Abstract

The purpose of this project was to describe the transition and process necessary for displaced workers to find reemployment. The mass layoffs event in the US reported for the fourth quarter of 2008 increased seriously in comparison to any other quarters over the last decade. The research literature explained the psychological effect, assistance available to acquire necessary skills, and the process for improving the perspective of displaced workers to find reemployment. The research literature described several job search methods in detail and categorized them as formal or informal. An analysis was conducted to determine if a difference exists between job search methods and satisfaction of current reemployment. In addition, the analysis included a correlation between level of education and satisfaction of reemployment. The participants of this analysis comprised a convenience sample of displaced workers from The Corporation (which shall remain unnamed). The statistical data collected from surveys seemed to support the idea that informal job searches are more successful in locating reemployment. In addition, the analysis suggested displaced workers with a higher level of education were more satisfied with their reemployment. Finally, it appeared a greater percentage of displaced workers reentering the workforce would be paid at least ten percent less than the jobs they left.
Introduction and Statement of Purpose

Statement of purpose

The purpose of this project was to describe the transition and process necessary for displaced workers to find reemployment. Displaced workers referred to people who were laid-off due to down-sizing, restructured organizations, relocated companies, or business closures. Nationally, millions of jobs have been eliminated every year over the last decade as a result of a corporate decision to reduce workforce. The data presented explains the psychological effect, assistance available to acquire necessary skills, and the process for improving the perspective of displaced workers to find reemployment. The research revealed formal job search methods utilizing assistance of outplacement programs, government agencies, and staffing firms. In addition, one study has shown informal job search methods for employment had higher success. Informal methods included networking, internet usage, and direct personal contacts to potential employers. The research was gathered within the United States during the last ten years.

Organizational Context

Setting of the problem. The United States has experienced thousands of extended mass lay-off events when corporations have merged, restructured, relocated overseas, and outsourced jobs to increase their profits. The corporate decisions resulted in large lay-offs of workers. Data presented detailed how laid-off workers or displaced workers handled the loss of their income, identity, life-style, and friends or co-workers.

The research revealed the benefits available through high quality outplacement programs and public agencies to develop the skills and perspectives of displaced workers. Outplacement and public programs relied on the displaced worker to actively seek involvement. One-on-one personal consultation, job planning, skill development, and group workshops were some of the
methods outplacement program and public employment agencies used to assist displaced
workers. Formal and informal job search methods were determined and the results of successful
job search methods were quantified. Formal job search methods utilized professional services
from outplacement programs, state employment agency, and staffing firms. In comparison,
informal methods of job searches involved Internet searches, networking, and direct connection
to potential employers.

Historical Perspective

Displaced workers, especially workers with several years of tenure, processed the loss of
their job by first making the psychological transition. The psychological transition was the
mental or emotional process involved the denial, grief, and acceptance of their situation, along
with the reality of the job market. The job market reality has been experienced displaced workers
often did not locate a position with equal pay or benefits as his or her prior position. The research
provided information, along with sources of assistance available for these individuals. The
displaced workers were introduced to the necessary skills and job search methods available to
find employment.

Research showed that no longer is one job search method successful in reducing the
amount of time unemployed. Combinations of several methods were advised as the best
approach to find employment in a shorter length of time. Displaced workers were required to
plan and organize the tasks and necessary networking to find a desired position. Job searches
have become competitive as a result of the Internet; therefore, the displaced workers currently
use more energy and effort to gain suitable employment.

Scope of the Problem
Corporations across the United States have reduced their workforce over the past decade as a result of mergers, restructuring, outsourcing or relocation to foreign countries. The Bureau of Labor statistical data from 2004 through 2007 showed over 4,000 extended mass layoff events each year in the United States. The mass layoff events from 2004 to 2007 have decreased from the 7-8,000 events reported for the years 2001 through 2003. When the events were related to the millions of people laid-off each year nationally, the data began sobering.

Nationally displaced workers have worked through the transition to find re-employment. The trend of corporations to redesign their business and lay-off workers transcended to countries over the world. Research data showed displaced workers in Canada used unemployed time as time for reflection and self-discovery. The Canadian article encouraged the use of outplacement agencies. Descriptive research provided national statistical data of the success of formal versus informal job searches. The job search methods did not include all possible forms of job searches, but addressed methods most often used. The project did not address discrimination issues or individuals who were unemployed for reasons other than being laid-off.

Significance of the Project

Displaced workers equipped with the knowledge of expected psychological affect prepared for the emotional impact of being laid-off. The research provided information to assist the displaced worker in their search for re-employment. Formal and informal job search methods were described to assist displaced workers in their job search. The benefits of high quality outplacement programs were detailed to encourage displaced workers to utilize any available program. The research explained the assistance provided by public unemployment agency. The study included several informal method of networking for job searches. Displaced worked
equipped with the knowledge from the research will benefit by reducing the amount of time unemployed.

**Definition of Terms**

Blog – personnel diary or journal.

Displaced worker – worker laid-off due to company’s actions (down-sizing, reorganization, relocation, closing, outsourcing, or various other possibilities).

Extended layoff event - Fifty or more initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits from an employer during a 5-week period, with at least 50 workers separated for more than 30 days (US Bureau, 2008).

Hits – each time a computer user goes to a particular Internet site.

Human capital – the years of tenure on a job whereas worker gains specific skills.

Job fair - designed to connect potential employees with recruiters.

Offshore Outsourcing - organization outsource certain jobs or tasks to overseas companies.

Online – using a computer with Internet connection to search for information or jobs.

Outplacement – normally an outside “staffing” firm contracted to assist laid-off employees to conduct job searches. High quality firms provide one-on-one counseling and personal support.

Outsourcing - organization send certain jobs or tasks to other companies to perform the job.

Networking – connection to people with common interest (Internet networking is connections made over the World Wide Web).

Reemployment – displaced worker who found new employment.

Social networking or social hardware – is the process of connecting entities together based on their social bonds or ties over the Internet. Network examples are MySpace, FACEBOOK, Google, Yahoo, Instant Messaging (IM), along with over 30 additional sites.

Site – location of a network on the Internet.

Tenure - holding one’s position on a permanent basis without periodic contract renewals.

Unemployment insurance – government program under which a person, who is unemployed through no fault of his or her own, is paid weekly benefits based upon his or her past wages.

Users – people using computers.
Review of the Literature

The purpose of this research was to describe the transition and process necessary for displaced workers to find reemployment. Bureau of Labor statistics quantified the national mass layoff events to demonstrate the problem. Displaced workers, especially workers with several years of tenure, processed the loss of their job by first making the psychology transition. Comparison to employed workers was used to clarify the loss experienced by displaced workers. The research provided resources for counseling available to the displaced workers. In addition, the displaced workers were introduced to the necessary skills and job search methods available to find reemployment. The research involved the benefits available through formal contacts (outplacement programs, public agencies, and staffing firms) to develop the skills and perspectives of displaced workers. Informal job search methods (networking, Internet search, and direct contact to potential employers) were described and the research showed informal methods were more successful than formal methods. Descriptive research provided national statistical data of the number of extended mass layoff events, along with the success of formal versus informal job searches.

Employed Persons

An employed person has a higher level of contentment in life. The worker has a daily time structure to his or her life (McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005). The life structure mentioned involved employee’s bedtimes, work times, and times available for personnel habits. There were “nine positive benefits associated with employment: opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity,
availability of money, physical security, opportunity for interpersonal contact, and valued social position” (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005, p. 55). The positive benefits were closely associated with the identity of the employed person. The place of employment provided an environment for social interaction with co-workers. The worker’s responsibilities provided the opportunity for fulfillment and accomplishment by utilizing his or her skills, intelligence, training, and abilities. An employed person had social status within the organization, personal work relationships, and financial security. Requirements of the job increased the physical and mental activities of a worker. The job responsibilities provided workers with purpose, along with satisfaction in their lives (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). The worker’s purpose and identity had been associated and integrated with the company he or she worked and what job they performed. When the job requirements, responsibilities, social contact, and purpose has been involuntary removed from the worker, he or she became displaced. Displaced workers were banished or expelled from their job, particularly when companies layoff. McKee-Ryan and (2005) described “job loss [as] a life event” (p. 53). The life event for displaced workers began with a layoff notice.

Corporate Trend Layoffs

Displaced workers referred to people who were laid-off due to down-sizing, restructured organizations, or business closure in the United States. Often, corporations have been forced to focus on the bottom line of profit and not their workforce. Duys, Ward, Maxwell, & Eaton-Comerford (2008) noted “major career upheavals…without warning [due to] trends in corporate restructuring and downsizing, associated with mergers and profit seeking” (p. 232). In addition, major companies outsourced certain jobs to overseas companies due to global competition and the saving expected from the deceased in wages. Plants have been relocated to areas other than United States due to the saving resulted from the North America Free Trade Agreement
(NAFTA). These corporate decisions have resulted in millions of workers displaced or
unemployed in America. The U.S. Bureau of Labor (BLS) Statistics reported “During the first 9
months of 2003, there were 5,206 extended mass layoff events in the United States that led to
over a million separations” (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005, p.53). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
reported an increased total of 21,137 mass layoff events for the year 2008 as indicated in Table 1
(US Bureau, 2009). Beginning with the years 2004, the extended mass layoff events for the
United States were no longer available thus, was incomparable to data from McKee-Ryan article.
However, the BLS data collected in table 1 for mass layoff events for the years 1999 through
2008 showed a decrease in events since 2002 until 2008 in table 1 (US Bureau, 2009). The
statistics were used to demonstrate the recent increased of displaced workers nationally. The
workers displaced due to the national layoffs faced a number of obstacles.

Table 1

*U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (Bureau, Jan. 2009)*

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<th>Year</th>
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Displaced Worker’s Psychologically

The first obstacle for the displaced worker dealt with their emotions or negative perspectives. Elberts (2005) described the emotional distress of a layoff worker as “emotions closely follow the typical grieving process one goes through after the death of a loved one” (p.75). Elberts (2005) explained the emotional process as denial, grief, and acceptance. Most workers were unprepared for the psychological affect of losing their job. “In a state of denial, the workers worked right up to day the doors closed on them” (Elberts, 2005, p.75). Denial delayed and prolonged the psychological transition and the process for finding reemployment. The lack of time structure, money, and personal contacts provided by a job altered the worker’s personal and leisure routines as well. The change resulted in deterioration of the lifestyles of the displaced workers. In addition, the financial hardship limited the possibility of making the free time productive or enjoyable. The displaced workers were in the grieving process: grief for the family of friends and co-workers, grief for lost wages, grief for their identity.

Zikic and Richardson’s (2007) reported Canadian displaced workers often used the time unemployed as a time for self-discovery, reflection, and achieving personal goals. However, the displaced workers in the Zikic and Richardson’s article were upper management and the survey didn’t address the financial issue most unemployed workers suffer. If there were no financial concerns, the displaced workers used the time off as time to reassess his or her career goals and education. Zikic and Richardson’s survey found displaced workers often seen the lay-off as a “blessing in disguise” (2007, p. 63). The time off of work resulted in position career choices and self-reflection. Zikic and Richardson’s article was refreshing. However, the majority of the research only addressed the negative psychological aspects of displaced workers.
Displaced Worker - Connection between Mental & Physical

In addition to the emotional problems, displaced workers often faced physical problems as well. “Unemployment...has a negative impact on individuals’ psychological and physical well being” (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005, p.53). Displaced workers who have exhausted their search for a job experienced “high levels of depression, irritability, and anxiety... reported greater physical illness and health complaints...[and were] “more likely to engage in high-risk health behaviors such as using alcohol” (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005, p. 55). The McKee-Ryan et al. (2005) article used headaches and backaches as two of the physical complaints. However, the research article by McKee-Ryan et al. suggested that were limited resources to verify the physical aspect of the study. The confusion in this article surrounded the possibility of the limitations of the unemployed person’s mental and physical abilities resulted in unemployment or the lack of job causing the person’s negative mental and physical state. At the same time, the overall evidence suggested a collation between loss of employment and then psychological problems.

Acceptance and the Job Market

The final process in the emotional stage was the one of acceptance. Acceptance included not only the job loss situation, but the reality of the job market and skills needed to find employment. Displaced workers were expected to accept the job loss situation during the grieving period. The job market realization was a significant reduction in pay and reduced benefits. “Displaced professionals... [have been] caught in the vulnerable situation of finding it unlikely that they will obtain a similar job, at similar pay, with similar benefits” (Duys et al., 2005, p. 233). The displaced worker came to the realization of the job market during his or her job search. During 2008 and the beginning of 2009 the US economy has been in serious trouble with banks failing, stock markets dropping seriously, increase home foreclosures, and more
unemployment than has been experienced over the past several years. “Displaced workers experienced significant and long-lasting wage losses” (Kriechel & Pfann, 2005, p.223). The conclusion of the overall research was the displaced workers would be paid less upon reentering the workforce.

Workers with long term tenure, over ten years, suffered a significant reduction in pay. Individuals that have served several years with a company, build up experience tailored to the business in which he or she worked. A person’s specific skill used at his or her former company has less valued on the job market. Kriechel & Pfann (2005) reported “wage losses of 10-30% for displaced workers” (p. 223). Their study quantified the impact of wage losses using mathematical equations of the Weibull model. The calculations or Weibull model used a complex scientific measurement with age, tenure, education, and specialized skill as the variables. However, Kriechel and Pfann’s research only used survey data from a one firm to determine the wage loss of displaced workers. Another study from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic with 2003 data, revealed “nearly 30% of the reemployed displaced workers took a pay cut of at least 20% in their new job” (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005, p. 53). Kriechel & Pfann (2005) also reported displaced workers with higher levels of education experienced less time unemployed. Education provided diversity and knowledge, which is transferable to another business. Regardless of education, “senior [displaced] workers suffer from greater reductions in earning” (Kriechel & Pfann, 2005, p.223). Often the acceptance stage was achieved by finding services and counseling.

Assistance from Public Employment Agency

Public services were provided for the displaced workers, such as unemployment insurance or payments to the worker laid-off. The displaced worker had to apply for
unemployment insurance. In Oklahoma, the displaced worker applied either online, over telephone, or in person. For continued payments, the displaced worker was required “to document their work search effort…with a minimum number of names of potential employers contacted for each claim week” (Eberts, 2005, p. 77). The combination of the benefits and job search requirements was designed to shorten the unemployment period for the displaced worker.

Two programs provided services for displaced workers: “Dislocated Worker Program (DWP) provided under the federal Workforce Investment Act and The Trade Adjustment Assistance / North American Free Trade Act” with similar services (Eberts, 2005, p. 77). In Eberts’ article, there were three levels of DWP services available beginning with the “core, intensive, and training services” (2005, p. 78). Eberts’ table detailed the wide range of services available through the federal program DWP (Eberts, 2005, p. 79). Group projects were set up to give the displaced worker moral support and a place to share their experience. In addition, “counseling offer[ed] professional assistance in coping with the job loss and in establishing the appropriate strategy to find another job” (Eberts, 2005, p. 78). Also, the personal counseling helped workers understand the job market. The reality of finding another job with the same pay was doubtful. Multiple services were also provided to enhance the skills of the displaced worker, including training. Often the displaced workers required additional skills or training to find available jobs. Workshops provided assistance with resume writing and interview techniques. Search methods were introduced to the displaced workers.

The clearest message in Eberts’ article was the longer a displaced worker waited to locate assistance, the longer it took to find a job. While Eberts’ article listed the percentage of people who received the different DWP services, there was no data to determine if the services were successful. There were no statistics available for workers that “exhausted their benefits”, only
that the public agency tried to identify these individual and provided workshops and personal counseling (Eberts, 2005, p. 78).

At this stage, the displaced workers had to accept the job market situation and become serious in their job search. Displaced workers found that successful job searches required planning and organization. A strong network of sources was important in finding job prospects. Activities suggested were “job clubs and group workshops, community-building activities…, and job fairs to link workers and potential employers” (Elberts, 2005, p. 83).

*Assistance from Outplacement Programs*

Another source for counseling has been through the high-quality outplacement programs offered by the past employers of the displaced workers. Both the displaced workers and companies benefited from outplacement services. Challenger (2005) used “high-quality outplacement… to describe the comprehensive outplacement programs that will have a substantial impact on individual job searches and company financial health after a downsizing event” (p. 86). Displaced workers were assisted in job searches, group discussions, and one-on-one counseling. The counseling minimized the psychological damage to the displaced worker associated with the loss of his or her job and identity. The displaced worker was guided through the process of finding reemployment, which resulted in positive attitudes. Tools used were; resume development, enhanced interview techniques, job location skills, and coaching (Challenger, 2005). Displaced workers found new jobs faster as a result. The satisfaction found by displaced workers impacted the company’s current workers positively as well.

The company that enlisted high-quality outplacement services for their displaced workers retained the loyalty of current employees. The surviving workers were less likely to have lowered morale or harbor ill feeling toward the company, which reduced productivity
Challenger (2005). The restructured or down-sized company had less cost associated with workforce reduction as a result. The remaining employees were stabilized, along with productivity. Companies who choose not to use high-quality outplacement services experienced increased sick time used by employees. Challenger (2005) reported “absence rate was more than two times as high after major downsizing than after minor downsizing” or no downsizing (p. 88). Challenger (2005) also quoted one “survey of employees at downsized organizations, in which 50 percent reported decreased company loyalty and 37 percent reported decreased job satisfaction” (p. 88). The surviving employees felt the company had treated the displaced workers poorly and felt insecure themselves. In addition, there were law suits from former employees and turnover rate of current employees increased (Challenger, 2005). The company’s bottom line or net profit was impacted from these costs.

Employers utilized outplacement services in Canada as well as the United States. The benefit reported served the displaced worker in coping, along with career development. Zikic and Richardson (2007) reported unemployed people in Canada found “outplacement agencies providing career and job search advice…were useful resources for coping with transitions” (p. 59). Those individuals who were “very active in establishing close contact and made extensive use of the [outplacement] services… such as networking opportunities [and] skill development courses” benefited the most (Zikic & Richardson, 2007, p.67). The article submitted from Zikic and Richardson encouraged the use of outplacement programs and career development.

Not all outplacement services had quality service. Some outplacement firms only provided computers and Internet access to search for jobs. Displaced workers with personnel computers and an Internet link searched for jobs without assistance.

*Assistance from Staffing Firms*
Staffing firms have been hired by corporations for outplacement services during mass lay-off event. Staffing firms offered a variety of services to corporations from recruiters to temporary staffing, contingency search, or any number of other services. “There are reports… of employers replacing full-time workers with part-time or temporary workers” (Duys et al., 2005, p. 232). Staffing firms supplied companies with temporary or contract personnel for short term assignment. The employer often assessed the employee’s abilities and work ethics before offering a permanent position. Displaced worker took temporary or part-time jobs from staffing firms to be productive and earn money. Temporary or contract work for an employer also gave the displaced worker the opportunity to become acquainted with the work environment and employer’s directives. The temporary work gave the displaced worker the chance to decide whether he or she would be interested in a full-time position.

Corporations have hired temporary employees into full time positions, because the employee proved their reliability and worthiness. In addition, corporations used temporary or part time workers to avoid the overhead cost, like medicine insurance and holiday or sick pay. Addison (2006) researched temporary employees and found “30% of temporary workers…chose this type of work…as a means of attracting an offer of permanent employment” (p.150). However, the displaced worker was employed. And since “firm prefer employed workers because, when an employed worker is willing to take a job offer, this is a strong signal that the worker likes the job” (Shimer, 2005, p. 504). Shimer’s article did not address temporary workers.

Informal Job Search - Internet

Individuals searched the Internet for “business-oriented social networking sites” and “job search engine[s]” for a job and information concerning potential employers (Russell, 2007, p.300). The Internet has multiple sites and search engines related to job inquiries. In addition,
many companies designed their own web page and listed available positions. The Tulsa World
has posted the classified ads on their site. In addition, individuals submitted their resume on line
to potential employers’ web site. Application were filled out online and submitted for
employment. “Social networking or social software – is the process of connecting entities
together based on their social bonds or ties over the Internet” (Russell, 2007, p.299). In
particular, the younger generation has been involved in this type of networking. The Social
networking sites included in the analysis was MySpace, Google, Yahoo, and FACEBOOK.
“Approximately 25% of Americans have visited a social network site” and “18% discussed
work-related topics online” (Russell, 2007, p.299). Social networking connected individual
searching for a job to potential employers. Companies have posted available jobs and their
information on sites such as MySpace, Yahoo, and Google. “The U.S. Marine Corps… easily
met [recruitment] goals in 2006 after their profile was posted on MySpace (Russell, 2007,
p.300). Often individuals expressed themselves with blogs and in their profile, which has lead to
being excluded for employment.

"Many people, especially [younger] students, have an unreasonable expectation of
privacy, says Steven Rothberg, the founder of CollegeRecruiter.com” (Millard, 2007, p.1). There
are certain individuals who revealed too much personal information on their social networking
blogs or profiles on sites like MySpace.com. The entire nation had access to the individual’s
revealing information unless it was password protected, which did not guarantee privacy. “Many
employers have made online searches part of their background checks” (Millard, 2007, p.1).
Employers have considered the literacy, social conduct, and personal image of social networking
users prior to considerate for employment. However, Millard article quoted confusing statistics
from CareerBuilder.com, first “more than one in 10 hiring managers” and then "one in four”
potential employers did Internet searches on potential candidates (Millard, 2007, p.1). The information suggested potential candidates should have cleaned up or deleted information on their social network before sending out a resume.

**Networking**

Networking has been an informal method to connect people with a common interest like job searches for a long time, not necessarily via a computer. Every profit or nonprofit organization, agencies, business, school, friends, co-workers, or group of people have a connection or network of people. Networking was applied to job searches (formal or informal) as a mean to connect with people that have knowledge of a potential job or assisted in counseling and skill development. “Creating support networks… [and] activities sponsored by joint adjustment committees... represented a step forward, such as job clubs and group workshops, community-building activities…, and job fairs linked workers to potential employers” (Elberts, 2005, p. 83). The displaced worked needed a connection to a potential employer. Connection or networking has been displayed in many avenues with different groups of people. “Institutions of higher education and local foundations… [joined together] to identify and address work force and other problem” (Eberts, 2005, p. 83). Members shared information concerning available jobs and employers within their groups and often displaced workers were made aware of the possible job positions open. The displaced worker made a direct contact to employer based on the information shared from the network group. “Employer’s informal networks with other employers provided more targeted information about job prospects” (Eberts, 2005, p. 82). Displaced workers who networked or connected with employed people had inside information about potential jobs. The key was to connect and network with as many people as possible in order to make a direct contact with potential employers.
Success - Formal versus Informal Job Search

Successful connection to potential employer required the match of the displaced workers qualifications to the specific requirements on the job description. Preparation of the interview techniques and advice offers by outplacement services, public employment agencies, and staffing firms made it possible to communicate the displaced worker’s credentials. Randall Eberts’ (2005) article listed formal job and informal search methods and percentage of people that used these methods:

A large proportion of displaced job seekers searched for job through informal methods: 65.7%... contacted prospective employers directly, 54.5% sent out resumes and filled out applications, and 20% contacted friends and relatives. A smaller…portion of displaced job seekers used more formal means: 27.1% contacted the public employment office…., 12.2% relied on public employment agencies (such as outplacement programs…), 2.4% contacted the school or university employment center, and 3.6% checked union or professional registers. (p. 76).

Nearly all of the job seekers in the informal method section used the Internet in some way, along with 53 to 69% of the formal job seekers (Eberts, 2005). Internet job searches, search for company or employer information, and networking for potential jobs has made the Internet the most important tool for displaced workers to find a job. A displaced worker which contacted a potential employer by Internet, via resume or application was considered as a direct contact.

Eberts’ report did not survey what was successful for the job seekers.

Eberts’ reported success for employment based on how employers found recruits. “Seventy-two percent of the establishments surveyed relied on direct walk-ins to find prospective workers. Informal referrals were the most frequently used method of recruiting workers, with 90
percent of employer relying on this method” (Elberts, 2005, p. 76). Only 50 percent of employers used state employment services or community agencies (Elberts, 2005). Elberts found similarities in how job seekers search for jobs and how employers located new hirers (2005). However, the percentage used suggested employers used formal and informal search methods at the same time. In addition, Elberts’ also reported most recent hires came through “informal referrals (40 percent), newspaper ads (28 percent)…, [and] public employment offices (2.6 percent). There was a wide variance between the percent of informal methods in Elberts’ surveys. There was also no explanation for the difference in surveys. A separate survey of displaced workers and how jobs were located should be conducted in order to determine what method is successful.

**Conclusion**

Perhaps no particular method was more successful at finding a job than another method. The combination of job searches methods offered the most plausible answer for locating employment. The displaced worker had to work through the emotional process: denial, grief, and acceptance. Although some displaced workers found the time unemployed as time to evaluate his or her personal goals and career planning. Some of the displaced worker needed to enlist assistance to improve his or her resume or interview skills and by doing so improved his or her perspective. Help was available for displaced workers who choose to participate. If new skills or training was required, then the displaced worker needed to address his or her issues to assist in finding employment. Finally, the search began for the displaced worker. Displaced workers benefited from outplacement services and public employment agencies to learn more about Internet and networking search methods. In addition, the displaced worker learned how to connect and communication their qualifications to potential employers from these formal search
methods. Finally the most important factor, the displaced worker had to be dedicated, serious, and organized to find reemployment.

Methods and Procedures

Hypothesis

The purpose of this project was to determine the successful job search methods used by displaced workers. The literature research revealed formal job search methods utilizing assistance of outplacement programs, government employment agencies, and staffing firms. In addition, the literature revealed informal job search methods as networking, internet usage, and direct personal contacts to potential employers. The literature revealed informal job search methods were more successful in locating employment. At the same time, it suggested utilizing more than one job search method proved to be the most effective. The primary purpose of hypothesis number one was to determine if a difference exists between job search methods and satisfaction of current reemployment. The intended outcome and objective of this study should provide evidence for informal job search methods as more successful in finding satisfactory reemployment. The alternate hypothesis or outcome should show a difference in outcome between job search methods.

Hypothesis number two, the study was to determine if a relationship existed between the displaced employees’ level of education and the satisfaction of their current employment. The literature indicated displaced workers with a higher level of education were more satisfied with their reemployment. Therefore, the null hypothesis stated there would be no difference in satisfaction with current job as a result of the level of education. The alternate hypothesis stated
there would be a difference in satisfaction with current job as a result of the displaced workers’ level of education.

Design

The research design utilized a quasi-experiment to determine the difference in job satisfaction of reemployment between the job search methods utilized to find the current employer. The dependent variable was the job satisfaction levels of reemployment or current job as surveyed from employees who were lay off from The Corporation. The independent variable on the survey of The Corporation survey listed potential job search methods and was divided into formal and informal categories. The survey asked the participants how they found their current employer and where given a choice between eight categories. These categories were divided between formal and informal search methods according to the literature research. Formal job search methods were assistance of headhunter or company contacted participant directly, outplacement programs, government employment agencies, and staffing firms or temporary services. Informal job search methods were networking (with friends, ex-coworkers, or acquaintance), internet (usage or search, includes Internet networking), direct personal contacts to potential employers or unplanned and other (specified Tulsa World). The displaced worker was instructed to identify the successful method employed for their current employer.

The second part of this research design also looked at the relationship between job satisfaction and a level of education. Once again, the dependent variable was the job satisfaction levels of current employer. The independent variable was the levels of education ranging from high school or equivalent to graduate degrees.

Participants
Surveys were received from forty-five displaced employees of The Corporation with their consent to utilize their information for analysis. A Corporation family and friends spreadsheet was obtained from a personal contact with over eighty email and home addresses of displaced workers. These were people that wanted to keep in contact with their coworkers of The Corporation. Many of individuals were not known to me since there were over eight hundred employees at and a good portion of employees which relocated to another city. The listing of The Corporation family and friends circulated among individuals and was received as a base to use in this survey. There was no personal control over individuals on the listing of The Corporation family and friends. Individuals personally known to have survived the transition were added to the base of the survey to include as many individuals as possible.

Questions on the survey were specifically designed for this study. Participants were not informed of the nature of the survey being conducted. The participants of the survey were instructed the study was for my SNU degree program and concerned unemployment. There were sixteen questions on the survey including characteristic such as years of service at The Corporation, gender, age and education level. These were asked as information to know a little bit about the surveyor. The survey included the disclaimer “participation is voluntary, confidential, and no names will be used. Participant may reply via email or remain anonymous by utilizing the postal service.” The first request was sent to participants via email and resent to non-responders by postal service with a self address and stamped envelope. See attached copy of the survey.

**Instrumentation**

There were nine questions related to satisfaction level of current job. The dependent variable or job satisfaction level for the first hypothesis was measured on the survey from one to
five: one was strongly disagrees, two was disagrees, neutral, four was likes, and five was strongly likes. The first independent variable was measured on the survey as formal or informal job search methods; see categories detailed above. The analysis portion of the project eliminated surveyors without employment.

The same dependent variable of job satisfaction was also utilized in the second internal level of measurement analysis. The independent variable or level of education was measured on the same survey from one to four: one was high school or equivalent, two was associate or some college or other training, three was bachelor degree (closer to bachelor than associate), four was graduate degree (or process on working on graduate degree).

Procedure

The survey was originally sent out to seventy-five displaced workers of The Corporation as an email requesting their voluntary involvement in a survey concerning unemployment. Each email was sent with blind copies to displaced workers so that the participants felt like their voice mattered in the survey. Each email also allowed for participants to utilize the postal service and mail a copy back to remain anonymous. There were an additional forty participants that their email was not available or they had not responded to the email and a copy of the survey was mailed along with a self address and stamped envelope. These options were applied to encourage as many participants as possible. The participants were not informed of the intended usage of the survey to prevent bias information. The survey informed the participants that the information concerning unemployment from the survey would be used anonymously to complete my SNU senior paper that near and dear to me. The completed surveys were collected and analyzed.

Data Analysis
A two-sample t test was employed to determine if any of the differences in the data were significant. The null hypothesis tested whether persons who found reemployment through informal methods scored high in their satisfaction level (Ho: μ1 = μ2). The alternative hypothesis tested whether persons who found reemployment through informal methods scored lower in their satisfaction level (Ha: μ1 ≠ μ2). The relationship of job satisfaction to the formal or informal job search method was analyzed with a .05 level of significance.

The second hypothesis used Analysis of Variance, which was calculated using STATISTICA (Statsoft, Inc., 2007) to determine the relationship of participants’ job satisfaction to the education level. Both the dependent and independent variable were rated on the survey from one to five. The null hypothesis stated there was no difference in satisfaction with current job as a result of the level of education (Ho: μ1 = μ2 = μ3 = μ4 = μ5). The alternative hypothesis was there was a difference in satisfaction with current job as a result of the level of education (Ha: μ1 ≠ μ2 ≠ μ3 ≠ μ4 ≠ μ5). The relationship of job satisfaction to the level of education was analyzed at the .05 level of significance.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to a portion of the displaced workers from The Corporation released after the headquarter transfer from Tulsa, OK to another city. Displaced workers who remained retired or were unemployed were not included in the analysis because the level of job satisfaction was unsubstantiated. As a result, participants involved were not representative of the overall group of displaced employees from The Corporation.

There were several findings in the literature review which were not addressed in this section. The literature indicated displaced workers with more than 10 years service found reemployment with a reduction in wages of at least ten percent. Experience lost value as years of
tenure increased (Kriechel & Pfann, 2005). The literature also found older displaced workers, those over 50 years of age, had greater length of unemployment time and when reemployment was found individuals received substantial decrease in wages (Kriechel & Pfann, 2005). One source in the literature suggested a decreased of up to thirty percent (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Wages were not covered in this section, because wages were considered a sensitive topic.

Summary of Results

Descriptive Statistical Information

A survey was sent to approximately 80 displaced workers from The Corporation with forty-five participants responding. Seven of the displaced workers were retired or unemployed, which left 39 for the sample size. The purpose of the survey was to determine the satisfaction of the participants’ current reemployment according to their job search method and then their education level to determine if there were any trends. The mean “satisfaction with current reemployment” score was 34.0790, and the standard deviation(s) was 7.4883. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the percentage of the total satisfaction attitudes of Corporation’s displaced workers for the formal and informal job search method of their current employer. Possibly informal job searches resulted in increased job satisfaction.
Table 2

*Multi-Way ANOVA Showing Descriptive Statistics for Total Satisfaction of Current Reemployment of Displaced Workers and Job Search Method*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Level of Factor</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Total Attitude Mean</th>
<th>Total Attitude Std.Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34.07895</td>
<td>7.488303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal / Informal</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32.62500</td>
<td>9.485892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal / Informal</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34.46667</td>
<td>7.006073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for the percentages of the total attitudes of Corporation’s displaced workers for the participant’s education level. The mean and standard deviation were gathered from the raw data of the survey. The sample size was 39 (n=38), the mean was 34.0790, and the standard deviation(s) was 7.4883 as shown in table 4.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics for Total Satisfaction with Current Reemployment of Displaced Workers and Education Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Level of Factor</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Total Attitude Mean</th>
<th>Total Attitude Std.Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34.07895</td>
<td>7.488303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.71429</td>
<td>3.68394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32.58333</td>
<td>9.42394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>36.14286</td>
<td>5.43291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32.40000</td>
<td>11.52389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1 shows a histogram of the total satisfaction with current reemployment level of the 39 cases.

![Histogram](image)

*Figure 1. Histogram Total Attitudes or Satisfaction with Current Reemployment of Participants*

Figure 2 shows a histogram of the successful job search methods used by the participants. The job search methods were categorized as formal or informal for the remainder of my findings for the first and main hypothesis. Formal job search methods were assistance of (1) headhunter or company contacted participant directly, (2) outplacement programs, (3) government employment agencies, and (4) staffing firms or temporary services. Informal job search methods were (5) networking (with friends, ex-coworkers, or acquaintance), (6) internet (usage or search, includes internet networking), (7) direct personal contacts to potential employers or unplanned and (8) other (specified Tulsa World). Seventy-nine percent of the displaced workers were successful in their job search utilizing informal methods to find new employment.
Figure 2. Histogram of Participants’ Successful Job Search Method

Figure 3 illustrates the same job search methods in a percentage basis.

Figure 3. Histogram Percentage of Participants’ Successful Job Search Method

Figure 4 shows a histogram of the education levels for the participants. Eighty-two percent of the participants surveyed had a higher degree of education.
Results of Significance Tests

Hypothesis #1. The main null hypothesis stated that the satisfaction level of reemployed participants would be greater for participants using informal job search methods (Ho: $\mu_1 = \mu_2$). The alternative hypothesis stated reemployed participants would be less satisfactory for participants using formal job search methods (Ha: $\mu_1 \neq \mu_2$). The relationship of job satisfaction to the formal or informal job search method was analyzed with a (p) .05 level of significance. The procedure used to test the hypothesis was a two-sample t using ANCOVA/MANCOVA. The critical value table of the $F$-value for .05 given 3 and 34 degrees of freedom was 2.9223. The calculated $F$-value of $F$ was 2.9223. The calculated $F$-value or degree of freedom was .3756. The null hypothesis was not rejected at this time. This study did not show a difference in the level of satisfaction depending on their job search method. Refer to figure 5 to see the box and whisker plot.
**Hypothesis #2.** The null hypothesis stated that the satisfaction level of reemployed participants would not be greater for participants with a higher level of education (Ho: \( \mu_{HS}=\mu_{A}=\mu_{B}=\mu_{G} \)). The alternative hypothesis stated that the satisfaction level of reemployed participants would be less without a higher level of education (Ha: \( \mu_{HS}\neq \mu_{A}\neq \mu_{B}\neq \mu_{G} \)). The relationship of job satisfaction to the education level was analyzed with a (p) .05 level of significance. The procedure used to test the hypothesis was a one-way ANOVA, using the factorial ANCOVA/MANCOVA from STATISTICA (StatSoft, 2007). The critical value table of the F-value for .05 with 3 and 34 degree of freedom was 2.9223. The calculated F-value of F was .5830. The null hypothesis was not rejected at this time. This study did not show a difference in the level of satisfaction depending upon participants’ educational level.
Figure 6. Confidence Interval Plot of Participants’ Satisfaction & Educational Level

*Exploratory Analyses*

Another possible analysis not considered as part of the original project concerned wages. One consideration would be the possible correlation between the participants’ level of satisfaction depending on wages earned at onset of reemployment. The histogram shown in figure 7 seems to demonstrate that fifty-three percent of Corporation displaced workers reentered the workforce at ten percent or more reduced wages. This data supported the literature research that displaced workers reenter the workforce with reduced wages, see figure 7.
Analysis of table 4 showed a correlation between less satisfaction and reduced wages. The displaced workers upon reentering the workforce with a decrease of 10% or more in wages were less satisfied than persons earning the same wage in their new position. However, the participants with an increase in earning of 10% or more were less satisfied than participants earning the same wages. Table 4 displayed the means of satisfaction with the wage category

Table 4

ANOVA: Descriptive Statistics for Total Attitudes and Wages
As may be seen in Figure 8, those who reentered the workforce at a lower salary were understandably more dissatisfied with their reentry employment ($F = 11.661, p = .00013$).

![Figure 8. Confidence Interval Graph from ANOVA](image)

**Discussion and Conclusions**

The purpose of this project was to explain the transition a displaced worker endures from grief to acceptance. In addition, the project detailed the methods and assistance available to assist in recovery and the best sources available to locate reemployment. BLS statistics were cited in the literature review demonstrated mass layoffs escalated in 2008 to 21,137 national events. The
project should be extremely beneficial by persons expecting to be laid off, displaced workers, and persons searching for employment.

**General Discussion and Conclusions**

The literature research and the statistical data from surveys in some ways seemed to support informal job searches as being more successful in locating reemployment and persons reentering the workforce will be paid at least ten percent less. The statistical survey data for the informal job search method revealed in figure 3 that networking with friends, ex-coworkers, and family was successful 45% of the time followed by internet networking and searches for 19% of the time. There was no statistical difference in reentry satisfaction level and the search method utilized by displaced workers.

The statistical data in table 3 showed the differences in reentry satisfaction level given the displaced workers educational level. It appeared that perhaps participants with a bachelor’s degree had a greater satisfaction level of 36.143 with their reemployment position. Participants with a graduate or associate degree may have been less satisfied than participants with only a high school education. Refer to figure 4 to see the mean and confidence interval plot. This was inconsistent with the literature research and it was not a significant difference, as evidenced by the overlapping confidence intervals. However, given the recent increased job losses and difficult job searching, it may be that those with higher degrees are expecting a high salary and more responsibilities than the realities of their position upon reentry into the workforce.

**Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study**

The first strength was in the survey approach which allowed an unbiased result to job satisfaction; the participants were free to answer honestly. The survey was carefully written with nine questions relating to job satisfaction, see appendix A. The levels of satisfaction for each
question were scored from 1 to 5, then utilizing STATISTICA the scores for all the questions were totaled to arrive at a total attitude for the participants. The result was equitable survey to participants’ total attitude of job satisfaction.

The second strength of the study was in the direct questions of the survey addressing participants’ successful job search method, wages, and education. These questions allowed very specific areas to be utilized in the hypothesis. The reliability of the reemployment satisfaction scores was high with a Cronbach alpha of .918 and a standardized Cronbach of .922.

The first weakness in the study was the limitation to displaced workers sample to survey. The survey was sent to a convenient list of white collar displaced workers from The Corporation. It was therefore impossible to know if the sample truly represented displaced workers. The second weakness for this study involved no way to substantiate the research where older displaced workers, those over 50 years of age, had greater length of unemployment time. The length of unemployment time was not addressed in the survey. The third weakness of the study was in the snail mailing of surveys that were not returned.

**Recommendations**

Displaced workers should promptly formulate their goals for reemployment and prepare a detailed plan and network system as soon as possible. Successful reemployment may not elevate the grief process of a long-term career, but it will shorten the time and energy in reflection of past employment. The first step involves updating one’s resume and, if necessary, one should locate professional assistance for the resume. The second step would be to prepare a list of ex-coworkers, friends, family members, church members, and any other personally contacts to start a network process to find more avenues to get your resume in the right hands. The third step is preparing a list of potential types of jobs of interest. The next list would be of employers that
have an organizational culture and values similar to expectations. Then one should keep a journal for personal accountability with a possible goal of at least one contact or resume send out per day. One per day may be a modest goal, but there are several items to consider before sending out a resume. One must research each company and then tailor the resume to a job listing and finally include a cover letter. Researching job listings and networking takes a great deal of time by itself. Keeping a positive attitude and preparing in advance for interviews are good things to do. It is extremely important that one practices interview techniques to relay personal strengths and accomplishments to potential employers.

Suggestions for Future Research

The literature research gave information concerning the length of time unemployment and characteristics of displaced workers who located reemployment in a shorter term. One suggestion for future research would be to include in the survey the length of time unemployed and how much of the time was utilized actively searching for a job. These questions would help determine if the participants found employment faster depending on their job search method. The literature research suggested there was a correlation between length of time unemployed and age of participant. The displaced workers over the age of fifty were unemployed longer due to their age. This is reasonable in consideration of the age discrimination act. The literature research found the level of education as a factor in the length of time searching for a job. Business people with bachelor degrees found reemployment faster than those without a degree, regardless of their experience. The length of time a displaced worker was unwillingly unemployed is a serious consideration for future research.
References


Appendix A

Survey

Dear Corporation family and friends,

This survey is part of my senior project to complete my bachelor degree at Southern Nazarene University. My paper concerning employment has become very near and dear to me. I would very much appreciate your participation in answering the questions in this survey. The project is voluntary, confidential, and no names will be used. You may either return this survey via email or if you prefer to remain anonymous, you may use the postal service. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and help.

Becky Ellison
Rebecca-Ellison@sbcglobal.net

1. After my departure from Corporation, which of the cases below applies today?
   a) Currently employed in desired field
   b) Currently employed in another field
   c) Retired
   d) Still searching for job
   e) Currently not searching for job

2. How long did you work for Corporation? ________ years

3. Do you like the work you do, please rate?
   a) strongly like   b) like   c) neutral   d) dislike   e) strongly dislike

4. At my present position, I have good opportunities for advancement.
   a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) neutral   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

5. I enjoy my co-workers.
   a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) neutral   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

6. I feel like I am part of my group.
   a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) neutral   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

7. The company that I’m with supports my values.
   a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) neutral   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree

8. I feel like my company empowers me to do my job.
   a) strongly agree   b) agree   c) neutral   d) disagree   e) strongly disagree
9. I am valued for my abilities.
   a) ___ strongly agree    b) ___ agree    c) ___ neutral    d) ___ disagree    e) ___ strongly disagree

10. I feel like I have earned advancement that has not come.
    a) ___ strongly agree    b) ___ agree    c) ___ neutral    d) ___ disagree    e) ___ strongly disagree

11. I feel like my skills are more than what is required of me.
    a) ___ strongly agree    b) ___ agree    c) ___ neutral    d) ___ disagree    e) ___ strongly disagree

12. When you were hired on at your current employer, which case below applies?
    ____ Wages are same (plus or minus 10%)    ____ Wages are more    ____ Wages are less

13. How did you find your current employer, check all that applies?
    ____ headhunter or company contacted me
    ____ outplacement programs like Corporation used
    ____ government unemployment agencies
    ____ staffing firms or temporary service
    ____ networking with friends, ex-coworkers, or acquaintances
    ____ internet usage or search – includes internet networking
    ____ direct personal contacts within company or accidental encounter (unplanned)
    ____ other – please specify __________________________________________

And now a little about you…

14. What is your gender?    ____ male    ___ female

15. What is your age today?    ________

16. What is your highest level of education, which of the cases below applies?
    ____ high school or equivalent
    ____ associate degree / some college / other training
    ____ bachelor degree – includes closer to bachelor than associate
    ____ graduate degree (or process on working on graduate degree)

Thank you for your time and assistance.
Sincerely,
Becky