts used this option.

**Research Question VI**

*What frames of reference are used and are the basis in determining hiring procedures?*

In questioning the administrators about the frame of reference or theoretical foundation that their hiring system was based on, a variety of answers were gathered. The
following describes their replies.

1. District one said there was no frame of reference or theoretical base to their hiring system. In fact, the superintendent said that he had never heard of any.

2. District two believed their hiring system, which is very formalized and task specific, had developed over time and tradition based on the previous superintendent’s model.

3. District three understood their hiring system was based on a model set up by the previous personnel director.

4. District four referred to its model as a shared decision making model. This reference was based on the fact that consensus on the final choice must be reached between the hiring committee and the principal.

5. District five remarked that there was no frame of reference or theory on which their hiring was based. "They just did it."

6. District six perceived their system was based on the philosophical underpinning that "it is most important to find people with good character, who are intelligent, team players, and will invest time in their job." Additionally, the superintendent tried to change the types of teachers who were hired. They previously looked for content people, but were dissatisfied because content people were not willing to differentiate children’s lessons and did not work as a team.

7. District seven’s hiring system was based on the superintendent’s model which was highly influenced by
techniques from the Association for School College and University Staffing, and the American Association of School Personnel Administrators. The principal who had worked in the district for twenty years remarked that the superintendent's model meshed well with what had been done previously and seeing the process in black and white solidified and formalized it. It was considered a very well managed and useful system.

8. District eight stated that their system was based on a late 1960's model from the University of Chicago that emphasized staff improvement techniques. The philosophy of this system was to match the needs of the school community with the staff available. This was best done by the principal who could "read the community".

9. District nine believed system had developed over time. Even though the superintendent used the Ventures in Excellence model, this was only completed at his level.

10. District ten had started to use the East Williston model. Interestingly when Dr. Lund was asked if there was a frame of reference or theoretical base for this model, he replied it was "based on an understanding of how things worked," and nothing else.

In summary, there was minimal selection research used in the hiring systems of the sampled school districts. Most hiring procedures were developed over time based on the experience of the administrators. In fact, most of the
administrators were unaware of much of the research or frames of reference in hiring. A few mentioned SRI, one, Ventures in Excellence, and one ASCUS and AASPA. Further discussion of training and developing a formalized hiring system will be discussed in Chapter IV based on the two frames of reference being used in this study.

**Research Question VII**

**What role can business hiring practices play in teacher selection practices?**

A variety of responses was elicited from administrators and can be organized in three areas. The first area can be classified as administrators who were not knowledgeable or did not know if business hiring practices could help in educational hiring. Eight of the twenty-five administrators can be grouped in this category.

Comments from these respondents usually had a "I don't know" statement in it. Although there were beliefs that schools actually were businesses and therefore should have some things in common, there were no specific ideas on how business processes could be borrowed or used. References to possibilities and maybe's were the predominant answer to the above question.

The second area in which the administrators can be classified are those that believe businesses do have a hiring process that educators can use. Twelve of the twenty-five administrators can be classified in this area. They
believed businesses could have roles in education, especially the service oriented companies. They thought that schools could borrow theories from businesses such as Deming’s, Total Quality Management and Ouchi’s, Theory Z.

It was also mentioned that corporations had PHD psychologists that helped them hire and that schools could learn from them. Additionally, it was believed that human resource departments dealt with the same challenges as schools and sharing procedures could help both groups. It could especially help smaller districts that do not have their own personnel departments.

In the third area the administrators believed that business does not have useful procedures for educational hiring. Five administrators can be classified in this area. There were very strong statements made about business hiring practices. Some of the administrators had worked in business and saw the ineffectiveness of theirhirings. They believed that business had different needs than education and did not make long term commitments to their employees. It was perceived that education did a better job than business in hiring, because schools could not terminate teachers as easily as business.

In summary, some of the administrators did believe that business practices in hiring could be helpful to school districts. However, this was less than half the administrators. The remainder either disagreed or did not
know. More discussion on this subject will take place in the next chapter.

**Summary**

Chapter III presented and analyzed the data collected from the sampled school districts. The chapter was organized around the seven research questions upon which this study was based. Additionally, the collected documents from the schools were used to add further meaning and clarity to the data. Further conclusions, implications, and recommendations will be included in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to carefully isolate the procedures and people involved and their roles in the teacher hiring process in ten selected school districts in Northwest Suburban Chicago. The guidelines that were followed by the sampled school districts in hiring their teachers were pinpointed. Furthermore, an evaluation of the components used to hire teachers was included in this study.

An additional purpose of this study was to organize a comprehensive systematic procedure, together with the activities needed in a hiring system. That will be shown in this chapter.

This study was necessary because of the significance and importance of hiring excellent teachers in school districts. Additionally, there is little formal training that is offered to administrators to help them with the critical task of identifying which procedures should be included in the hiring process, who should be included, and for what reasons.

Many businesses have formalized hiring procedures and formats to help them hire excellent personnel. Professional
headhunters, psychologists, and personnel specialists assist these businesses in hiring. The relationship between business hiring practices and school hiring practices was presented.

This qualitative study purposely sampled ten Northwest Suburban Chicago elementary school districts using open-ended face-to-face interview questions. Twenty five superintendents, personnel directors or other central office administrators, principals, and ten newly hired teachers were interviewed during the time period of August, 1994 through November, 1994. The data from the interviews were compared with the forms and written documents collected from the sampled schools to increase understanding and to give added explanations and depth to the research. The data were collected and analyzed simultaneously, which was a continuous process. Understanding themes and developmental thinking were accomplished by memoing and coding.

The data were compared to a frame of reference that included two models. They were the East Williston model from New York and the PIE model (Profile Interview Evaluate) of Richard Pinsker. The East Williston model was an education model while the PIE model was from business.

A limited number of research articles were discovered that discussed the entire process of school district hiring practices. Many studies were found that viewed specific areas in hiring. These included teacher examinations, legal
aspects in hiring, teacher induction, and especially teacher interviewing. Also, many articles were devoted to the hiring of principals and superintendents, and the hiring of college personnel.

Additionally, much research and literature were found that dealt with business hiring practices and personnel selection methods. This literature review helped to formulate the frame of reference used in this study.

Selecting teachers is an involved and comprehensive activity that when done correctly takes many hours of investment. Therefore, this study aimed to interpret the collected data so that interpretations, insights, and understanding could be generated.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the current hiring procedures being used in the school districts being studied?

2. What is the purpose of each step in the procedure?

3. Why are these procedures the way they are?

4. Who are the people involved and what are their roles in the hiring procedures?

5. What formal or informal ways are used to assess the hiring procedures?

6. What frames of reference are used and are the basis in determining hiring procedures?

7. What role can business hiring practices play in teacher selection practices?
Conclusions

Research Question 1

What are the current hiring procedures being used in the school districts being studied?

**Conclusion I:** The participants all used the following components to some extent when hiring teachers. They were recruiting, examining resumes, credentials, transcripts, and letters of recommendation, an application form, interview(s), and a job offer. Three other components - phone references, job descriptions or job analysis, and work samples (portfolios, videos, or teaching demonstrations) were used more sporadically.

The school districts as mentioned, all had their own way of using the hiring components. The importance of each of the elements in each district had different weights. For example, where one district may have only one interview with a candidate by the principal or superintendent, another would have team interviews that included teachers and other district administrators. Candidates were recalled a number of times.

Also, not all the components were used all the time. Examination of credentials, transcripts, and the application form, was done haphazardly in some districts or not at all in others.

The use of work samples, phone references, and job descriptions or job analysis were items that were entirely
missing in some of the districts. While these components can give valuable and critical information to the school districts, their importance is not always recognized by some of the districts. Once again, this was most evident when work samples were not included in the process at all or not recognized as a function by some of the administrators. Additionally, sometimes work samples were used part of the time when the district had the comfort of not being rushed. In other districts, usually those with a formalized hiring process, these components were an important and valued part in hiring.

**Conclusion II:** The administrators in the sample considered the interview the most important instrument in the hiring process. This was followed in descending order by phone references, work samples, credential review, job description, recruiting, and transcripts.

This conclusion was reached using the final question on the questionnaire which asked the administrators to rank the above components from most important to least important. The interview without a doubt was the number one component picked. The second and third areas chosen were phone references and work samples. This was surprising, considering that few districts used work samples in their process all the time. The same can be said for phone references. Perhaps a realization of the importance of these procedures will influence the districts to utilize
these components more often when hiring.

The job description or job analysis being fifth on the list shows the lack of understanding of its importance by the administrators. The research and frame of reference all project the importance of defining the job so that the right person can be hired. This cannot be emphasized enough.

**Conclusion III:** Newly hired teachers understood the hiring process well and were quite perceptive as to the importance of each step in the process.

The newly hired teachers were asked the same last question in their interview as were the administrators. That is, they were asked to rank the hiring components from most important to least important.

The interview, as with the administrators, was listed as the most important component in hiring. This was followed by work samples, job description or job analysis, credential review and phone references (tied), and transcripts and recruiting.

The importance of the work samples to the hiree was projected many times by the candidate’s belief that this was one of the best means for the hirer to really know them. Their understanding of the importance of this was better than the administrators.

The rest of the list closely resembles the administrator’s choices. The newly hired teachers have many more insights to offer than perhaps given credit.
Conclusion IV: Time is of essence in hiring. Planning enough time so that all the important hiring components can be accomplished must be allowed.

The theme that came out continuously was the enormous amount of time it took to hire correctly and the impatience that was evidenced by the administrators when they were rushed or had to do last minute hiring.

When the administrators were asked what components were included in the ideal hiring system, the number one response was having enough time to do the job correctly.

Conclusion V: Districts that had more formalized hiring systems were apt to use more of the hiring components on a regular basis. Larger districts were more inclined to have formalized hiring systems than smaller.

The larger districts had planned hiring systems with components that were nearly always used as compared to the one school or smaller districts. The informality of the hiring system allowed these smaller districts to bypass or compromise certain components. Examples could include not filling out an application, not reviewing credentials or transcripts, and not calling for recommendations. Since there was less accountability, there was less explaining why these procedures were not completed. When the components are not all used, the portrait of the candidate is less complete and therefore less information is available to make a decision. Formal steps force the hirers to go through the
process more completely.

Research Question II

What is the purpose of each step in the procedure?

Conclusion VI: The components of the hiring process are all used to form a portrait of the individual so that the hiring district can learn who that person really is.

This theme was projected constantly by the administrators. They used each individual hiring component to add another piece to the description of the individual. This description can be related to a jigsaw puzzle; that is, as each piece is added, a clearer picture of the individual becomes apparent.

This was even more evident in districts with a more formalized system that used each component every time. The use of an increased number of interviews and teaching demonstrations were more evident in these districts. The length of time of the process and seeing the candidates so many times brings consensus and clarity to the choice of the candidate. Observing them under different conditions and situations brings closure to the process.

Research Question III

Why are these procedures the way they are?

Conclusion VII: Most of the hiring procedures that were in place in the selected school districts developed over a period of time.

Although a few districts changed or added components in
their hiring systems, most procedures had been used in the same manner for many years. Administrators did allude to the superintendent making changes in the components, such as using committee hiring or adding some paperwork for better accountability, but this was only in a few of the districts.

More often, when procedures changed it was from informal experimentation at the local school level. In no case was an entire system totally revamped in any of the districts.

One of the superintendents described it best.

This system has been here for twenty years and has worked very well. It was introduced by the previous superintendent who had been here the last fifteen years. When I took over, we worked with what we had, and tried to make things better.

**Conclusion VIII:** Procedures are continued because the perceived results are positive.

There is no need to change if the system does not need to be fixed. This adage is often used but is a good explanation as to why procedures stay basically the same. If the districts are pleased with their results, they have no reason to look for something else.

Another reason why procedures have not changed is that some of the administrators were not aware of the research that supported work samples, thorough reference checks, and committee hiring as being very beneficial in selecting excellent teachers. Additionally, some of the administrators were not even aware of some of these
techniques and therefore did not include them in their hiring programs.

Research Question IV

Who are the people involved and what are their roles in the hiring procedures?

**Conclusion IX:** Different people were involved in the hiring depending upon each district's philosophy in hiring.

The hiring process included different people in various districts. Collectively, the superintendent, personnel director, or other central office staff, principal(s), and teachers were involved at different levels in the process. Each individual district spelled out these people's contributions. This could include only the superintendent and principal interviewing to staff committees and principals being included. The one constant in all the districts was the building principal being involved.

Usually when staff participated, they were involved in interviewing the candidates and then providing feedback to the principal. Their role was usually advisory. However, in some cases, consensus of choice was the goal of the group. That is, the principal and hiring team had to agree on a candidate. This was mandatory in one district and the rule in two others.

**Conclusion X:** When using hiring committees the administrator should be aware of certain fallabilities in this option.
A number of administrators who endorsed the using of committees were cautious when considering that group's recommendation. They believed that committees had a tendency to pick people that fit-in with them, and did not always select the best candidate. Also, one needed to be careful of committees and inside candidates. These candidates often had an edge.

The other option, as mentioned before, has the final choice being made by the administrator's as a group, or the principal, personnel director, or superintendent individually. How this was implemented was based on the philosophy of the hiring procedure.

**Conclusion XI:** The use of teachers on selection committees has many additional positive outcomes other than just helping choose excellent teachers.

All of the administrators who used teachers in the hiring process alluded to the benefits that resulted from their participation. The biggest asset was the increased morale that occurred. This was followed by the staff's loyalty to the new teacher hired and their willingness to help the new person to insure that he/she would be successful. Commitment to the new hiree was outstanding.

The teachers who were included in the hiring had a very positive view of themselves as professionals. Their having a say-so and a responsibility in choosing their colleagues raised their perception of being more than just a teacher,
but also a true professional.

This outcome was one of the most positive mentioned by the administrators. In addition to having the expertise of the professional teacher in assessing a candidate’s potentiality as a new teacher in their area, they helped to develop a strong team unity in their school and district.

The following superintendent’s quote summarizes this nicely when he says that "the teachers are so invested in the new hiree, they make sure he/she is successful."

Research Question V

What formal or informal ways are used to assess the hiring procedures?

**Conclusion XII:** If school districts assess their hiring systems, they do so informally.

Although hiring was considered an important task in all the school districts, there was little formal assessment of their systems. Sometimes, administrators would discuss among themselves the results of their work, but actually sitting down and evaluating the system did not happen very often.

Informal evaluations were usually done at the principal’s level but this did not occur often. Although three districts had some discussions among all the administrators that emanated from the superintendent, this was done perfunctorily and without much substance.

**Conclusion XIII:** Most administrators assessed the
quality of the hiring system by the results of their efforts. That is, did the candidate they hire turn out to be excellent?

Usually, one cannot evaluate the quality of the teacher hired until sometime during their first teaching year. Although most administrators watch their new teachers more closely than their tenured teachers, there is still a period of acclimation that needs to be allowed. However, for first year teachers, rehiring decisions have to be made by March, because of legalities. The thinking of most of the administrators was that they could rate their hiring procedures based upon how many new teachers they kept and did not release. The administrators as a group felt that the first two years of a new teacher's job were included in this hiring procedure. Tenure is not granted until the start of year three.

**Conclusion IV:** Training administrators and teachers to use the hiring components would help them evaluate their hiring systems.

Almost all of the administrators interviewed responded that they had little training in hiring teachers. Those who did were usually involved in short workshops. Therefore, the people who are most responsible for this task, and who should train the teachers that are involved, have limited resources to do so.

With little formal background training, there is not a
basis to evaluate their systems other than mentioned in conclusion one. There are so many different components which make up hiring that experience alone cannot do the best job of evaluation. Additional input or information on a regular basis is necessary.

Research Question VI

What frames of reference are used and are the basis in determining hiring procedures?

Conclusion XV: Most of the hiring systems are not based on any frame of reference, but are more philosophically based.

Consensus of the administrators is that their hiring systems are based on finding the best person for the job. There is little reliance on a model other than the system they are currently using.

Although two administrators referred to certain guidelines they had learned from their studies, most hiring systems were evolutionary.

What districts decided either consciously or unconsciously was the "kind of person" they were seeking; that is, the personal and professional characteristics that they required in the teachers they hired. The lists of characteristics that the administrators mentioned were long and descriptive. While many of the categories they listed were the same, their actual descriptions were different. The importance of defining applicant characteristics is
paramount when looking for candidates.

Once again, the majority of the districts described the basis of their hiring systems from a philosophical description of the kind of teacher they wanted to hire. Little if any reference was made to a frame for their system or a comprehensive plan other than what had evolved over time.

Research Question VII

What role can business hiring practices play in teacher selection practices?

Conclusion XVI: Many businesses have sophisticated hiring procedures that could be useful if transferred to teacher hiring.

Much research has been done on hiring for businesses, especially when hiring for management positions. When one looks at the literature and the complex personnel departments that many companies have, its possibilities for use by school systems becomes evident.

Usually, what business has done is to break down each step in the hiring process and analyze it. Suggestions for the use of each step are often provided. Some of these steps include resume reading, interviewing, job description analysis, legalities in hiring, recruiting, making reference calls, and others. Pinsker was most representative of how business could be helpful to schools. There are also other systems that could add important information to schools in
helping them hire the best candidates.

Also, one cannot forget management theories like Deming’s, Total Quality Management, or Ouchi’s, Theory Z that have impacted schools in their way of operation. Hiring is a crucial part of those theories also.

On the other hand, not every business will hire well. Many companies, as well as many schools, do a mediocre or poor job in hiring candidates. So, simply saying that all business hiring practices are good or bad is as wrong as saying all school hiring practices are good or bad. Each system must be evaluated on its own merits. Again, many businesses have much to offer schools in devising a system to hire excellent candidates.

Recommendations

Recommendation I

Hiring procedures should involve the components and activities listed below. These components and activities should be constructed individually by each school district to meet their needs.

Job Description or Job Analysis. This is the first task that should be completed before any other when seeking to hire. A thorough description of the kind of person needed for the position together with the required personal and professional characteristics is of paramount importance. This description should be identified by the group that will be involved in the hiring and not just one administrator at
the central office level.

A philosophical underpinning that should be the basis when deciding the needs of the position is that the people closest to the job (principal, teachers) are in the best position to know the requirements of that position. Also, this job description should be done as soon as the open positions can be identified. To hire correctly and to do all the procedures takes time. Rushed hiring can be haphazard and end up with poor results.

There are three forms from Pinsker's book that can give formality to this part of the selection process. They can be helpful in determining the potential teacher's success patterns, personal characteristics, and performance expectations. These forms can be found in the Appendix section of his book, but should be adapted for each local school district to best meet needs of that district.

**Recruitment.** The second step in the procedure is recruiting for the position. Informal and formal processes should be developed that give the hiring school district a wide spectrum of visibility when advertising the available position.

There are many ways to get excellent applicants. However, it should be remembered that not all the best teachers will apply, and must be pursued. Locating these special people and inviting them to apply takes more work then simply advertising in a university bulletin.
To acquire those special people takes creativity and ingenuity. Although the salary that is to be offered often determines the experience and education level of candidates, special individualized attention to a potential employee can do much to entice him/her to a new district. Also, providing leadership opportunities for people can be very alluring.

Using job fairs and the Education Week newspaper so that a national scope of recruitment takes place can bring balance and variety to a school district. Just because a plethora of unsolicited resumes are received should not preclude a district from advertising widely.

It should be remembered that the job analysis is extremely important and should be the basis of the advertisement. This will allow the candidate to individualize his/her interest to the specifics of the position.

**Resume, Credentials, Application, Transcripts.** This section of the hiring procedure could be considered the paperwork portion of the process. In order to obtain a complete picture of the candidate, collecting all of the above data will help. This information should be used to personalize the interview questions so that clarification of written responses to questions on the application, questions about grades or classes taken, questions about written recommendations in the credential file, and questions about
red or yellow flags on the resume can be pursued (See Appendix section in Pinsker's book). Also, looking for the Absolutes and Pluses in the above materials that have been developed in the job description or analysis is another important task when examining those papers.

There are a number of ways to secure a writing sample from the candidate. This can be done as an attachment to the application, or on the application itself. Each district can decide for itself if they want spontaneous hand-written responses or prepared responses where the candidates have more time to write their essay. It is suggested that however the district decides to do this, the questions themselves be carefully considered and relate well to the position being offered.

The application form should be of a fine quality. Copied applications that are obsolete and perhaps even illegal give a negative portrayal of the district. It is important, for legal reasons, that the candidate sign the application. Actually, the application form should be checked by the district's attorney to see that it meets all legal requirements and protects the district from lawsuits.

The letters of recommendation that are usually enclosed with the university credentials should be read and used as another piece of the information. Research shows that letters written by university student teacher advisors have more credibility than others. Also, if the reader knows the
writer of the letter, he/she is better able to analyze and interpret its contents.

The information received in the letters of recommendation should be used to help determine some of the interview questions and as a basis to telephone the reference writers for clarification and expansion on what was written. Whatever the case, calls to these people should be made, as the letters themselves are not to replace personal and professional reference calls.

**Interview.** There are a number of ways to organize the interviews so they can be helpful in analyzing a candidate’s potential. The interviews then can be described as screening interviews or extensive interviews.

The screening interview is usually of short duration (fifteen to twenty minutes) and is used as a device to lower the number of applicants to a smaller group. Screening interviews can be completed at the central office level, or school level. It is suggested that the screening interview be done at the school level in keeping with the philosophy that decisions are best made locally. Prepared questions should be used and an evaluation sheet completed on each screening interview so comparisons can be made. Since there can be a large number of interviews, this is most important. The interview team should design the screening questions and the long interview questions in conjunction with the job description and position requirements. The team can also
decide who will be included in the screening interview.

It is suggested that screening interviews include a sufficient number of candidates. This researcher believes that paperwork can give important information, but personal contact cannot be underestimated. If in doubt, see them.

After the paperwork and screening interviews have been completed and evaluated, and the team decides on the candidates who will be called back for an extensive interview, the questions should be finalized and personalized for the position and the candidate. The most important factor in this interview is to influence the person to reveal her/himself. This is best accomplished by making them comfortable and at ease.

After the interviews, a committee designed evaluation form and discussion on the merits of the candidates should be completed. It is suggested that if there is trouble differentiating among the candidates, or if further clarification or information is needed, the candidates be recalled for an additional interview. This is in keeping with the philosophy that the more information obtained about a candidate the better the decision that can be made.

**Work Samples/Reference.** After completion of the interviews three further steps need to be taken; examining the portfolios or video (if the candidate has one), arranging a teaching demonstration, and closely checking references by calling.
Since most candidates bring their portfolios to the interview, the selection committee can either examine them after the final interview or review them at the time of the screening interview. It should be decided if the entire team will examine these materials or a sub-committee that would report back its findings to the team. A district designed evaluation instrument should be used to rate these items.

The teaching demonstration can be completed in two ways and there are benefits to both. The members of the team can attempt to observe the candidate in their current teaching position. The benefit is the candidate will be seen in his/her own environment. A caution should be noted in that it is possible to stage a lesson more easily that way.

The benefit of a teaching demonstration at the hiring school site is that it is more convenient for the team, and the situation of the lesson can be monitored more closely. Also, this is the working environment for the person if hired.

The committee should decide if the hiree will be given a lesson to teach, or be allowed to present his/her own. Whatever the case, it is suggested that the candidate be permitted to meet with the regular classroom teacher beforehand.

The question of what to do during the summer is always a dilemma. Sometimes a summer school class can be used.
This does reinforce the idea that it is most important to start the hiring process early in the year, so that the demonstration lessons can be completed before the end of the school year.

Making the final reference calls is an extremely important step in the hiring process and should not be overlooked or completed haphazardly. Based on the philosophy that a person probably will behave in the future as he/she has in the past, checking behaviors and past experiences of candidates by talking to people who have worked with or supervised them is extremely important. These data can only be collected by the personal call. Usually, one can influence a person to share feelings and insights easier verbally than in writing. This is certainly the case when considering the lawsuits that are being filed.

The caller should try not only to talk to references that are listed on the candidates resume or application, but others too. This often can be accomplished by asking the reference to list the names of people who know or who have worked with the candidate.

Pinsker has an entire section of his book dedicated to the reference call. This would be an excellent resource for any person involved in reference checking.

**Job Offer/Final Decision.** After all the components of the hiring procedures have been completed, a final decision can be reached and the offer made to the candidate. It is
assumed that the hiring district will have decided who makes the final decision. It would seem to make the most sense to have a final meeting of the hiring team to consider the candidates and to get final input. The following are options on final choice:

1. The hiring committee decides by consensus.
2. The hiring committee gives input to the principal and he/she decides.
3. The hiring committee sends recommendations (one or two candidates) to the central office, personnel director, and/or superintendent, and they decide.

It is suggested here that option two be endorsed. It should be added that whatever the option, the hiring committee should know this up front, so there is no disagreement on roles.

Even though it is recommended that option two be used, it is also recommended that a courtesy interview be extended to the candidate by the personnel director and/or superintendent. This closure to the process sends a message that the new hiree is really an important person to the district and the best candidate. It also reinforces the team work concept of the school district to both the new hiree and the hiring team.

The issue of using intuition when trying to reach the final decision should not be underestimated or overlooked. People on the hiring team with good intuition should be
encouraged to report their feelings and instincts about the final candidate.

In summary, the recommended hiring model needs to be adapted to each individual district. The process of designing that model may be as important as the outcome. There are a number of very important points that should be added or reinforced to the above model. They follow in the other recommendations.

Recommendation II

The comfortability of the candidate in the interview is of paramount importance if the "real person" is to emerge. It is up to the interviewer(s) to do this.

Recommendation III

The hiring process should be started early in the year so that all the components can be completed.

Recommendation IV

Formalize the hiring procedures and use forms to notate information on the candidates. This will help the hirers evaluate the candidates more clearly.

Recommendation V

Develop a final questionnaire that the newly hired teacher completes which evaluates the hiring process. The feedback will be very helpful.

Recommendation VI

Training must be done for all members of the hiring committee. This also includes administrators.
Recommendation VII

Universities should include personnel hiring as part of the administrative course sequence.

Recommendation VIII

The following philosophical underpinning should underlie school district hiring systems.

1. People will behave in the future the way they have in the past.

2. Hiring decisions should be made closest to the job site.

3. Hiring quickly with mediocre or poor results, is not expedient at all, but actually inefficient and costly, since the search will be done over again. Start early!

Recommendation IX

Handle experienced teachers who are being recruited differently from new teachers. The district may need to convince experienced teachers as to the merits of changing jobs.

Recommendation X

Make certain that all legalities are adhered to in the hiring process and that legal issues are included in the training.

Recommendation XI

When evaluating the hiring system, do not assess procedures only on the number of teachers that were released but on how many were truly excellent, not just mediocre.
Recommendations For Further Research

1. Replicate this study at the high school level.

2. Do further research into newly hired teacher perceptions of the hiring process.

3. Do further research on business hiring practices and their relationship to hiring teachers.

4. Do further research on the numbers and background of teachers who should be on the hiring team.

5. Do further research on developing job profiles in teaching.

6. Do further research on the use of intuition in hiring teachers.

7. Do further research on using work samples in hiring teachers.
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APPENDIX A

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
Job Position - Superintendent, Principal, Teacher, Personnel Director

Years In Position

Male - Female

District & School
1. How many students in district? In each school?
2. How many buildings in district? How organized - K-6, K-8, etc.?
3. What is the economic status of the district? In the red, in the black?
4. What is the economic status of the people of the school community? (percentage of low income)?

Procedures & Steps
5. Ideally, what do you think are the important components of a good hiring system?
6. What are the current procedures and components used in your teacher selection process now? Please expand on the importance and purpose of each step.

PROBES:

_____. Is the current process the same throughout the district?
_____. If not, who decides what the process is?
_____. What specifically is looked for when examining credentials, transcripts, letters of recommendation? Written rating sheets?
_____. Are the interview questions prepared beforehand? Who does it?
1. Are the questions the same for all candidates?
2. Are there certain candidate behaviors that are looked for during the interview?
3. Are teacher candidates given any tests? NTE, etc.
4. Are any work samples used to evaluate the candidates such as - videos, teaching examples, portfolios, written essays? Written rating sheets?
5. Is this done before or after the interview?
6. What part does intuition play in choosing a teacher?
7. Are teacher candidates ever visited at their current position and evaluated while they are teaching?
8. How is the final decision reached?
9. Is there any theoretical base or frame of reference from research that the hiring system is based upon? ex. Selection Research Inc. (SRI), Business Model etc.

7. Who are the people involved in these processes and what are their responsibilities? Parents, board members, others?
8. Where do you get the names of most of your applicants? ex. other administrators, recruiting, mailed resumes?
Position Analysis

9. Is there a specific job description for the teacher positions being interviewed? In other words, would the same position (ex. 1st grade) required different needs or a different positional description in one school as opposed to another school in the same district?

10. Are there special applicant characteristics that you are looking for? What are they?

Training and Assessment

11. Are there any informal or formal assessment procedures in place that evaluate the hiring process? Please explain.

12. Have you or any of the hiring team had a workshop or class in personnel hiring, interviewing, etc? Please explain.

   . Would you consider some training if it was offered to you?

   . Do you think personnel hiring should be a standard course offered as part of the administrative course sequence through the university? Please explain.

Business

13. Do you think business has hiring processes that could be useful if transferred to the hiring of teachers? Explain.

   . Do you think business does a better job of
hiring than schools? Why?

**Final**

14. What are the strengths of your hiring process?

15. What are the weaknesses? Concerns?

16. What part of the process gives the most significant information to the hiring officer so the best candidate is selected?

17. Please consider the following components of the hiring process and rank them in order of importance, number one being most important to number seven being least important. (Administration)

   ____ Recruiting
   ____ Job Description or Job Analysis
   ____ Credential Review
   ____ Transcripts
   ____ Interview
   ____ Work Samples
   ____ Phone References
APPENDIX B

NEW TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
New Teacher Questions

1. Please tell me about your recent experience going through the hiring process in this district. (Include strengths and weaknesses).
   . any meaningful questions you were asked?
   . how did you feel during the interview process?

2. Did you understand what was expected of you throughout the process? Please explain.

3. What parts of the selection process were most positive? What parts were most negative?

4. Describe one or two things that could have been done during the process that would have better indicated who you are? What you know about teaching?

5. Please consider the following components of the hiring process and rank them in order of importance - number one being most important to number seven being least important. (Teacher)

   ____ Recruiting
   ____ Job Description of Job Analysis
   ____ Credential Review
   ____ Transcripts
   ____ Interview
   ____ Work Samples
   ____ Phone References
APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Raymond J. Kuper has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Max A. Bailey, Director
Associate Professor and Chairperson, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Loyola University Chicago

Dr. Philip Carlin
Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Loyola University Chicago

Dr. L. Arthur Safer
Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Loyola University Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Date: March 28, 1995

Director's Signature: [Signature]