

Evaluating New Employee Orientation
Utilizing Employee-Valued
Criterion

by

Dawn L. Schalow

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the
Masters of Science Degree
in
Training and Development

Approved for Completion for 4 Semester Credits
TRHRD-735 Field Problem in Training and Development



Dr. Kat Lui, Ph.D.

Research Advisor

The Graduate School

University of Wisconsin–Stout

August, 2007

**The Graduate School
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie, WI**

Author: Schalow, Dawn L.
Title: *Evaluating New Employee Orientation Utilizing Employee-Valued
Criterion*
Graduate Degree/ Major: MS Training and Development
Research Adviser: Kat Lui, Ph.D.
Month/Year: August, 2007
Number of Pages: 53
Style Manual Used: American Psychological Association, 5th edition

ABSTRACT

Now more than ever, organizations need to evaluate their existing orientation processes to ensure that they are effective in meeting the needs of today's employees and adequately preparing them for success in their new role. Unfortunately, missed opportunity is the name of the game with many orientation programs. Even with the best of intentions, the amount of time and resources organizations invest in new employee orientation often falls short. With such competitive work environments and the differing expectations of employees, organizations have no choice but to find a new way of approaching the orientation process. In order to be effective, organizations need to place greater focus on developing orientation processes that are not only highly effective in today's complex workplaces but also tailored to the employees they are hiring.

The purpose of this field study is to evaluate the effectiveness of key elements of an employee orientation program against the importance of those elements as determined by the employee themselves.

The Graduate School
University of Wisconsin Stout
Menomonie, WI

Acknowledgements

As I reflect back on my graduate studies at University of Wisconsin-Stout, it is quite evident that I could not have accomplished this on my own. As I started this adventure with a hopeful vision of “life going on as normal”, I soon realized that despite my best efforts of having to exist on only a little sleep or doing homework while sitting at my sons activities, some things just had to take a back seat. There were many who played a significant role in my completing this goal. I could never adequately express my gratitude to all those who helped, but there are a special few I wish to identify here.

Mike, my husband, for taking on the extra little things that are often unnoticed by most, but they meant the world to me. There were many nights and weekends amidst an already busy and crazy schedule that you took the reins without complaints. I love that about you.

Jake and Kyle, my two sons, who freed me from the guilt of not being able to be in two places at once, most often to their loss. Thank you for allowing me to a good example of a lifelong learner for both of you and for all of your fun encouragement along the way.

Dr. Kat Lui, my research advisor, for your continued patience as I traversed the many bumps in the road that often led to many detours in my progress. Your gentle spirit and support is the quality which makes the Training and Development graduate program such a success. It has truly been a pleasure to have you as an instructor and as an advisor. I have learned a great deal from you. Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
.....	
ABSTRACT	ii
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
<i>Statement of the Problem</i>	1
<i>Purpose of the Study</i>	2
<i>Assumptions of the Study</i>	2
<i>Limitations of the Study</i>	2
<i>Methodology</i>	3
Chapter II: Literature Review.....	4
Chapter III: Methodology	15
<i>Subject Selection and Description</i>	15
<i>Instrumentation</i>	17
<i>Data Collection Procedures</i>	17
<i>Data Analysis</i>	17
<i>Limitations</i>	20
<i>Summary</i>	20
Chapter IV: Results.....	21
<i>Item Analysis</i>	21
Chapter V: Discussion	36

Findings 38

Conclusions 38

Recommendations 38

References 39

Appendix A: Online Survey Template 43

List of Tables

Table 1: Tenure Demographics of Field Study Subjects.....	16
Table 2: Employment Demographics of Field Study Subjects.....	17
Table 3: Gap Analysis of For-Profit Organization, All Subjects	23
Table 4: Gap Analysis of For-Profit Organization, Full-Time Subjects.....	26
Table 5: Gap Analysis of For-Profit Organization, Part-Time Subjects.....	28
Table 6: High Importance and Gap Scores of all Groups.....	30
Table 7: Performance Mean Score Comparison of Full-Time to Part-Time.....	32
Table 8: Importance Mean Score Comparison of Full-Time to Part-Time.....	34

List of Figures

Figure 1: Gap Matrix of For-Profit Organization – Sample.....	19
Figure 2: Gap Matrix of For-Profit Organization – All Subjects.....	24
Figure 3: Gap Matrix of For-Profit Organization – Full-Time Subjects.....	27
Figure 4: Gap Matrix of For-Profit Organization – Part-Time Subjects.....	29

Chapter I: Introduction

New employee orientation programs are one of the processes within organizations that gets overlooked and receives little or no funding (Rogers & Wainwright, 2005). With a predicted shortage of qualified and available staff in the next five to ten years, employee turnover will become a real concern for most organizations. Effectively orienting new employees is a way to help employees feel like they are a valuable part of the organization and to help them get settled and start contributing to the organization (Wheeler, 2006). Too often, this simple yet powerful process is not leveraged in ways to benefit both the employee and the organization.

Statement of the Problem

With employee turnover rates almost doubling in two years time frame, a for-profit health care system in northeastern Wisconsin was faced with the challenge to decrease the amount of qualified staff voluntarily leaving the organization within their first six to nine months of employment. This high turnover rate mirrored the current turnover rates being experienced across the healthcare industry as a whole (Jones, 2001). Exponential growth, along with numerous expansions of services and clinic sites led to a very chaotic pattern of hiring and orienting. This posed a challenge since there were never enough candidates for all of the positions available. Management felt the pressure to get the new employees productive right away such that minimal consideration was given to preparing and supporting them. These management practices eventually created the scenario for an inevitable revolving door of employees, with many new employees departing with less than nine months of tenure. It was evident that something needed to change as these practices were extremely costly, inefficient, and difficult on both the employee and the organization. Unfortunately, it was often those with

great talent and promise that were choosing to leave the organization. In response, the management team invested time in completing several dialogues to identify the causes of the growing employee exodus. Although many contributing factors were discussed, the greatest consideration was given to evaluating the current orientation process since it had never been formally evaluated. This provided a great opportunity and the perfect venue to complete a graduate degree field study on how to evaluate and design effective orientation programs for today's organizations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this field study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a new employee orientation, utilizing key elements identified as best practices of successful employee orientation programs, against the importance of those elements as determined by the employee themselves. It was necessary to evaluate the orientation process in order to determine its impact on the high turnover rates. The field study also offered an opportunity to find out which elements of new employee orientations are perceived as more important than the others according to the employees. These findings might be useful for organizations as they design and evaluate their current employee orientation processes.

Assumptions of the Study

An assumption of the study includes that what the organization assumes is an important part of the orientation process will not likely be the same for the employee and that full-time and part-time employees will offer similar responses to the key elements regarding their importance and performance. Another assumption is that the current employee orientation program is a key factor contributing to the high levels of employee turnover.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study include a small number of participants taking part in the survey (n= 66). It may also include the participant's level of computer proficiency, their experience with computer surveys, and the subjective nature of their attitude on the day that they completed their survey. All of these factors, although not measured, may impact the way in which they answered the survey questions. Another possible limitation of this study is that the orientation process has never been evaluated beyond the initial three days so this will be uncharted territory.

Methodology

A review of literature was conducted on several key content areas including: key elements of effective orientation programs/on-boarding processes, changes workforce demographics, and the role of orientation on enhancing employee retention and employee engagement. The literature was reviewed and analyzed by the researcher in order to develop the research project. The review of literature is presented in Chapter Two.

To collect the primary data, the researcher surveyed a group of new employees (full-time and part-time) with tenure between six to nine months with a for-profit health care system located in Northeast Wisconsin. All of the survey data was collected through a voluntary online survey.

Chapter Three will include the methodology of the study.

Chapter Four will share the results and interpretation of the research project.

Chapter Five will reveal the conclusions and recommendations of the researcher.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This field study reviews current literature on new employee orientation programs and proven elements of highly effective orientation processes. Many of these elements have been implemented and tested in many successful organizations across all industries. This literature review also explores a multitude of impending challenges in orienting, retaining, and engaging employees in today's organizations. This includes consideration of the trends in workforce demographics, such as the youngest workers coming in to the workplace, in conjunction with the differing values and expectations the various generations bring to work. All of these factors have an impact on the design and development of today's orientation programs.

The Need for Effective Orientation Programs

There are examples from across all industries that demonstrate the negative impact on employee orientations that go wrong or don't even go at all. D. Melbauer (personal communication, January 24, 2007) said that his orientation program (or lack thereof) at a previous employer was so bad that after three days he walked off of the job at ten in the morning and never returned. This attitude is not uncommon in many of today's workers. The younger generation of workers believes that they can leave any job and find something else on the next day, if needed (Armour, 2005). This was demonstrated by D. Melbauer in feeling empowered to walk off of the job without regret or remorse. It illustrates the reality of the current and future war on talent, that those first days of orientation are so critical to creating a positive first impression (Amenl, 2001). The attitudes and expectations of today's employees will no longer accept such experiences. Besides, it is just good business to keep the best talent.

Although many organizations say that they invest in orientation programs, recent studies have shown that even if they are doing orientation programs, they are not doing them

well. Considering the survey findings by i4cp (2007), they found that over 86% of the organizations surveyed admitted to having a mentality of swiftness when it comes to orientation, in other words, to get it over and done with. The survey also noted that 46% of the companies participate in orientation processes that last a day or less and only 26% of the programs lasted two to three days. It is not uncommon to have great opportunities to engage new employees into their role being lost (Vickers, 2007).

Key Elements of Effective Orientation Programs

Ilene Gochman, an organization effectiveness expert with Watson Wyatt Worldwide, believes that there are only a few things more important to the long-term success of organizations than to hiring the best employees and equipping them from their first day on (as cited in Prospera, 2007). Organizations can no longer rely on the successes of the past because the expectations and styles of today's employees have changed dramatically. Organizations must be able to embrace and respond to the demographic shifts taking place. For this study, literature about the factors identified as key elements of effective orientation programs are reviewed and evaluated below.

Manager actively involved in the orientation process. So what does your manager got to do with it, anyway? Recently, Kaye (2007), a noted expert on employee engagement, stated that: "Some organizations will arrogantly say, "People will always want to come and work here." What they forget is that people may join an organization for its mission, brand, or reputation, but they leave if they have no relationship with their manager" (p. 74). Having a manager actively involved in the orientation process of their new employee is one of the top elements to a successful orientation process (Wheeler, 2006). It is important for organizations to give top consideration to establishing orientation processes to ensure the opportunity for

building a positive working relationship is offered. Managers need to take control of their part of the orientation process (Sullivan & Burnett, 2005). Without someone ultimately responsible for the new employee's orientation, it is too easy in today's fast-paced workplace for things to fall through the cracks. This is an easy way to lose great employees.

Understand the importance of the job.

It has been shown that building engagement and commitment in employees can have positive financial consequences for an organization (Gandossy, 2001). Implementing effective orientation programs is generally a very cost-effective practice for organizations. One simple technique amongst high performing organizations was the imperative for managers to communicate with employees about why they were hired. Communicating about the importance of one's job gives them a sense of why they are there and how their experience and skills will be meaningful at the organization (Sullivan & Burnett, 2005). This helps employees understand the importance of their job and gives them a sense of value. Organizations can never underestimate the value of connecting the importance of their role to the success of the organization.

Meet with Manager For Regular Feedback. With managers ultimately holding the purse strings to a new employee's career opportunities, development path, and the opportunity for learning experiences, it is essential for the employee to meet with manager on a regular basis (Wheeler, 2006). Connections on a regular basis offer not only the opportunity to develop a positive working relationship through regular contact but it allows the new employee an opportunity to express their development interests and career plans to the one person who can help to make it happen. It is important for managers to extend the process of orientation across the first year of the new employee's tenure (Belilos, 2007). This is often difficult as schedules

get busy and the manager often have too many employees to supervise in order to manage them effectively (Ambel, 2006).

My Job is What I Expected it to Be. A company is only as strong as the commitment level of its weakest employee (Michaud, 2001). Employees will disengage when their expectations are not met or feel as though they are being lied to. According to Branham (2004), employees anticipate that the company and their managers will be true to the expectations set during orientation. If this is not done then, employees might actually choose to leave. Organizations have the responsibility to ensure that they are being truthful in the scenario that they create for the new employee during their first weeks and months of orientation. This ensures that what they are experiencing is what they were promised (Recruitmax, 2004).

Clear Understanding of Expectations for Role. It is important to get new employees familiar and acquainted with the operations of the organization and how their job fits into it. Helping them to understand the flow of work and to communicate expectations is valuable to all employees (Belilos, 2007). This might include conversations around skill sets and the competencies for which they were hired. It might also encompass opportunities for a new employee to know and see how departments and teams operate. Judith Brown (n.d.), Director of HR Research at International Personnel Management Association, states “it is important that employees learn as soon as possible what is expected of them, and what to expect from others”.

Equally, it is important for new employees to have a conversation with their manager about their job description to ensure they know the accountabilities they will be held to and the items duties often not listed on the job description (Wheeler, 2006). Branham (2004) states that “The more clearly an employee understands his or her own expectations, the higher the probability of a match in expectations” (p.2).

New Employee Feels Welcomed and Valued. The old adage goes that people do not care how much you know until they know that you care. This same strategy is applicable with effective orientation processes. The way employees are treated during the first days, weeks, and months of their employment often determines how productive, engaged, and committed they are to your organization (Wheeler, 2006). Platz (2007) suggests that “welcoming the whole person, rather than just a set of job functions, will help new hires more quickly assimilate to your corporate culture” (p. 2). Although completing all of the required paperwork is necessary, it is more important to make a great first impression on that new employee. Organizations that leverage the orientation experience to make employees feel comfortable and welcoming will secure their decision for joining that organization.

Receive at least One Formal Performance Review. According to Branham (2004), receiving feedback is essential to employees because it helps to answer two concerns of new employees, “How do you expect me to contribute?” and “How am I doing?” This is especially true in today’s competitive workplaces so organizations need to make sure that the efforts of the employees are in line with the expectations of their manager and the larger organizational goals. It is important that managers are held accountable for providing feedback routinely to new employees as it helps them to feel important and know that they are doing well (Recruitmax, 2004).

Understand Mission, Vision, and Values of Organization. It is important for employees to understand and have a clear picture of where the organization is going and how it is going to get there (Kaufman, n.d.). According to Harris (2004):

Employees are more loyal if they feel “connected” to the company, if they are in the “loop”, and are kept informed on key company issues. Most important, they need to

know that their opinions matter and that management is 100% interested in their input.

(p. 3)

It is important for organizations to share their history, their achievements, along with the direction of the organization in order to solidify and align all employees on the vision.

Employees join an organization based on the values, history and culture of what that organization represents (Recruitmax, 2004). Taking the time to share the big picture with all of the employees on a regular basis keeps that vision alive and aligned (Kaufman, n.d.).

Shown Appreciation for Your Work. In a workplace study conducted by Lawrence Lindhal, which has been repeated every decade since the 1940's, managers state that employees want job security, good wages, and opportunities for advancement. On the contrary, results find that first and foremost employees want to be recognized, appreciated for their work, feel informed and believe they are working in meaningful jobs (Gandossy, 2001). According to Gandossy (2001), "the 21st century employee is looking for meaning and will choose an employer that provides a higher level of purpose" (p. 11). Managers need to be sure that new employees are acknowledged and shown appreciation for their work.

Understand the Industry. Not being able to speak the business language of the organization within which you work can be frustrating. It is important that organizations provide an overview and continual dialogue with their new employees about the industry that they are working in so they can better understand their role and purpose for their work (Sullivan, 2001). R. Gerard (personal communication, July 17, 2002) said the following:

Giving an employee a chance to learn about all aspects of the organization; where the money comes from, where the money goes to, how the profits are spent, what the governmental influences are on a national and state level, how we serve our customers,

all of these things are critical to creating an scenario of employee ownership in what the organization does and this creates commitment, how could it not.

Helping employees to understand the unique challenges of the industry is beneficial to their learning and understanding. With today's workforce changing jobs more frequently, organizations might always have employees who come to their organization with ten years of experience in the industry.

Goals are Developed, Prioritized, and Tracked. It is estimated that less than 10% of employees do not have a clue about their organization's business strategies or what they need to do in order to meet company goals (Harris, 2004). Organizations that use goals to link the overall organizational strategy to the employee's job will have a more positive impact on performance. According to McKeown (2000), "People want to contribute and they want to contribute early" (p. 59). Goals can offer new employees a sense of direction and accomplishment by having something to work toward. Goals are like stepping stones that help lead new employees to where they need to go and offer learning during the process of getting there. This is especially important since today's employees are more apt to give consideration to stay or to leave the organization (Hicks & Hicks, 1998).

A Formal Development Plan is Created With Manager. The collective brainpower of the organization's staff is one of its greatest long-term competitive advantages (Recruitmax, 2004). It is important that consideration be given to the employee's development throughout the orientation process. It is best for a formal development plan to be completed by the employee and their manager within the first year of their employment. Today's employees place high value on the opportunity to learn, grow and develop themselves through their

employment experience. If organizations do not provide learning and development opportunities, employees will find one that does (Gandossy, 2001).

Knowledge of Where and How to Find Needed Information. Having access to the tools and information necessary to do your job is something that is often missed in most employee orientation programs (Sullivan & Burnett, 2005). Employees often have to figure things out and find them on their own, which is not a motivator for a new employee (Belilos, 2007). It is important to offer resources, either written or online, that will help employees find their way and be able access when they need it after their first few days of orientation.

Aware of What it Takes to Be Successful. Expectations of employees today are much higher than ever. They are driven, competitive, yet want to be a part of something meaningful and affiliated with a successful organization. Learning the culture of the organization as to how things are done and handled cannot be left to chance (Kaufman, n.d.). Expectations regarding conflict need to be identified and explained so that the employee can follow suite to how issues are typically handled (Recruitmax, 2004). Having regular conversations with their manager offers an opportunity for feedback and what they need to change in order to be successful. All employee needs to learn how to adapt and utilize their strengths in the context of the work environment (Sirota, Mischkind, & Meltzer, 2006).

Impact of a Changing Workforce

According to the Employment Policy Foundation (EPF), it is estimated that there will be close to four million more jobs than workers by the year 2011 (as cited in AARP, 2004). This cannot help but create a profound impact on the ability of organizations to produce. It is estimated that the unfilled jobs could reach as high as 35 million by 2030, since there will not be enough people for the jobs available (AARP, 2004). Nigel Paine, (2006) head of people development for the BBC, believes that the resulting impact of such changes will include a shortage of “the right people with the right skills and the right attitude” (p.2). Couple the aging of the population and resulting changes with the infusion of a new breed of worker entering the workforce, known as Generation Y. Gen Y’s will often come into an organization with high expectations for themselves, their employer, their boss (Armour, 2005). The younger adults coming into the workforce are adaptable and ready to challenge the status quo as needed. This forces organizations to do things differently than they have in the past since if they are not getting what they want from their employment experience, orientation included, they will go elsewhere without any remorse (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000). The Gen Y generation will challenge all conventional wisdom as they continue to enter today’s organizations (Smith, 2006).

It is important for organizations to give consideration to the impact of changing demographics on how they orient new employees. Organizations could expect that Gen Yers will demand much more on day one than previous generations did. This is because they have received constant feedback from parents, friends, coaches, and teachers all of their life. This group believes that the younger group of today’s workforce will be demanding and difficult for organizations, in that, they are confident in what they believe and they are used to getting what

they want They will also expect continual feedback and contact with their managers throughout the orientation process (Zemke, et al., 2000). Those employees closing in on the last years of their employment will also provide some challenges. As the Boomers start to wind down their employment, they will want a more flexible work schedule and the opportunity to down shift in their role (Zemke et al., 2000). A manager that is “out of touch” with the unique challenges of today’s employees, they will easily lose their attention, their energy, and their employment (Smith, 2006). According to AARP (2004), employers who treat their employees well, are aware that it is not only a good business decision but offers a way to minimize staff turnover.

Impact of Turnover Orientation on Retention

It was evident that the quality of the orientation process of the for-profit organization was having a definite impact on the retention and attrition rates of its new employees. By the time employees reach the six month mark, 25% of those employees already had one foot out the door. There has long been a suspected a link between orientation and its impact on retention and now data is helping to improve the correlation. According to Deliver the Promise, a consulting firm in San Anselmo, CA, organizations that give workers a comprehensive orientation can expect turnover to decline by as much as 50% within two years. (McKeown, 2000). Employee turnover is extremely costly, and can be up to two and half times an employee’s annual salary. “In comparison to that loss, orientation is dirt cheap” says Andrew Klein, a consultant at Mercer Human Resource Consulting (as cited in Abell, 2004). If done well, orientation could pay for itself by just stopping one employee from exiting the organization too early.

Summary

As shown through the literature, there is much support for the value and benefits of the orientation process. The resulting combination of all of these forces coming together will create a situation that many organizations will have a hard time dealing with in order to keep talent in the coming years. These changes will not only require them to do things differently, but also prepare their leaders in how to effectively manage this process. It is imperative that organizations develop a new way of creating an orientation experience that is of value and relevance for today's changing employees.

As the needs and expectations of the emerging continue to change, organizations have to be able to adjust and respond to those changes in order to find ways to keep talented employees onboard. Key elements of successful programs will need to be foundational to the components of all orientation processes and continual evaluation will be woven into the process. Building orientation processes off of the key elements of value to employees will be critical to making it an experience they will value and learn from. The research supports the idea that orientation is a serious matter and one that organizations need to invest time, energy, and resources in.

As noted in the research, managers will continue to play an even greater role to success of the orientation process and the inevitable challenge of employee turnover along with the demographic changes soon upon today's organizations. There not better time that now to find out what your employees want and how you can make that available to them in their orientation experience. As noted by Platz (2007), "you never get a second chance to make a first impression, your business should make absolutely sure that new hires feel welcomed, valued, and prepared for what lies ahead" (p.1).

Chapter III: Methodology

The purpose of this field study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a new employee orientation, utilizing key elements identified as best practices of successful employee orientation programs, against the perceived importance of those key elements by the employees themselves. The evidence of high levels of employee turnover amongst newer employees was an ever-growing challenge of a for-profit health care system needed to address. This section will provide a description of the methods the researcher used to obtain the information necessary to complete this field study. It encompasses the following sections: subject selection and description, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis procedures used for the researcher to obtain employee perceptions on their new employee orientation experience. It will conclude with the limitations of this methodology.

Subject Selection and Description

The sample population for this field study consisted of new employees at a For-Profit health care organization in northeastern Wisconsin. The subjects were identified on the basis of their employment tenure being within the past six to nine months. All qualified subjects were sent a link to an anonymous online survey. When the individuals voluntarily chose to complete the online survey, they became a subject for the field study. Ninety-four (94) subjects that qualified based on their tenure received the survey link via email. A total of sixty-six (66) individuals completed the survey, equaling a seventy percent (70%) response rate. Of the sixty-six that participated in the field study, forty-seven (47) indicated that they were full-time staff, working thirty hours or more per week, while nineteen (19) identified themselves as part-time, working twenty-nine hours or less per week. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the subjects were full-time, while twenty-nine percent (29%) were part-time status. All subjects, regardless of

employment status, were offered the same online survey and were required to answer all of the questions in order for the survey to be completed. The subjects were not asked to identify any personal demographics other than their length of tenure and to indicate if they were part-time or full-time employees. See Table 1 for specific demographics on the tenure of the field study subjects. The subjects were asked to identify themselves as having six, seven, eight or nine months of tenure in their current role within the organization.

Table 1

Tenure Demographics of Field Study Subjects

Tenure	Frequency	Percentage
6 Months	32	48.48
7 Months	11	16.16
8 Months	10	15.16
9 Months	13	19.70
Total	66	100.00

The researcher believed it to be necessary to be able to categorize the data on a couple of levels for comparison purposes. The various perspectives might offer some identifiable differences of orientation programs between those employees who work full-time versus those who work part-time. This is why subjects were asked as part of the survey to indicate their current employee status as either full-time and part-time. The following table offers insights into the percentages of part-time and full-time staff that participated in the online survey.

Table 2

Employment Demographics of Field Study Subjects

Tenure	Frequency	Percentage
Full-time	47	71.21
Part-time	19	28.79
Total	66	100.00

Instrumentation

The survey and its contents were created solely by the researcher. A review of current key elements of highly successful orientation programs also contributed to some of the survey content. Other questions were determined based off of defined needs to specifically evaluate the for-profit organization. Survey questions were reflective of the most recent standards of highly successful employee orientation programs and included an opportunity for the subjects to also evaluate how important that particular element of new employee orientation was to them personally. A five point Likert scale (1-5) was utilized as the rating component of the survey.

Data Collection Procedures

A thirty-three question online survey was sent to all new employees identified as having tenure between six to nine months. The survey was intentionally designed with two distinct and separate sections of questions. The first section of survey questions asked subjects to assess a series of statements based on how their orientation process has been thus far. This provided an opportunity to capture insights about the subject's current orientation experience.

The second section of questions asked the subjects to identify the level of importance each of the specific elements was to them personally. The elements assessed were the same

ones they evaluated their orientation experience against in the first section. This allowed the researcher to complete two functions; to evaluate the current employee orientation program against key elements of highly successful programs and to identify the important of those elements to the employees themselves. This also provided an opportunity to assess the importance of each element of the orientation. Subjects were given a two week time frame in which to complete the survey. The design of the online survey allowed for built-in indicators that would not allow subjects to be able to complete the survey more than once.

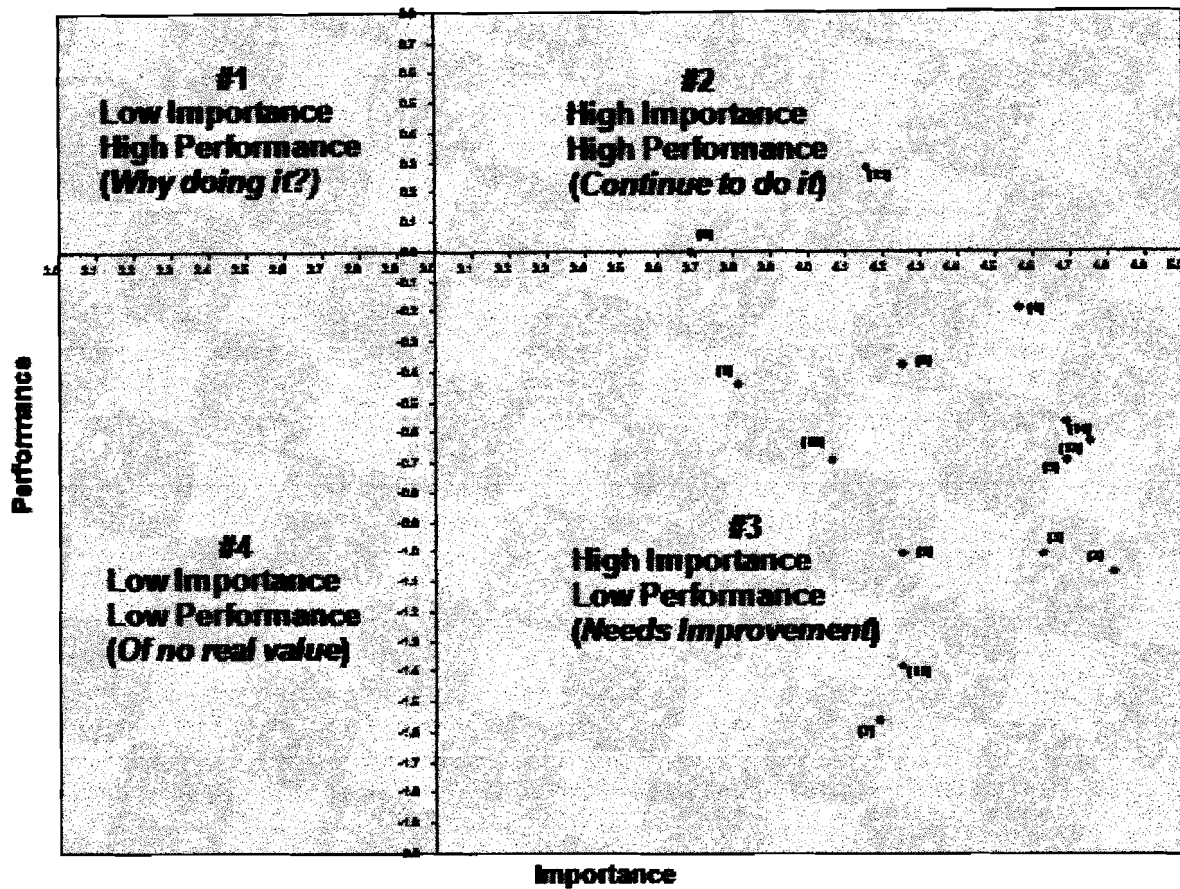
Data Analysis

From the data gathered, the researcher was able to analyze the current performance of each element of orientation against the level of its perceived importance through a gap analysis. Analysis calculations were completed on all subjects' responses including part-time and full-time subjects. Using an x-y axis, the vertical axis being current performance of that orientation element and the horizontal axis being the perceived importance of the element, a matrix was created to plot the gaps of the two means for each of the survey questions.

By plotting the gaps between importance and performance, each gap score (+/-) was plotted into a specific quadrant of a gap matrix (see Figure 1). The matrix provided insights regarding each of the fourteen elements as they are currently and what needs to be explored for improvement. The desired goal would have all of the elements being evaluated fall into Quadrant #2, meaning that those elements of high importance to the employee would be performed well.

Figure 1

Example of Gap Matrix, Quadrants Defined



By completing a Gap Matrix, each of the specific elements was charted based on their results. Their locations on the matrix offer insights as to which elements are being performing well against the perceived level of importance by the employees.

The researcher was able to determine which orientation elements were considered most important to all subjects, from the perspective of the large group and on their full-time or part-time status. The elements of the current orientation process needed to be improved as its performance rating was low based upon where the specific gaps were plotted. Gap Matrices were developed to compare the following data: one that represented all of the subjects

combined, one for Full-time Subjects, and one for Part-Time subjects as shown in Tables 2-4 respectively.

To compare the means of the full-time and part-time subjects, an independent group t-test was calculated. The test is designed to determine if the differences are statistically significant. Due to the small sizes of the subject group, it was determined that it would not be feasible to divide subjects into groups based on their months of tenure. As result, the only statistical calculations were completed on comparing the means of each element of the full-time and part-time groups.

Limitations

A limitation of this study might include that it is actually a replication of a study that the researcher had conducted for another health care system but was not able to fully complete that project due to a change of employment. The method of rating the Importance level of the elements allowed subjects to give high importance to any and all elements as they chose. The subjects could potentially be influenced by knowing that the elements are effective components of successful orientation processes, which would make them all important. Without a forced numerical ranking of the elements importance, it is possible the subjects could rate all elements with high levels of importance. Another limitation is that no statistical calculations were completed comparing the means of the subjects based on their tenure, rather only on their employment status.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this field study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a new employee orientation program, utilizing key elements identified as best practices against the perceived importance of those key elements. An online survey was completed by new employees of a for-profit health care system with six to nine months of tenure. This chapter will report the subject's responses in reference to the online survey. The reporting of the findings will start with all subjects' perspective and include both the full-time and part-time perspectives to follow. The results will explore the similarities and differences found between those groups and provide some insights as to opportunities for improvement and application.

Item Analysis

Initial analysis of the data included a gap analysis, which calculated the differences between the mean scores of each element based on the rating of importance versus the current organizational performance around the elements. To further explore the results, gap analyses were completed not only for All Subjects, but also on the responses of those who identified themselves as Full-time and as Part-Time.

Findings

Analysis of the data indicates that there are differences between the responses obtained from the three designations. The differences were more pronounced when the responses of the full-time and part-time groups were compared. It was determined that several gaps showed statistical significance between the full-time and part-time groups.

The gap scores for each of the three designations were plotted on a gap matrix, which graphically categorized them into one of four quadrants based on the level of importance (horizontal axis) against the level of performance (vertical axis). The results of the gap matrices

varied between groups but there was one common finding across all three of the designated groups. The survey showed that all of the elements, except #13 [Have access to necessary information and materials to do the job] were rated as having a higher level of importance than current performance, thus creating negative gaps for ninety-three percent of the key elements. Element #13 was the only element that had a positive gap difference, i.e., the performance rating was higher than the importance rating. Thus, it was the only element value plotted into Quadrant #2 on the Gap Matrix.

Data Analysis for All Subjects Group

The initial data analysis was completed on All Subjects. Based off of the data obtained, the top three key elements of importance were around elements requiring an active engagement of the manager or other leader in the orientation process. All of these elements cannot feasibly be accomplished in a short period of time as they require an upfront investment of time with the new employee.

The key elements with the greatest gaps as determined by the subjects responses were elements #7, #9, and #11 (see Table 3). The elements consisted of receiving feedback about performance, having goals to accomplish, and feeling valued. These elements were identified as having the greatest gap between the levels of importance against the current level of performance.

Table 3

Gap Analysis of For Profit Organization, All Subjects (n = 66)

Element	Q #	Importance	Gap	Performance
Manager actively involved	1	3.95	-0.10	3.85
Understand importance of job	2	4.70	-0.61	4.09
Regularly met with manager	3	4.73	-0.70	4.03
Job is what I expected it to be	4	4.68	-0.29	4.39
Clear understanding of expectations	5	4.61	-0.58	4.03
Feel welcomed and valued by team	6	3.97	-0.11	3.86
Received one performance review	7	4.32	-1.04	3.28
Good understanding of mission, vision, values of organization	8	4.35	-0.20	4.15
Feel valued/appreciated for my work	9	4.40	-0.78	3.62
Good understanding of health care industry	10	4.21	-0.68	3.53
Specific goals for my position are developed, prioritized, tracked	11	4.53	-0.80	3.73
Formal development plan created by manager	12	4.73	-0.56	4.17
Have access to necessary info. and materials for job	13	4.23	0.17	4.39
Understand what it will take to be Successful at this organization	14	4.66	-0.42	4.24

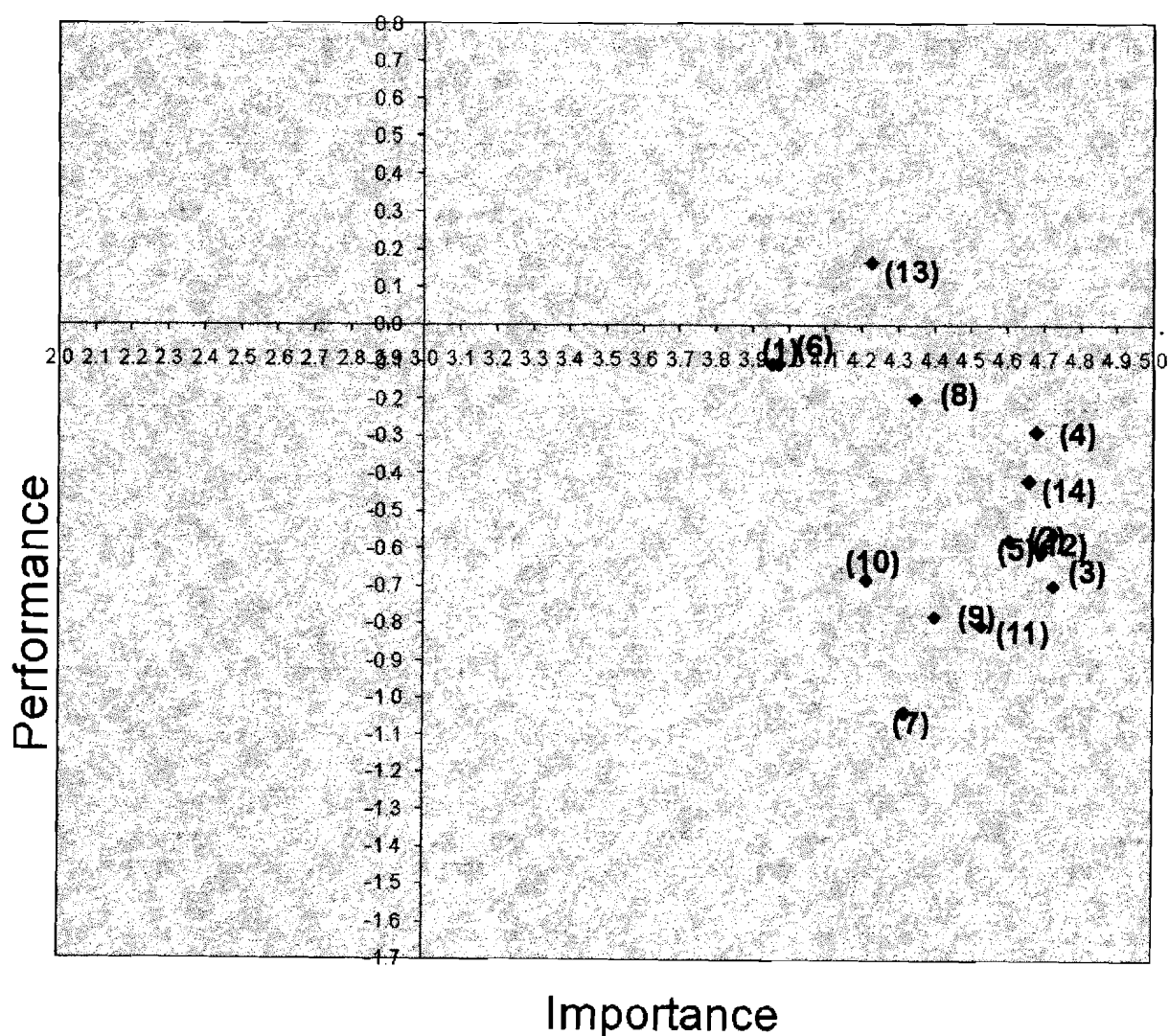
Note. Maximum score = 5.0

Note. Circle denotes top elements of Importance; Square indicates highest gap values.

The gap scores for All Subjects were plotted on a matrix, which graphically categorized them into one of four quadrants based on the importance ranking (horizontal axis) against the level of performance (vertical axis). As noted by Figure 2, it is evident that the majority of the key elements were rated as being of high importance to the subjects of this field study. The supporting data demonstrates, however, that the level of performance is not up to the level that is being expected. Therefore, consideration must be given to finding ways to improve the performance levels for each of those elements.

Figure 2

Gap Matrix of For Profit Organization, All Subjects (n=66)



Data Analysis for Full-Time Subjects

Data analysis was completed on the responses of the Full-Time Subjects. Based on the data obtained, the top three key elements of importance require time with their manager, aligned expectations of the job, and formal development planning. Evaluating the data based on the subjects' employment status offered additional insights as to what is most important to full-time employees (see Table 4). The responses of the full-time subjects on did vary somewhat from the findings of All Subjects.

The key elements with the greatest gaps, or opportunity for improvement, were elements #7, #9, and #10. They encompassed the elements of receiving feedback about performance, feeling valued and appreciated, and also to have a good understanding of the health care industry. These elements had the greatest gap between the levels of importance against the current level of performance.

Table 4

Gap Analysis of For Profit Organization, Full-Time (n = 47)

Element	Q #	Importance	Gap	Performance
Manager actively involved	1	4.02	-0.04	3.98
Understand importance of job	2	4.68	-0.49	4.19
Regularly met with manager	3	4.79	-0.62	4.17
Job is what I expected it to be	4	4.77	-0.36	4.40
Clear understanding of expectations	5	4.60	-0.57	4.02
Feel welcomed and valued by team	6	4.09	-0.17	3.91
Received one performance review	7	4.36	-0.92	3.44
Good understanding of mission, vision, values of organization	8	4.38	-0.13	4.26
Feel valued/appreciated for my work	9	4.45	-0.72	3.72
Good understanding of health care industry	10	4.26	-0.70	3.55
Specific goals for my position are developed, prioritized, tracked	11	4.64	-0.68	3.96
Formal development plan created with manager	12	4.74	-0.60	4.15
Have access to necessary info. and materials for job	13	4.26	0.12	4.38
Understand what it will take to be Successful at this organization	14	4.67	-0.40	4.28

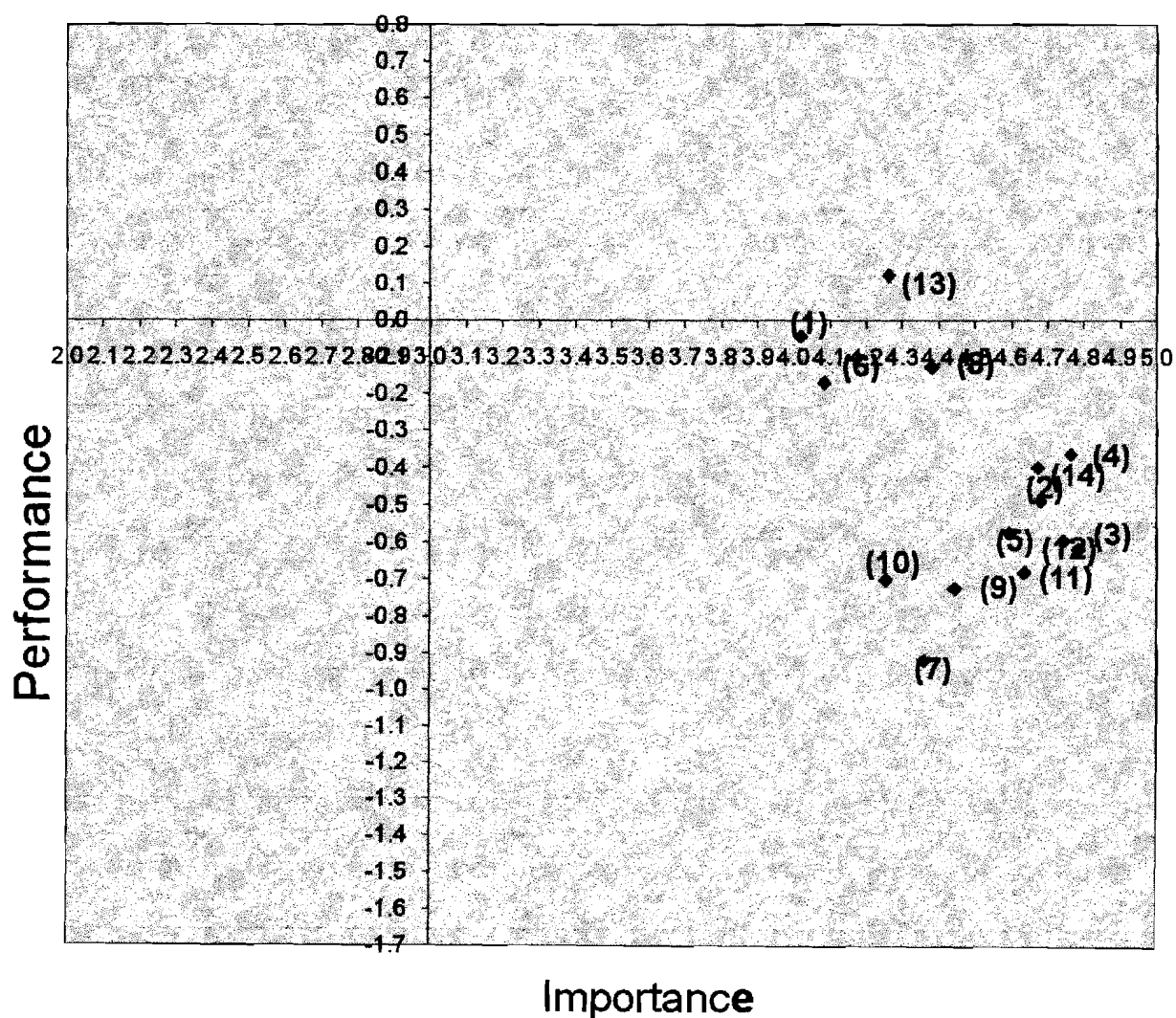
Note. Maximum score = 5.0

Note. Circle denotes top elements of Importance; Square indicates highest gap values.

The results of the Gap Matrix for Full-Time Subjects, as seen in Figure 3, showed the same pattern as with the All Subjects, in that the majority of the key elements were rated as being of high importance to the subjects of this field study. From the perspective of a full-time employee, there is a need to improve the performance for each of those specific elements.

Figure 3

Gap Matrix of For-Profit Organization, Full-Time Subjects (n=47)



Data Analysis of Part-Time Subjects

Upon completion of the data analysis for the part-time subjects, the researcher found that the top key elements of importance required time with their manager, formal development planning, understanding of expectations, and know what it takes to be successful. Evaluating the data based on the subjects' employment status offered additional insights as to what is most important to part-time employees. The responses of the part-time subjects on did vary somewhat from the findings of All Subjects and the full-time subjects.

The key elements with the greatest gaps, or opportunity for improvement, were elements #7, #11, and 8. They encompassed the elements of receiving feedback about performance, goals for position developed, and understand value of job to organization. These elements had the greatest gap between the levels of importance against the current level of performance.

Table 5

Gap Analysis of For Profit Organization, Part-Time (n = 19)

Element	Q #	Importance	Gap	Performance
Manager actively involved	1	3.81	-0.44	3.38
Understand importance of job	2	4.81	-1.06	3.75
Regularly met with manager	3	4.63	-1.00	3.63
Job is what I expected it to be	4	4.56	-0.19	4.38
Clear understanding of expectations	5	4.69	-0.69	4.00
Feel welcomed and valued by team	6	3.69	0.00	3.69
Received one performance review	7	4.19	-1.56	2.63
Good understanding of mission, vision, values of organization	8	4.25	-0.38	3.88

Feel valued/appreciated for my work	9	4.25	-1.00	3.25
Good understanding of health care industry	10	4.06	-0.69	3.38
Specific goals for my position are developed, prioritized, tracked	11	4.25	-1.38	2.88
Formal development plan created with manager	12	4.75	-0.63	4.13
Have access to necessary info. and materials for job	13	4.15	0.28	4.44
Understand what it will take to be Successful at this organization	14	4.69	-0.56	4.13

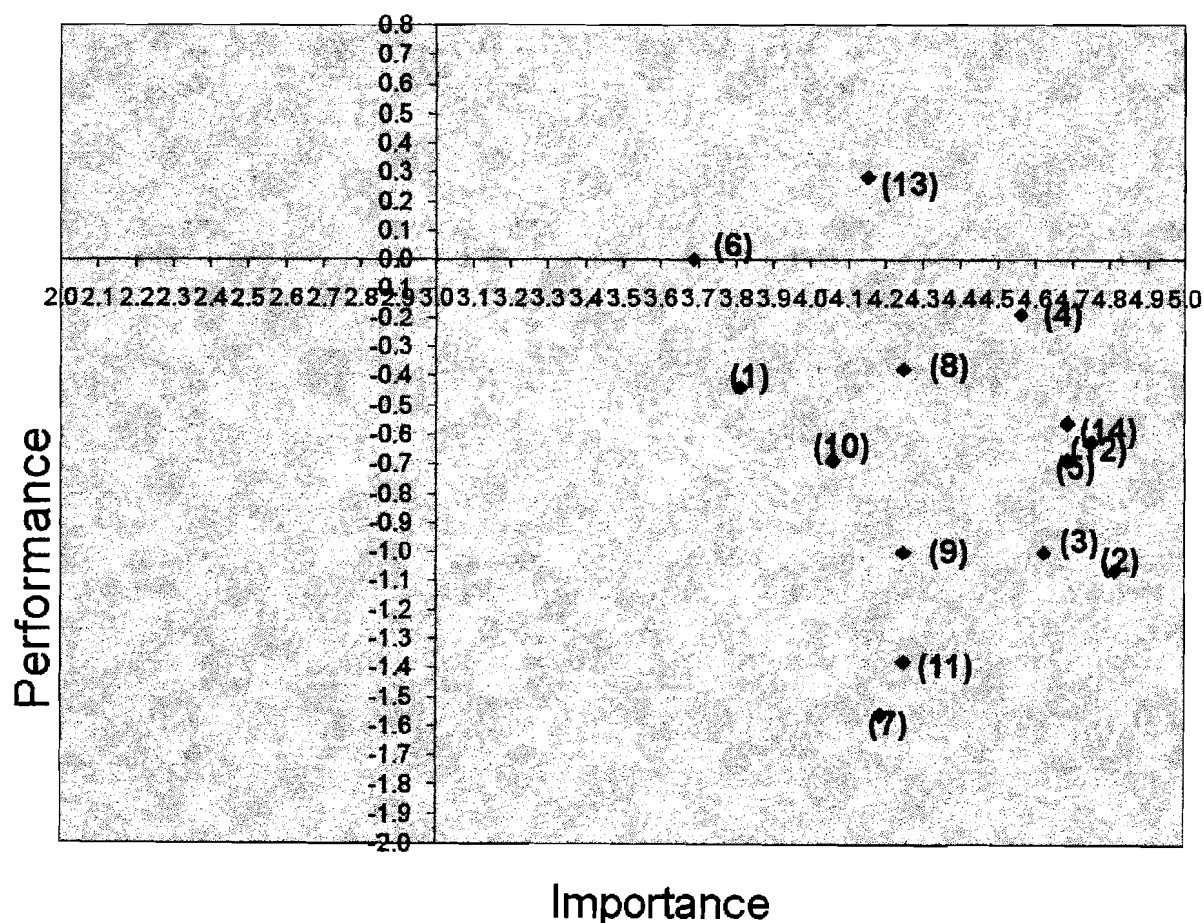
Note. Maximum score = 5.0

Note. Circle denotes top elements of Importance; Square indicates highest gap values.

The results of the Gap Matrix for Part-Time, as seen in Figure 4, illustrates that in all but two elements, #6 & #13, the gap was negative.

Figure 4

Gap Matrix of For-Profit Organization, Part-Time (n=19)



When comparing the importance and gap scores of the key elements, the research offered some interesting results. As noted in Table 6, element #12 [Formal development plan was created with manager] was the one element that was rated in the top three elements of importance across all groups, while element #7 [I received at least one formal review of my performance since being hired], was the one element that had the greatest gap across all three groups. This is of particular value because it offers insights into what employees' value as important to their orientation experience as well as to identify those elements that the organization is not performing well. Although #7 element did not show up in the top three elements of importance within any of the groups, it exposed an area by assessing how poorly the organization had done on this element across all three subject groups.

Table 6

Highest Importance and Gap Scores of All Groups

All Subjects		Full-Time Subjects		Part-Time Subjects	
Importance	Gap	Importance	Gap	Importance	Gap
#3	#7	#3	#7	#2	#7
#12	#9	#4	#9	#12	#11
#2	#11	#12	#10	#5	#8
				#14	

Note. Numerical values reflect a particular element of the survey being referenced

Note. Circle denotes repeating top element of importance for all groups; Square indicates top elements with highest gap values.

Full-Time Vs. Part-Time Performance

The results demonstrated the value of understanding how full-time versus part-time employees can experience the various elements of the orientation process differently. The data offered some interesting insights that organizations, specifically managers, need to keep in mind. It showed that there can be statistically significant differences in how a full-time versus a part-time employee experiences the orientation process. Although the findings had some similarities, the level of differences between mean scores of both groups was something to explore. The part-time subjects consistently ranked the performance of all but one element lower than that of the full-time employee. Utilizing a t-test to compare the means of the two groups around all key elements, it was determined that there were statistically significant differences between some elements of full-time and part-time employees regarding performance (as seen in Table 8). It was found that the key elements that demonstrate statistical significance between full-time and part-time subjects included: Element #1, A manager's ability to be actively involved in the orientation process; Element #3, The opportunity to meet regularly with your manager; Element #7, To receive at least one complete performance appraisal; Element #10, Have a good understanding of the health care industry

Several of the elements that showed statistical differences regarding performance were related to time spent with their manager. Managers who supervise part-time employees need to be intentional about making connections regularly with your new employee. These connections allow the opportunity to share concerns, ask questions, and develop a positive working relationship. Time spent with manager is also important for full-time employees; however, part-time employees naturally have a harder time due to the nature of their schedule. As noted in the literature review, people leave their managers because of a lack of a relationship with them;

therefore, it is essential that managers commit to building a positive relationship through connecting on a regular basis. This does not only have to be face-to-face but can be done through email or phone conversations as well (Lee, 2005). The key is that contact is made on a routine basis. Not only is this more of a challenge due to the normal chaos of the work schedule, but with part-time employees it makes it even that much more difficult. Leveraging other forms of communication might be valuable for part-time staff. Since part-time staff already have limited contact with the system, it is relevant for managers to keep this in mind as they support and mentor their new employees. Unfortunately, this is often the area that falls off to the wayside but can cause significant damage in the building of the relationship (Sullivan, 2001).

Regarding the other differences found, for part-time staff to obtain a better understanding of the industry, they need exposure to other service areas and other leaders of the organization. This can be difficult too as their time is already limited and often focused solely on their department and their service areas. This provides managers an opportunity to create for their staff to have a valuable orientation experience.

Table 7

Performance Mean Score Comparison of Full-Time to Part-Time (t-test)

Performance	Full-Time Mean	Part-Time Mean	P Significant*
1. Manager actively involved	3.98	3.38	*
2. Understand importance of job	4.19	3.75	
3. Regularly met with manager	4.17	3.63	*
4. Job is what I expected it to be	4.40	4.38	
5. Clear understanding of expectations	4.02	4.00	

6. Feel welcomed and valued by team	3.91	3.69	
7. Received one performance review	3.44	2.63	*
8. Good understanding of mission, vision, values of organization	4.26	3.25	
9. Feel valued/appreciated for my Work	3.72	3.38	
10. Good understanding of health care Industry	3.55	2.88	*
11. Specific goals for my position are developed, prioritized, tracked	3.96	4.13	
12. Formal development plan created with manager	4.15	4.44	
13. Have access to necessary info. and materials for job	4.38	4.13	
14. Understand what it will take to be Successful at this organization	4.28	4.13	

Note. P<.05

In comparing the means of the two groups around key elements of importance, it was determined that there were also some statistically significant differences (seen in Table 9). The data showed that there were some statistically significant differences between full-time and part-time subjects around level of importance. They included: Element #6, Feel welcomed and valued by the team and Element #11, Specific goals for the position are developed, prioritized, and tracked.

It is not uncommon to expect that there could be differences between full-time and part-time subjects. The interesting insight was that the Part-time subjects rated the importance for the elements lower than the full-time subjects. The full-time subjects identified feeling welcomed and valued by the team along with specific goals for their job with a higher importance value than the part-time subjects. This could be due to the fact that working full-time might lend to a greater interest in feeling connected and being part of the team moreover than someone who is part-time has less time invested and can more readily come in, do their

job, and leave without worrying about all of the team dynamics going on. This doesn't imply that part-time staff do not want those things, rather, they have less of an opportunity to get it.

Table 8

Importance Mean Score Comparison of Full-Time to Part-Time (t-test)

Importance	Full-Time Mean	Part-Time Mean	P Significant*
1. Manager actively involved	4.02	3.81	
2. Understand importance of job	4.68	4.81	
3. Regularly met with manager	4.79	4.63	
4. Job is what I expected it to be	4.77	4.56	
5. Clear understanding of expectations	4.60	4.69	
6. Feel welcomed and valued by team	4.09	3.69	*
7. Received one performance review	4.36	4.19	
8. Good understanding of mission, vision, values of organization	4.38	4.25	
9. Feel valued/appreciated for my Work	4.45	4.25	
10. Good understanding of health care Industry	4.26	4.06	
11. Specific goals for my position are developed, prioritized, tracked	4.64	4.25	*
12. Formal development plan created with manager	4.74	4.75	
13. Have access to necessary info. and materials for job	4.26	4.15	
14. Understand what it will take to be Successful at this organization	4.67	4.69	

Note. P<.05

Summary

The results of this field study and the learning it provided prompted significant changes in the design and delivery of the for-profit health care system's orientation process. It also justified the need for continual consideration of what is important to each of the new employees

joining the organization. One immediate action that took place was for the second section of questions (provided in the online survey), to be adjusted and then handed out to all new employees on their first day of work. This allowed Human Resources and the supervising managers to learn more about what is important to that employee, how they are motivated, and helped to begin the discussion about their role being of value and importance to the organization. Another significant change that took place from this study was for the managers to create a timeline of the first twelve months and to set dates in their calendars and those of their new employees to ensure regular routine connections in order to foster that manager-employee relationship. Human Resources also infused the on-going support requirement into the management performance review process so that managers who are responsible for staff supervision, are evaluated and held accountable for leveraging what was learned from this study. It is, however, unrealistic to assume that an organization can highly customize each new employee's orientation process, yet small changes and attention to those things of value help do wonders to build the manager-employee relationship. When employees feel cared for and valued, they experience greater levels of job satisfaction and higher levels of engagement. This in turn, can reduce employee turnover and enhance productivity throughout the organization.

Chapter V: Discussion

The findings of this field study underscore the existing research, showing that even though organizations invest time and resources into orientation programs, they are still not as effective or being performed in ways that have a significant impact on the employee's orientation experience (Prospera, 2006). As the quest for talent continues to be more complex and challenging, organizations need to leverage the learning from such studies in order to create the kind of orientation experience that today's employees want. According to Branham (2007), employee turnover is not an event – it is a process of disengagement that can take days, weeks, months or even years until the actual decision to leave occurs. This field study also supports the existing research that effective orientation processes have value and play a key role in reducing employee turnover and enhancing employee engagement. A strong partnership between manager and new employee is the success driver for making such changes.

Findings

There were several key findings that could have some impact and value for those who are designing or updating their orientation processes.

Performance vs. Importance. According to the findings of this study, the performance rating for all of the key elements, except for element #13, was consistently below the level of importance ratings. This demonstrates that there are many key elements of the orientation process which are of high importance to the new employee. Yet from a performance perspective, they were not being accomplished or performed to the level desired, as shown for subjects of the for-profit health system. This is very important to keep in mind as organizations are continually trying to find ways to enhance the tenure of their staff. Actions based off of these findings might include discussions with new and old employees in order to better

understand what their needs are today. As we learned and found through the literature review and the field study results, today's employees are much different than in the past and will require organizations and leadership to change their ways as a result. Interestingly, these results were consistent across subject groups (i.e., all subjects, full-time, and part-time). Although there was little research found that compared part-time and full-time employees specifically, the researcher found that the statistical differences in the full-time and part-time subjects assessment requires further exploration.

These findings also prompt further consideration of routinely exploring the level of importance of key elements in an organization's orientation program. It offers the employee a way to communicate that this is what is important to me during my orientation and then be able to assess if the performance is critical. If the element is consistently shown to be of low importance, it would beg the question as to why continue to do it. Organizations need to be willing to invest the time and energy so that their employee orientation process is effective and of high value to the new employees.

Full-Time vs. Part-Time

It is not difficult to understand that there could be differences in performance and importance values between full-time and part-time employees. When considering employees work schedules, part-time employees will naturally get less contact time each week than those who work full-time. Busy and chaotic schedules make it even more difficult to connect on a routine basis. What does this mean for managers? For those that supervise both full-time and part-time employees, it is evident that they will need to manage the orientation experience a bit differently for their employees. Making intentional connections with both groups of new employees will go a long way in developing a positive working relationship and employee

retention. Considerations need to be made for how differently some aspects of the orientation process needs to be done based off the results found from the study.

Conclusions

The results of this field study supports how valuable orienting employees effectively is to employee retention and employee engagement. Many of the results found were similar to those found of other research, in that orientation involves many key elements as outlined in the literature review. The study showed that there is significant value in knowing what is important to your employees, especially new employees as they begin their career with the organization. The cost and time investment is something to not take lightly as a simple function of Human Resources but a strategic endeavor. It requires a new way of thinking that organizations need to be able to embrace today. Old ways will no longer work and the efforts needed to minimize employee turnover begins with their first day of employment and to how they feel about the company for which they now work.

The findings of the study are similar to what was found in the literature review in that for organizations to retain their talented staff, they have to create orientation processes that utilize the key elements of successful programs and give strong consideration to the value of contact, goals, feeling welcomed, formal development plans, and all those elements so essential to capturing the interest and employment of today's workforce.

Recommendations

Research results from Chapter Four identify the importance of making sure the orientation process fits the values, expectations, and needs of today's employees. It also supports the significant role a manager's plays in an employee's overall orientation experience. The researcher recommends that additional studies to explore the impact of the demographics of the workplace continue to change dramatically over the next decade. It is understood that the old, traditional ways of orienting new employees will no longer work. Key business issues of retention, turnover, and along with the projected deficit of qualified staff will demand organizations to invest in processes to leverage the talents of the employees, which benefits both the organization and the employee.

Utilize opportunities to communicate with staff on a regular basis to see how things are going and to assess what needs to be changed. Research supported the fact that today's employees are going to demand, expect, and want more from their employment experience. This field study helped to show that there is a lot of work to be done but it can be if organizations are willing to invest the time, energy, and resources needed to create an orientation experience that is relevant and of value for their needs and expectations.

References

- American Association of Retired Persons. (2004). *The changing workforce*. Retrieved on March 23, 2007, from <http://www.aarp.org/money/careers/choosecareer/occupational-info/2004-04-20/asp>
- Abell, A. (2004). *Practical tips for new-employee orientation*. Retrieved January 17, 2007, from <http://philantropy.com/jobs/2004.htm>
- Amble, B. (2006). *Organizations slow to integrate new hires*. Retrieved February 11, 2007, from <http://www.management-issues.com/2006/12/15/researchorganizations-slow-to-integrate-new-hires.htm>
- Ameln, R (2001). *New employee orientation programs key to starting employees off right*. Retrieved March 3, 2007, from http://www.missouribusiness.net/docs/orientation_programs_key.asp
- Armour, S. (2005, Nov. 6). *Generation y: They've arrived at work with a new attitude*. Retrieved on January 7, 2007, from http://www.usatoday.com/money/workplace/2005-11-06-gen-y_x.htm
- Belilos, C. (1998). *Conducting effective orientations*. Retrieved on November 3, 2004, from <http://www.easytraining.com/orientation.htm>
- Branham, L. (2005). *The 7 hidden reasons why employees leave*. New York: American Management Association.
- Brown, J. (n.d.). *Employee orientation. Keeping new employees on board*. Retrieved on February 11, 2007, from <http://humanresources.about.com/od/retention/a/keepnewemployee.htm>

- Gandossy, R. (2001). *The talent edge in the 21st century*. Retrieved on March 11, 2007, from www.worldatwork.com/talent_edge/2001-12.htm
- Hampel, B. (n.d.). *How to build an effective onboarding process that works for your organization*. Retrieved March 11, 2007, from www.conectingdotsconsulting.com
- Harris, J. (2004). How to decrease turnover and increase employee retention. Retrieved June 1, 2007, from http://www.innovativeemployeesolutions.com/knowledge/articles_04/article28_decrease_turnover.html
- Hicks, R., & Hicks, K. (1999). *Boomers, xers, and other strangers*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House.
- I4cp. (2007). *New employee orientation program: Survey results*. Retrieved June 2, 2007, from <http://www.i4cp.com/servlets/sfs>
- Jones, K. (2001). *The impending crisis in health care*. The Internet Journal of Healthcare Administration. Vol. 1, Number 2. 1-5.
- Kaye, B. (2007, July). *The long view: Beverly Kaye*. *Training*, 74-75.
- Kaufman, R. (n.d.). *It pays to help new staff start right*. Retrieved on July 1, 2007, from http://www.speaking.com/articles_html/RonKaufman_315.html
- Lee, D. (2005). *How to avoid the four deadliest onboarding mistakes*. Retrieved May 2, 2007, from <http://www.ere.net/articles/db/3f9dedc4bd074e23a72ad98b938382ca.asp>
- McKeown, L. (2000). *The complete guide to orientation and re-orientation*. EVNA, Inc.
- Michaud, L. (2001). *Turn the tables on employee turnover*. Retrieved on March 11, 2007, from www.americanpayrollassociation.com/employer_practices/epe0119.pdf

- Paine, N. (2006, March). *Changing workforce*. Retrieved March 23, 2007, from http://www.wpsmag.com/content/templates/wps_article.asp
- Platz, B. (2007). *Employee onboarding: One chance for a positive new employee experience*. Retrieved on July 1, 2007, from <http://humanresources.about.com/od/orientation/a/onboarding.htm>
- Prospera. (2007). *Review: Meaningful hiring, orientation programs key to long-term success*. Retrieved May 17, 2007, from <https://www.prospera.com/Refernce/ViewNewsItem.asp>
- Recruitmax. (2004). Onboarding for employee retention. Retrieved March 11, 2007, from www.recruitmax.com/docs/upload/onboardingwhitepaper.pdf
- Rogers, K., & Wainwright, P. (2005). *Effective onboarding*. Retrieved May 3, 2007, from <http://www.websterb.com/articles.php>
- Sirota, D., Mischkind, L., & Meltzer, M. (2006). *Why your employees are losing motivation*. Retrieved on March 12, 2007, from <http://hbswk.hbs.archive/5289.html>
- Smith, D. (2006, December, No. 1). *Managing the Risks of a Changing Workforce*. Retrieved on May 1, 2007, from <http://www.accenture.com/outlook/>
- Sullivan, J. (2001). *A manager's guide to orientation*. Retrieved February 17, 2004, from <http://www.erechange.com>
- Sullivan, J. and Burnett, M. (2005). *Missed opportunities: Talent intelligence during the onboarding process*. Retrieved May 11, 2007, from <http://www.ere.net/tb/4740b07052ab426ca4795bc579e3f1eb>
- Vickers, M. (2007, April). Making Employee Orientation Count. Trendwatcher Archive. Issue 358.

Wheeler, K. (2006, March). Five Tips to Ensure a World-Class Onboarding Experience.

Retrieved on March 11, 2007, from <http://www.ereexchange.com>

Zemke, R., Raines, C. & Filipczak, B. (2000). *Generations at work*. New York, NY: American Management Association

Appendix A:
ONLINE SURVEY TOOL

Table A1

FRAMEWORK FOR ON-LINE SURVEY TOOL - New Employee Satisfaction & Importance Survey

Thank you for choosing to participate in this field study project. Your participation in this survey is strictly voluntary and your responses will be kept completely confidential. If at any time you wish to terminate your participation in the survey, you may do so without coercion or prejudice by just hitting the reset button at the bottom of the on-line survey form. Thank you for your participation with this on-line survey project.

This survey itself consists of approximately 33 questions designed to assess your orientation experience and get your feedback on which components are most important to you in the orientation process. Choose the response that best represents your personal opinion. In order to choose a response, click the mouse over that area. Please note: You are not able to save a partially completed survey. If you have to exit the survey before completing it, you can re-access the survey instrument through the link included in the email. I need you to complete the survey by XXXXXXXXXXXX. Thanks!

How many months have you been employed at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX?	6 Months	7 Months	8 Months	9 Months	
What is your current employment status with XXXXXXXXX?	Full-time	Part-time			
Please rate each statement by indicating the response that best represents your orientation experience thus far at XXXXXXXX:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. <i>My manager has been actively involved in my orientation since my date of hire.</i>					
2. <i>I understand the importance of my job & how it contributes to the larger organization.</i>					
3. <i>I have met with my manager on a regular basis to get feedback, share frustrations, ask questions, & build relationship.</i>					
4. <i>My job duties and responsibilities are in line with my original expectations. This job is what I expected it to be.</i>					
5. <i>I have a clear understanding of what is expected of my position by the organization, my manager, & my co-workers.</i>					
6. <i>My co-workers have made me feel welcomed & view me as a valuable part of the team.</i>					

7. I have received at least one formal review of my performance since being hired.					
8. I have a good understanding of the mission, vision, & values of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.					
9. I have felt appreciated for the work that I do within the organization.					
10. I have a good understanding of the health care industry.					
11. Specific goals for my position have been developed, prioritized, with time frames for completion.					
12. My formal training & development plan has been created with my manager.					
13. I know where to find & how to obtain the necessary information & materials to do my job well.					
14. I am aware of what it takes to be successful in this organization.					
15. XXXXXXXX is my employer of choice & I anticipate working here for a long time.					
16. How would you rate your overall orientation experience at Prevea in comparison to others you have had?	Significantly Better	Slightly Better	About the Same	Worse	Not Applicable
How IMPORTANT are the following aspects of the employee orientation process to YOU personally? PLEASE base your responses on how you actually feel about each statement, not on a prior orientation experience.	Very Important To Me	Important To Me	Neutral	Not really Important To Me	Not Important To Me At All
17. The employee's manager is actively involved in the orientation process.					
18. I understand the importance of my job & how it contributes to the larger organization.					
19. Opportunity to regularly meet with my manager.					
20. Having a clear understanding of what is expected of the position by the organization, manager, & co-workers.					
21. The employee's job expectations are in line with the job duties & responsibilities.					
22. Feeling welcomed by co-workers & viewed as a valuable part of the team.					

23. Receiving a formal review of one's performance within the first 6 months of employment.					
24. Having a good understanding of the organization's mission, vision, & core values.					
25. To feel valued and appreciated for the work that you do within the organization.					
26. Having a good understanding of the health care industry.					
27. Goals specific to the job are developed, prioritized, with time frames for their completion.					
28. To have your formal training & development plans created with your manager.					
29. Knowing where to find & how to obtain the necessary information & materials to do the job well.					
30. I am aware of what it takes to be successful in this organization.					
31. Employment within the organization is a positive & rewarding experience.					

Please complete the additional questions provided below:	Please type in your response. Space for your response is unlimited. The box will continue to scroll down as you type in your response.
<i>How has your orientation experience up until now contributed to either your satisfaction or dissatisfaction of employment at XXXXXXXX?</i>	
<i>Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve the orientation process of XXXXXXXX from a systems or departmental perspective?</i>	

Thank you again for participating in this study. If you wish to obtain a copy of the project's findings, please email Dawn Schalow at dawnsc@XXXXXXXX.com and request a copy to be forwarded to you. Thanks.

SUBMIT SURVEY	RESET FORM
----------------------	-------------------