

FINDING THE JOB: IS IT WHO YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU KNOW, OR HOW YOU  
APPLY?

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For my sister, Bug. You are my inspiration, motivation, and so much more. If I've taught you anything, I hope it's not to go to graduate school for four years.

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## ABSTRACT

Online applications and the use of personal connections are often used to increase employment opportunities. As the prevalence of online application use increases, some companies now utilize systems that review résumé content for the presence of particular applicant qualities (Chapman & Webster, 2003). Additionally, approximately half of employment opportunities are identified through informal connections (Topa, 2011). However, not all job seekers have a useful network of connections. Participants were expected to view automated résumé screening systems and the use of personal connections as unfair processes. Participants were recruited from an online platform ( $n = 382$ ) and documented their perceptions of fairness in relation to fictional scenarios involving various company and applicant behaviors. Screening system types were considered to be equally fair. Participants considered the use of personal connections least fair when the use of strong and direct connections led to a job offer.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

There are many ways in which individuals can identify employment opportunities. Job seekers are most likely to search for job vacancies through personal connections and online job boards (Ott, Blacksmith, & Royal, 2008). Approximately half of employment opportunities are identified through informal or personal connections (Topa, 2011). Online job boards are also important for locating employment opportunities. Almost two-thirds of individuals utilize online sources during their job searches (Ott et al., 2008). The use of personal connections and submission of résumés through online job boards are two of the most commonly utilized methods of obtaining employment.

Personal connections are extremely important to successfully obtaining employment. These connections may include friends and family along with professional relationships. Personal connections may result from networking with industry-relevant professionals, obtaining referrals from current employees, and utilizing one's social network. In order to develop personal connections, one must participate in various social behaviors. There are multiple antecedents to engaging in behaviors related to building personal connections, one of which is personality (Gibson, Hardy, & Buckley, 2014). Specifically, extroverted individuals are more likely to socialize, engage in professional activities, and maintain social contacts (Forret & Dougherty, 2001). Conversely, introverted individuals may be less inclined to engage in social activities related to building one's personal connections (de Janasz & Forret, 2008). As a result, introverted individuals may have a smaller network. The highly advantageous nature of personal

connections in relation to obtaining employment may put those uncomfortable with establishing a wide network of connections at a disadvantage.

Another primary method of obtaining employment is through online resources. Through the use of online job boards and company websites, applicants can easily research and apply for vacancies in various employment industries. Over half of applicants use the internet to conduct job searches and many large organizations continue to expand their online recruitment methods (Anderson, 2003; Bennett, Borstoff, & Marker, 2007). Just as there are disadvantages with all job search methods, there are consequences associated with relying solely on online job boards to locate employment. For example, to evaluate online applications and identify candidates, organizations may utilize automated screening methods. However, depending on the methods used to perform searches and the résumés provided by applicants, screening systems may omit qualified individuals from consideration and may make it harder for candidates to stand out from the rest.

Some authors suggest future research should explore the impact online selection methods have on the use and productivity of personal connections (Topa, 2011). Research should consider whether the use and advantages of personal connections has changed with the increased reliance on online selection methods. Additionally, applicant reactions to the use of automated screening systems have not been adequately explored (Anderson, 2003). As the prevalence of automated screening systems increases, it is important to evaluate the perceptions associated with these tools. The purpose of the

current study is to examine reactions to the utilization of personal connections and automated screening systems during a job search.

### **Personal Connections**

Personal connections are one of the most common and fruitful methods of locating and obtaining employment (Ott et al., 2008). Personal connections can include social relationships, such as those with family and friends, and professional relationships, including those with former work colleagues and industry-relevant acquaintances. These connections are often used to identify employment opportunities or gain an advantage over others during the recruitment and selection processes. Some studies identify the potential prescreening of applicants by current employees as a contributing factor to the competitive advantage of personal connections (Karsh, 2008). Current employees are held accountable for the applicants they recommend, and are likely to limit their recommendations to qualified individuals (Jattuso & Sinar, 2003). Research has concluded that job seekers with connections to current employees are more likely to be interviewed and receive job offers (Breugh, Greising, Taggart, & Chen, 2003; Fernandez & Weinberg, 1997). The type of relationship that results in a personal connection useful to the job search process may vary.

In general, there are two types of personal connections. First, personal connections may be based on social relationships, including those with friends or family. In the past, this type of personal connection has been represented through exclusive networks, such as an “Old Boy’s Network”. In an Old Boy’s Network, social relationships resulted in an exclusive club with an exchange of information, opportunity,

and social support. Historically, these networks consisted of high-powered men and excluded other populations (Rand & Bierema, 2009). The advantages associated with these personal connections are based solely on whether a job seeker knows a connected individual. A job seeker's qualifications are considered less important. Many believe the "Old Boy's Network" concept still exists today but is no longer limited to high-status wealthy men. Today's informal networks remain exclusive to those belonging to particular cultures with the necessary relationships (Rand & Bierema, 2009). These social relationships act as an employment advantage for some individuals.

The second type of personal connection assesses the capabilities of the job seeker. These connections may consist of relationships with former work colleagues, acquaintances made through networking events, employee referrals, and other professional connections. Previous observation of an individual's ability to perform to the specified employment standards is a key ingredient of "capability-based" personal connections. These relationships can provide the assurance to an organization that an applicant can perform to the specifications of the employment position (Jattuso & Sinar, 2003). These personal connections have the potential to provide applicants an advantage during an employment search.

The importance and benefit of personal connections during a job search is unquestionable. Many job seekers utilize personal connections when searching for employment opportunities (Feldman & Klaas, 2002). Applicants with connections to an organization are more likely to be considered for employment, even when other candidates are equally qualified (Breugh et al., 2003; Fernandez & Weinberg, 1997).

These connections may provide a job seeker the opportunity to have their application materials reviewed when they otherwise may not have been seen by the organization. Even experts emphasize the use of personal connections, through the form of employee referrals, as the best method of obtaining employment and some companies will place these applicants on the fast-track to employment (Neary, 2012; Taber & Hendricks, 2003; Weber & Silverman, 2012).

### **Applicant Perceptions of Personal Connections**

Some individuals may rely heavily on personal connections to obtain employment. The use of personal connections as an advantage over others during an employment search may not be seen as fair by all job seekers. Multiple consequences associated with the use of personal connections as a recruitment method and selection tool may result in perceptions of unfairness, according to well-known applicant reaction theories. For example, one of the primary models of applicant reactions identifies the consistency of a selection system as a key contributor to an individual's perception of fairness; this model specifically highlights the bias associated with utilizing personal connections for employment gain as a violation of the consistency required of selection procedures (Gilliland, 1993). A recent meta-analysis also supports the relationship between selection procedure consistency and various applicant attitudes towards the organization; this meta-analysis identifies the personal connections among the least favorable selection tools used by organizations (Hausknecht, Day, & Thomas, 2004). It is proposed that individuals will support the previous research and view the use of personal connections as an unfair method of obtaining employment.

*Hypothesis 1: In general, individuals will view personal connections as an unfair advantage to obtaining employment.*

### **Barriers to Establishing Personal Connections**

Organizational reliance on personal connections as a recruitment method and selection tool may pose a number of difficulties for some job seekers. Job seekers may fail to establish adequate industry-relevant personal connections and may face more difficulty locating employment. There are a number of factors that can impact an individual's network of personal connections. Potential barriers to effectively using connections during a job search involve the qualities of an individual's network, including the quality and number of the connections made. Individual characteristics may also limit the development and usefulness of personal connections. Job seekers may vary in comfort level and have reservations with establishing and maintaining personal connections for use in obtaining employment.

Not all job seekers are members of a network that will be useful during an employment search. The usefulness of an individual's network is dependent on the quality of the personal connections. One aspect of quality that is important for the successful utilization of personal connections is the relevance of connections made. The connections must be relevant to the type and level of employment one is trying to gain. Additionally, similar to any relationship, personal connections must be maintained. Ill-fitting or poorly maintained contacts may provide a challenge to job seekers (Wanberg, Basbug, Van Hooft, & Samtani, 2012). For individuals with a limited network, the

inability to establish quality, industry-relevant personal connections may hinder the ability to find employment through these means.

A limited network can also provide a barrier to network quality. A job seeker's network may be limited if the size and reach of the network is small or if the contacts are unwilling to help establish employment connections (Wanberg et al., 2012). If a job seeker has faced long-term unemployment, they may have fewer connections than others, thus limiting their ability to obtain valuable employment connections (Schwartz, 2013). Job seekers may also experience a limited network of personal connections if they are unable to engage with individuals to expand their network. Others may find their personal connections of limited use after moving to a new area or changing careers. Some job seekers may feel discomfort when engaging in the social behaviors related to forming relationships and fail to establish quality connections. Job seekers may find themselves uncomfortable and hesitant to partake in networking events. Additionally, job seekers may be reluctant to rely on their personal network during a job search (Wanberg et al., 2012). Job seekers may feel embarrassed to reach out to individuals they have not kept in touch with for the sole purpose of probing for potential job vacancies. Job seeker hesitation and factors such as long-term unemployment may prevent individuals from creating adequate networks for use during a job search.

A job seeker's personality composition may also influence the social behaviors associated with developing personal connections. Many studies have identified social tendencies as a precursor for networking behaviors (Wolff & Kim, 2012). As a result, an individual's willingness to engage in social behaviors may impact their personal network.

As can be expected, extroversion is a significant predictor of networking behavior, intensity, and the expansion of one's social network (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Gibson et al., 2014, Wanberg, Kanfer, & Banas, 2000, Wolff & Kim, 2012). Individuals most comfortable with relying on social relationships to explore employment opportunities tend to have higher levels of extroversion (Wanberg et al., 2000). Personality also influences the behaviors required to establish personal connections.

Socializing and creating a network of personal connections may be easier for individuals with a particular personality type. For example, the creation of a broad network may be more effortless for extroverted individuals. Extroverted individuals tend to establish personal connections with little effort through incidental networking (Wolff & Kim, 2012). Meanwhile, introverted individuals may rely on a more calculated approach to relationship building. Individuals who are not highly extroverted may be less inclined to participate in the behaviors associated with developing personal connections (de Janasz & Forret, 2008). The heavy reliance on obtaining employment through personal connections may put individuals who are introverted at a disadvantage. The current study postulates that extroverted individuals will perceive the advantages associated with personal connections during the selection process as fairer than introverted individuals.

*Hypothesis 2: Extroverted individuals will perceive the advantages associated with personal connections during the selection process as more fair than introverted individuals.*

### **Fairness of Personal Connections**

Multiple barriers exist and may prohibit job seekers from developing personal connections that are useful during a job search. For these reasons, job seekers who experience these difficulties may perceive the use of personal connections as a recruitment and selection tool as unfair. The advantages provided to individuals with personal connections effectively exclude disconnected individuals from the benefits others receive. Individuals who are unable to join an exclusive group that receives preferential treatment may view the advantages from this process as unequal and unfair (Rand & Bierema, 2009). The awareness and perception of an unfair process may tarnish an applicant's view of the organization. Additionally, there are issues that must be considered by the organization when utilizing personal connections during the recruitment and selection process.

The reliance on personal connections and informal recruitment methods has legal ramifications the organization must consider. Some job seekers may be unable to access or develop connections with employees of an alternative gender or race (Taber & Hendricks, 2003). This may limit the reach individuals of a minority group may have when exploring employment opportunities. One study found that while minority groups actively network and utilize employee connections, they often have fewer useful personal connections (Taber & Hendricks, 2003). A heavy reliance on informal recruitment methods may effectively eliminate diversity from a workforce. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission warns, "While word-of-mouth recruiting in a racially diverse workforce can be an effective way to promote diversity, the same method of recruiting in

a non-diverse workforce is a barrier to equal employment opportunity if it does not create applicant pools that reflect the diversity in the qualified labor market” (EEOC, 2006, p. 24). However, word-of-mouth or informal recruitment methods are not always an issue, these methods simply require consideration and monitoring.

When used with other recruitment methods, informal recruiting has the potential to be a valuable source (Smith, 2015). Some organizations attempt to overcome to problems associated with informal recruitment by limiting the percentage of employees hired through informal means (Schwartz, 2013). Additionally, the common perception is that the use of informal recruitment methods through personal connections is fair. In fact, individuals within an exclusive group are more likely to downplay the benefits received and importance of these connections (Rand & Bierema, 2009). It is important to examine the impact the illumination of these barriers has on perceived fairness and how this may impact the organization.

### **Electronic Résumé Submission and Screening**

The use of technology to aid the selection of candidates is becoming more prevalent across organizations (Zall, 2000). Both companies and job seekers have increased their use of online resources during job searches. From its infancy, the appeal of and intent to use automated résumé screening systems has been supported and growing among large organizations (Baker, DeTienne, & Smart, 1998). Additionally, the use of online resources by job seekers has increased. Almost two-thirds of individuals currently utilize online sources during their job search (Ott et al., 2008). The increased reliance on

technology has altered the way in which some organizations design their selection processes.

There are positive and negative consequences of increased online reliance during employment searches. Online technology has resulted in an increased volume of applications received by organizations (Bennett et al., 2007; Neary, 2012). The influx of applications may be due to the ease and increased ability to search and apply for vacancies online (Neary, 2012; Weber & Silverman, 2012). As a result of the increased number of applications, many organizations require the use of a technology-based screening system to identify candidates. These systems eliminate less-desirable candidates and allow managers to focus their efforts and assessments on the best candidates. Organizations may find the ability of screening systems to easily narrow the applicant pool and increase time spent interacting with organization personnel as beneficial (Chapman & Webster, 2003). There are multiple ways in which automated screening systems function to identify the best candidates.

Automated screening systems may identify candidates based on their qualifications or the content contained within their résumés. Screening systems may review résumés to evaluate for the presence of the minimum qualifications required by the vacant position. These systems can identify whether a candidate has a particular set of knowledge, skills, and abilities or meets specific job requirements (Bennett et al., 2007; Wanberg et al., 2012). Screening systems may also assess for the presence of particular keywords used in a job seeker's résumé (Neary, 2012). The use and result of these screening techniques pose a number of potential issues.

The issues associated with automated screening systems are particularly relevant to those who are eliminated from consideration by this tool. Automated screening systems have the potential to overlook qualified applicants. Individuals who are unaware or fail to use particular keyword combinations may be eliminated from the applicant pool (Mohamed, Orife, Wibowo, 2002; Neary, 2012; Weber & Silverman, 2012). The legal defensibility of this method is dependent on the quality of the job description and the job-relevancy of the screening parameters (Mohamed et al., 2002). Job seekers may view these systems as unfair, especially if they have failed to utilize the preferred word combinations in their résumés.

Preliminary research has explored the perceptions of fairness associated with technology-based selection processes, including automated résumé screening systems. These results have indicated individuals consider the screening of résumés by humans to be more fair than when an automated screening and decision-making agent is used (Dineen, Noe, & Wang, 2004; Stidham, 2014). However, this hypothesis was assessed using undergraduate student participants. The movement away from convenient student samples and to those more representative of realistic applicants has been recommended by multiple researchers (Anderson, 2003; Hausknecht et al., 2004). However, the use of actual applicant samples is not always feasible. The current study attempts to bridge the gap between recent research and future recommendations by utilizing a participant sample of individuals with full-time work experience. Consistent with preliminary research, this study hypothesizes that human résumé screening will be viewed as more fair than automated screening systems.

*Hypothesis 3: Human résumé screening will be viewed as more fair than an automated screening system.*

### **Importance of Applicant Fairness**

The use of personal connections and automated screening systems as recruitment and selection tools may impact applicant's perceptions of fairness and subsequent attitudes towards the organization. Applicant reactions impact both the individual and the organization (Gilliland, 1993). The perceived fairness of selection procedures can impact a job seeker's intent to remain a viable applicant and continue in the selection process (Dineen et al., 2004). Applicants may also be more inclined to accept a job offer if they view the decision-making procedures as fair and job-related (Hausknecht et al., 2004). Applicant reactions also impact the organization's public image and reputation.

The attitudes held by applicants can impact their behavior and the image and reputation of the organization. Applicants with favorable reactions to selection procedures often have a positive perception of the organization and will perpetuate a positive view to others (Hausknecht et al., 2004). The resulting public and shared image of an organization can critically impact the desirability of employment at the particular organization. A poorly perceived organization may struggle to attract potential candidates (Hausknecht et al., 2004). The inability to attract and retain employees may limit the organization's ability to succeed. A poor organizational image may also be influenced by applicant reactions following an unfairly perceived procedure.

Negative applicant reactions can impact an organization by increasing their vulnerability to litigation. The reliance on both personal connections and screening

methods using keywords has faced scrutiny. Recruitment with heavy reliance on personal connections as a candidate source has resulted in numerous lawsuits, including *Nelson v. Wal-Mart Stores Inc.*, a case filed in the Eastern District of Arkansas, involving the multinational retail corporation that was settled in 2009 for 17.5 million dollars (Caulfield, 2009). The process of screening résumés using keyword searches has not been void of controversy. Screening software is only as valid and useful as the parameters used to search for candidates. Some have warned that keyword searches using words and phrases used primarily by the majority race or culture may exclude applicants from protected groups from consideration (Flynn, 2002). Due to the potential for negative organizational consequences that may result from poorly perceived processes, it is important to determine how applicants perceive the most commonly used recruitment and selection processes.

### **Influence of Selection Outcome**

An individual applies for a vacant position with the hopes of obtaining employment from that particular organization. Whether or not an individual receives a favorable outcome, such as a job offer, has great potential to influence individual attitudes and perceptions, including fairness perceptions (Bauer, Maertz, Dolen, & Campion, 1998; Gilliland, 1994; Ployhart & Ryan, 1998; Ryan & Ployhart, 2000). Research supports a relationship between selection process qualities, the resulting selection outcome, and the perceived fairness associated with the selection decision. As expected, individuals who receive a favorable outcome, such as a job offer, tend to perceive the process used to be fairer than those who received an unfavorable outcome

(Gilliland, 1994, Ployhart & Ryan, 1998). Those who receive an unfavorable outcome, such as a rejection, may perceive the process used to be less fair than those who received a favorable outcome (Gilliland, 1994). This may be due to an individual's focus on obtaining employment and less care given to the process a company uses when the individual achieves that goal, however, if employment is not obtained, the focus may shift to the underlying reason. Gilliland (1993) proposed that when the chance of an individual obtaining employment diminishes due to job-irrelevant factors, the resulting selection outcome may be seen as less fair. For example, if an applicant has a smaller chance of obtaining a job offer in comparison to another qualified individual simply because the other individual has an irrelevant personal quality, the selection outcome would be seen as less fair by the disadvantaged applicant. Irrelevant qualities may include gender or race, and in the context of this study, may include screening system type or strength of personal connections. The selection processes and employment outcomes have the potential to impact perceptions of fairness, and as a result, all of these variables are considered in the current study.

### **Current Study**

The current study was developed to determine applicant perceptions associated with the use of personal connections and automated screening systems during the recruitment and selection process and the impact of the employment outcome. The following hypotheses and research questions will be evaluated in this study.

## **Hypotheses and Research Questions**

*Hypothesis 1:* In general, individuals will view personal connections as an unfair advantage to obtaining employment.

*Hypothesis 2:* Extroverted individuals will perceive the advantages associated with personal connections during the selection process as more fair than introverted individuals.

*Hypothesis 3:* Human résumé screening will be viewed as more fair than an automated screening system.

*Research Question 1:* Will the perceptions of fairness associated with automated screening systems differ for extroverted and introverted individuals?

*Research Question 2:* Will individuals view the process of personal connections providing advantages to candidates within an automated screening system as fair?

*Research Question 3:* Is it fairer to use personal connections when an individual's application is being assessed by an automated screening system rather than a human screener?

*Research Question 4:* Will the outcome of the fictional applicant's job search impact fairness perceptions?

## CHAPTER TWO: METHODS

### Design

The current study used a 2 x 3 between-subjects and one within subjects factor factorial research design. Three independent variables: type of screening system, strength of personal connections, and employment outcome, were manipulated in the study. The dependent variable, perceived fairness, was assessed before and after outcome of the hiring process was known. A covariate variable, extroversion, was also measured in the study. Supplemental participant information, such as employment history, social comfort and networking attitudes, and demographics were collected to assess any potential relationships. Additionally, comprehension and manipulation checks were administered throughout the survey to ensure participants understood the material and attended to the information provided in the study.

The first independent variable, screening system type, reflects the method used to review résumé content to determine applicant eligibility. Screening system type had two levels; human screening and automatic screening. A human screening system was defined as the direct evaluation of résumé content by an organizational employee, typically an internal recruiter. An automated screening system was in reference to the use of a computer system to evaluate résumé content for the presence of keywords and phrases. The second independent variable, strength of personal connections, was in reference to the ability of an individual's personal network to provide assistance during a job search. The three levels of this variable each represented a varying degree of usefulness for a job search. The three levels included no personal connections, weak personal connections,

and strong personal connections. A lack of personal connections reflected applicants who did not have any individuals within their personal network to assist during a job search. A weak connection reflected job seekers who had personal connections with limited helpfulness. An example of a weak connection was a relationship with an employee who is limited to a particular location or department, which may or may not be fruitful for a job seeker. Strong personal connections represent connections with an increased probability of being useful during a job search, compared to weak connections. An example of a strong personal connection was a job seeker who had a relationship with an employee involved in the hiring process or within a department currently hiring. The third and final variable contained the outcome of a fictional employment search. This variable was used to indicate whether or not a job seeker received a job offer.

### **Participants**

Data was collected from 430 participants. However, inclusion was limited to those who correctly answered a single item, “How do automated screening systems sort résumés?” Analyses conducted on all attention check items indicated a correct response to this item represented an appropriate level of comprehension of the study variables and differentiated participants who were attentive throughout the study. This excluded the data from 48 participants. After exclusions for inattentiveness, a final sample of 382 participants was included in this study, all of whom were recruited through a paid online service, Mechanical Turk. Participants were limited to those currently in the United States based on the assumption that individuals with local work experience would be more likely to have engaged in or be familiar with the job search experience and methods

included in the study. Of the 380 participants who provided demographic information, 72% ( $n = 276$ ) were female and 27.2% ( $n = 104$ ) were male. Approximately half of the participants fell in the 25-30 years old ( $n = 102$ ) and 31-40 years old ( $n = 98$ ) age groups. Almost all participants had held a full-time job at some point in their employment history (92%). Additionally, almost half of participants were currently employed in job with a 40 hour work week (48%). All demographic information collected is displayed in Appendix B.

## **Measures**

### **Manipulated Scenarios**

The independent variables were manipulated using scenarios representing various situations a fictional job seeker faced during their job search. Preceding the scenarios was a thorough introduction and explanation of the screening system type and personal connection variables. These introductions served to adequately inform the participant of the upcoming content and assess their basic understanding of the variables. A series of questions followed each introduction to evaluate the comprehension of each introduction. The results of the comprehension items were used to exclude individuals producing inattentive responses.

The manipulated scenarios containing the independent variables were presented following the introductory paragraphs. These scenarios were created by combining one level of each independent variable. For example, a fictional job seeker applied for employment through one screening system type (automated or human), assessed the potential of their personal network (none, weak, or strong personal connections), and was

informed of the outcome of their job search (job offer or rejection). Twelve scenarios resulted from the crossing of these variables. Participants only viewed one scenario. The scenario was presented in two parts. The first section of the scenario featured the screening system type used by the company and the fictional job seeker's strength of personal connections. Following the presentation of the fairness measure, the outcome of the fictional job seeker's job search (job offer or rejection) was provided. The fairness measure was then presented for a second time.

### **Fairness**

A measure assessing perceived fairness was created specifically for this study to evaluate participant's perceptions of fairness related to screening system type and the use of personal connections based on a particular scenario. This measure assessed the perceived fairness and acceptability of the processes used by both the company and applicant using a five-point scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The fairness scale contained five items total, four regarding the fairness of the company and applicant processes, and one overall fairness evaluation of the processes contained in the scenario. The items were presented in an effort to prompt participants to consider all parts of the scenario before providing their perception of the overall fairness of the situation. As previously mentioned, the fairness measure was administered prior and following the presentation of the employment outcome.

### **Supplemental Information and Demographics**

Supplemental information regarding personal demographics, employment history, and networking attitudes were presented after the scenarios. Demographic items included

age and gender. Employment history included multiple items assessing the types of jobs held and the average weekly hours worked by participants, both currently and in the past. Additionally, previous job search methods and actions were assessed. Items covering personal opinions and comfort levels associated with various networking and socialization behaviors were also presented.

### **Personality Measure**

A scale hosted by the International Personality Item Pool (Goldberg, et al., 2006) was used to measure major personality dimensions. Participants were presented the full scale measuring all five personality dimensions (e.g., extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism). All items on this measure were randomized to avoid grouping by factor and measured using a five point scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. Some items were reverse coded. The main purpose of using this measure was to assess the covariate variable, extroversion. The remaining dimensions were included in exploratory analyses to identify any relationships between the other personality dimensions and networking behaviors. The five factors on the scale have an average reliability of  $r = .89$ ; the extroversion scale has a reliability of  $r = .91$ .

### **Procedure**

The current study was created using an online platform, Qualtrics and administered through Mechanical Turk, a paid online service. All participants viewed introductory paragraphs to the independent variables, highlighting the background and importance of each. Next, Participants were randomly assigned to one of twelve groups;

each group viewed a scenario with varying levels of the independent variables. The distribution of participants among the scenarios is presented in Table 1. Participants rated their perceptions of fairness following the manipulated scenario and again following the employment outcome associated with that scenario. Finally, participants were presented supplemental and demographic questions prior to the personality measure. All survey content is presented in Appendix A. Following the survey content, participants were thanked for their participation and provided relevant researcher contact information.

Table 1  
*Participant Distribution across Scenarios*

	Frequency	Percentage
Scenario 1	30	7.9
Scenario 2	33	8.6
Scenario 3	25	6.5
Scenario 4	35	9.2
Scenario 5	30	7.9
Scenario 6	33	8.6
Scenario 7	32	8.4
Scenario 8	35	9.2
Scenario 9	32	8.4
Scenario 10	33	8.6
Scenario 11	31	8.1
Scenario 12	33	8.6
Total	382	100.0

## CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

### Introduction to Analyses

Type of screening system (human, automated), strength of personal connection (none, weak, strong), and employment outcome (job offer, rejection) were used to predict perceptions of fairness. A familywise alpha of .05 was used for all analyses, unless indicated otherwise. Fairness perceptions were measured twice. The first measurement was administered following the manipulated scenario, but prior to knowledge of the employment outcome – whether the fictional applicant received a job offer or a rejection. The second administration of the fairness measure was presented after participants learned of the employment outcome. These two measurements were used to evaluate the impact of employment outcome may have on the fairness associated with the use of screening systems and personal connections.

Data was collected from 430 participants. However, inclusion was limited to those who correctly answered a single item, “How do automated screening systems sort résumés?” as it was considered to represent an appropriate level of comprehension and attentiveness to the study variables. This excluded the data from 48 participants.

### Pre-Employment Outcome

The dependent variable used to evaluate general fairness perceptions prior to knowledge of employment outcome was a single item, “In general, the processes used were fair”. This item was administered following other items intended to assess fairness perceptions regarding company processes and applicant behaviors; as a result, it was

assumed that participants had fully evaluated the content of the manipulated scenario before making a judgment to the overall fairness of the processes involved.

### **Main Hypotheses**

A 2 x 3 ANOVA was conducted to determine the level of fairness associated with screening system type and personal connection strength when the employment outcome was known. Descriptive statistics for initial fairness reactions are contained in Table 2. The interaction between screening system type and personal connection strength was used to answer the research questions, “*Will individuals view the process of personal connections providing advantages to candidates within an automated screening system as fair?*” and “*Is it fairer to use personal connections when an individual’s application is being assessed by an automated screening system rather than a human screener?*”

There was not a significant interaction between the type of screening system and strength of personal connections. These findings indicate that participants did not view the use of personal connections as more or less fair based on the type of screening system used. The main effect test of personal connections was used to evaluate Hypothesis 1 – “*In general, individuals will view personal connections as an unfair advantage to obtaining employment.*” In support of this hypothesis, strength of personal connections was a predictor of general fairness perceptions,  $F(2, 376) = 11.04, p < .001, \omega^2 = .05$ . Sidak comparisons indicated the use of strong personal connections was considered less fair than not using connections or utilizing weak connections. The main effect test of screening system type was used to evaluate Hypothesis 3 – “*Human résumé screening*

*will be viewed as more fair than an automated screening system.”* Screening system type did not influence fairness perceptions.

Table 2  
*Fairness Rating (Pre-Employment Outcome) by Personal Connections and Screening System*

Personal Connections	Screening System	N	General Fairness		
			Mean	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
None	Automated	62	3.92	3.71	4.13
	Human	68	4.09	3.89	4.28
Weak	Automated	68	3.91	3.72	4.11
	Human	61	3.95	3.74	4.16
Strong	Automated	57	3.60	3.38	3.81
	Human	66	3.50	3.30	3.70
		Automated	187		
		Human	195		
Total		382			

A 2 x 3 ANCOVA was conducted to determine if perceptions of fairness related to the use screening systems and personal connections differed by level of extroversion. See Table 3 for results of the ANCOVA. The interaction between personal connection strength and screening system type was nonsignificant. The main effect test of personal connections with consideration of an extroversion covariate was used to evaluate Hypothesis 2 – “*Extroverted individuals will perceive the advantages associated with personal connections during the selection process as more fair than introverted individuals.*” Fairness perceptions differed by strength of personal connections but were not influenced by extroversion,  $F(2, 375) = 10.91, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .06$ . Hypothesis 2 was

not supported. Sidak pairwise comparisons on the adjusted means indicated that when controlling for extroversion, the use of strong personal connections was once again considered less fair than when none or weak connections were used. The main effect for screening system type was used to evaluate the research question, ***“Will the perceptions of fairness associated with automated screening systems differ for extroverted and introverted individuals?”*** The level of fairness associated with screening type did not differ and was not influenced by extroversion level.

Table 3

*ANCOVA Results for Fairness Ratings by Screening System, Personal Connection, and Extroversion*

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Extroversion	0.15	1	0.15	0.22
Screening System	0.14	1	0.14	0.20
Personal Connections	14.80	2	7.40	10.91*
Screening System x Personal Connection	1.10	2	0.55	0.81
Error	254.46	375	0.68	

\* $p < .05$

*Note:* The General Fairness measurement was administered pre-knowledge of employment outcome.

### **Post-Employment Outcome**

A paired samples t-test was conducted to assess the question, ***“Will the outcome of the fictional applicant’s job search impact fairness perceptions?”*** The results

indicated that as a group, general fairness perceptions were similar before and after the results of the job search were known.

The major hypotheses of this study were reexamined to evaluate how knowledge of a job seeker's employment outcome may impact the perceptions of fairness related to the use of screening systems and personal connections. The single item used as the dependent variable was again, "In general, the processes used were fair." but was administered after knowledge of the employment outcome. A 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the impact of employment outcome on fairness perceptions. See Table 4 for descriptive statistics. As before, the strength of personal connections predicted fairness perceptions,  $F(2, 370) = 3.68, p = .003, \omega^2 = .01$ . However, this time the interaction between employment outcome and personal connections was also significant,  $F(2, 370) = 4.00, MSE = 0.61, p < .001, \omega^2 = .02$ . Participants considered situations to be less fair when an applicant received a job offer after using strong connections compared to when applicants did not use connections or they were of weak strength. See Figure 1.

Table 4  
*Fairness Rating (Post-Employment Outcome) by Personal Connections and Screening System*

<i>M (SD)</i>	Rejection		Job Offer	
	Automated	Human	Automated	Human
None	3.50 (0.88)	3.72 (0.84)	4.30 (0.60)	4.34 (0.64)
Weak	3.83 (0.62)	3.80 (0.60)	3.70 (0.73)	4.03 (0.72)
Strong	3.94 (0.91)	4.06 (0.61)	3.24 (0.97)	3.27 (1.13)

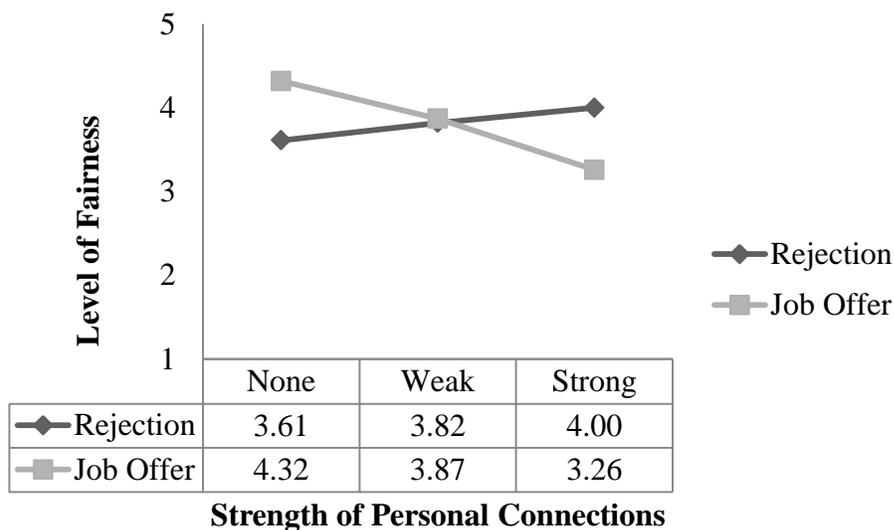


Figure 1. Fairness of Personal Connections and Employment Outcome

Note: Fairness measurement was administered post-employment outcome knowledge.

A 2 x 3 x 2 ANCOVA was also conducted to evaluate the impact of employment outcome on fairness perceptions when adjusting for participants' initial evaluation of fairness. See Table 5 for descriptive statistics and Table 6 for the ANCOVA results. The dependent variable used for this procedure was also the post-employment outcome measurement of the general fairness item, "Overall, this process is fair". This procedure controlled for participants' initial reaction to fairness perceptions, prior to knowledge of employment outcome. The covariate variable, initial fairness ratings impacted perceptions of fairness following knowledge of the employment outcome,  $F(1, 369) = 169.68, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .32$ . Most participants did not change their rating after the employment outcome was known. Personal connections, however, were no longer a predictor of fairness perceptions when controlling for initial reactions to fairness. The

interaction between employment outcome and personal connection strength was significant and not explained by initial fairness perceptions,  $F(2, 369)$ ,  $MSE = 0.42$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2_p = .11$ . These results indicate that when controlling for first impressions, fairness was influenced by the strength of personal connections when they result in a job offer. Situations in which applicants utilize strong and direct connections with hiring managers and then received a job offer were considered to be less fair than when an applicant received a job offer without utilizing any personal connections. See Figure 2.

Table 5  
*Fairness Ratings by Job Outcome and Personal Connections*

Variable		Rejection			Job Offer		
		Personal Connections			Personal Connections		
		None	Weak	Strong	None	Weak	Strong
General	<i>M</i>	3.62	3.82	4.00	4.32	3.86	3.26
Fairness	<i>SD</i>	0.86	0.61	0.77	0.62	0.74	1.05
	<i>Adj. M*</i>	3.61	3.76	4.08	4.14	3.81	3.49
	<i>Std. Error</i>	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.09
	<i>n</i>	65	66	65	65	63	58

\*General Fairness Adjusted for Initial General Fairness Ratings

*Note:* The General Fairness measurement was administered post-knowledge of employment outcome.

Table 6  
 ANCOVA Results for Fairness Ratings by Screening System, Personal Connections, and Pre-Employment Fairness Ratings

Sources	SS	df	MS	F
Fairness (Pre)	71.61	1	71.61	169.68*
Personal Connections	0.66	2	0.33	0.78
Screening Systems	1.01	1	1.01	2.39
Job Outcome	0.00	1	0.00	0.01
Personal Connections x Screening System	0.14	2	0.07	0.17
Personal Connection x Job Outcome	19.93	2	9.97	23.61*
Screening System x Job Outcome	0.00	1	0.00	0.00
Personal Connection x Screening System x Job Outcome	0.31	2	0.15	0.36
Error	155.73	369	0.42	

\* $p < .05$

Note: The Fairness dependent variable was administered post-knowledge of employment outcome.

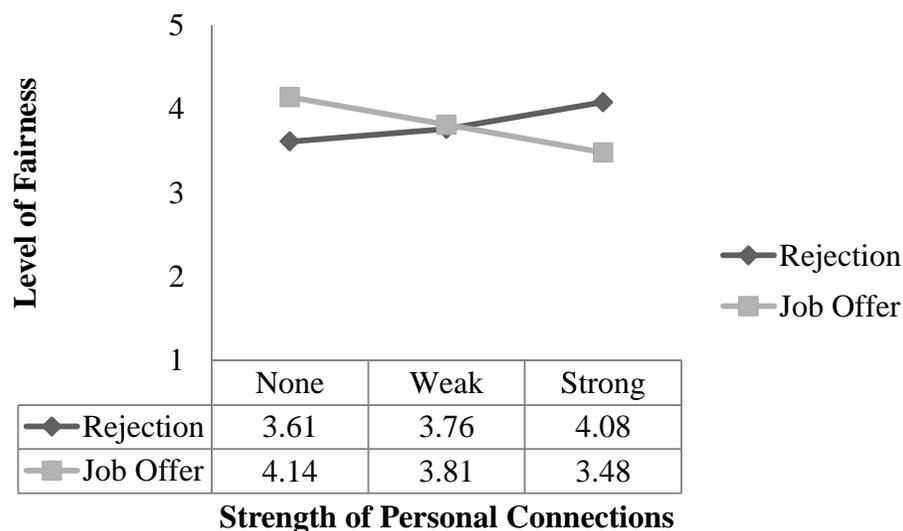


Figure 2. Fairness of Personal Connections and Employment Outcome with Adjustment for Initial Fairness Ratings

### **Participant Correlations**

Correlations between various supplemental questions regarding participant views, opinions, and characteristics were examined to further explain the study findings. An alpha of .01 was used. The fairness of the use of personal connections during a job search was moderately correlated with the fairness of personal connections providing an advantage over others during the job search ( $r = .59$ ). The fairness of personal connection use was significantly, but weakly, correlated with the expectation ( $r = .26$ ) and criticality ( $r = .25$ ) of the use of connections during a job search. However, viewing personal connections as a necessity or critical to a job search was not correlated with a participant's level of connectedness. Unsurprisingly, the more fair participants considered the use of personal connections, the less awkward they felt using these connections during a job search ( $r = -.45$ ). If participants viewed the use of personal connections as awkward, they were likely to be hesitant to rely on them during a job search ( $r = .63$ ).

## CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

### Screening System Type

Previous research has explored the fairness associated with various screening system types. These studies found human screening systems to be more fair than automated screening systems (Dineen, Noe, & Wang, 2004; Stidham, 2014). The findings of the current study were in contrast to what was expected based on this research. Instead, there was no difference in the fairness associated with automated and human screening systems. The lack of replication of previous research may be due to the research design and stimulus materials used in this study. Specifically, the materials used may not have emphasized screening systems in the same manner as previous research.

### Personal Connections

The current study also examined the fairness of the use of personal connections during a job search. The use of strong personal connections was consistently perceived as providing an unfair advantage to obtaining employment. The use of strong personal connections was considered less fair than when weaker or no connections were used to assist the job search. However, when asked directly, participants considered the use of personal connections during the job search to be fair even when they provide an advantage over other job seekers. Some participants also viewed the use of personal connections as expected and critical to a successful job search. However, it was considered least fair when the use of strong and direct connections to hiring decision-makers resulted in employment opportunities. This finding remained true even when taking into consideration the initial reactions to the use of personal connections.

### **Impact of Employment Outcome**

Previous research has supported the influence that knowledge of a favorable outcome has on individual attitudes and perceptions, including perception of fairness (Bauer et al., 1998; Gilliland, 1994, Ployhart & Ryan, 1998, Ryan & Ployhart, 2000). Knowledge of the employment outcome impacted the fairness associated with specific applicant behaviors. It was considered unfair for a job seeker to be rewarded with employment opportunities as a result of using connections that were not equal among applicants. The results of the current study indicate that the most important factor in assessing fairness is whether the actions used provided an advantage to gaining employment.

### **Impact of Personality Type**

Previous research suggests individuals with higher levels of extroversion are comfortable with utilizing social relationships to seek employment opportunities (Wanberg et al., 2000). In contrast, less extroverted individuals may fail or be reluctant to participate in the behaviors necessary to develop a useful network of personal connections (de Janasz & Forret, 2008). As a result, the current study anticipated extroverted individuals would perceive the use of personal connections and screening systems differently from introverted individuals. However, no differences in perceptions of fairness were found between introverted and extroverted individuals. The lack of replication of previous research may be a result of the materials used in the current study. The scenarios used to examine fairness did not detail the creation of connections and

building of one's network. A study detailing socialization behaviors and requirements in more detail may illustrate a difference between personality types.

### **Implications**

The results of the current study encourage companies to review and reflect upon the perceptions of their selection processes. Specifically, if companies give preference to applicants based on the relationships within their personal network, they should consider how this process is viewed by the public. The advantage provided to some, who know the right people, and as a result, become employed, may be viewed poorly by those who do not have as useful connections. This research emphasizes the need for companies to be mindful of the public perceptions of their employment processes. If the employment advantages provided to some job seekers unequally impacts some applicant groups, a poor company reputation and even legal ramifications may result.

### **Limitations**

The results of two major hypotheses within this study were in contrast to what was expected based on previous research. It is possible that the design of this study did not represent all variables with similar emphasis as in previous research. With multiple variables to consider in this study, it is possible that the stimulus materials did not wholly represent the various conditions or their impact was deemphasized. As a result, participants may not have evaluated all variables in a similar manner to past research.

Next, the research design was limiting by requiring participants to evaluate only a single scenario. Participants did not have to reevaluate their perceptions using new information or by comparing situations. This design may have prevented participants

from fully considering the impact of the processes contained within the scenario. Also, the design of the study was hypothetical. Hausknecht et al. (2004) identify hypothetical evaluation of scenarios as problematic because participants do not first-hand experience the situation or interact with the process and procedures. With the lack of firsthand experience, participants may not have fully comprehended or examined the implications of the scenario presented in order to experience the reactions expected.

Finally, a single measure of fairness was used to evaluate the perceptions associated with the manipulated scenarios. It is possible that the single measure used did not fully represent the construct. Empirical support for this study would be enhanced if more established measures had been utilized.

The participants used in this study present another limitation. Participants were recruited from a paid, online service. While this sampling is different from the typical student convenience sample, it is still imperfect. Participants were compensated for their completion of the survey used in this study. As a result, participants may have been driven to collect payments from multiple providers and may have spent less time tending to the stimulus materials in order to quickly complete the study.

### **Future Research**

Future research should continue to explore fairness perceptions regarding the job search with working and professional populations. Research should reexamine and expand upon the hypotheses and research questions contained in this study by rewriting stimulus materials or requiring the evaluation of multiple manipulated scenarios. Future research should also expand upon the fairness associated with the job search activities

contained in this study by utilizing real or recent applicants or the recently unemployed. Finally, due to the unexpected lack of support for previous research involving student populations, future research should examine a direct comparison of student and working participant groups.

### **Conclusion**

The current study examined fairness perceptions regarding the use of automated and human-driven résumé screening systems and applicants' use of personal connections to influence the employment process. In contrast to previous research, no difference in fairness perceptions was found between the use of automated and human résumé screening systems. The use of strong personal connections that result in employment opportunities was considered less fair than when weaker connections were used and employment advantages were not provided. Although participants considered the use of strong personal connections to be less fair, 70% of participants had used a personal connection to help them obtain employment.

The results of the current study provide valuable information to companies regarding their employment process. If companies allow employment opportunity advantages to be provided to those with personal connections within the company, they should consider how this process is viewed by applicants. Companies should maintain consistency within their hiring practices. An employment process that seemingly provides some individuals or groups an unfair advantage may produce negative public and applicant perceptions of the company and its hiring process.

The current study provides an introduction to a new perspective of applicant research by evaluating the fairness associated with two integrated employment processes and assessing the impact of resulting employment opportunities. This research provides a starting point for further research and outlines a number of revisions and directions to consider in the future.

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APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Survey Content

#### Informed Consent Middle Tennessee State University

**Title:** *Finding the job: Is it who you know, what you know, or how you apply?*

**Purpose:** The current study was developed to determine applicant perceptions of fairness associated with the use of personal connections and screening systems during the employment process.

**Procedures:** Participants will be asked to review information regarding the use of personal connections and screening systems and their impact on the employment process. Participants will be presented a fictional scenario featuring a job seeker and their experiences searching for employment. Participants will be asked to evaluate the fairness of the situations presented. Participants will also be asked to provide information regarding their personal experiences and preferences. The current study is anticipated to require 30-45 minutes for completion.

**Risks/Benefits:** No risk or discomfort is anticipated from this study. Majority of this study involves the evaluation of fictional scenarios and the provision of general opinions or preferences. The information gathered from this study will provide valuable guidance to organizations related to the employment processes used to recruit and select future employees.

**Confidentiality:** Minimal personal information will be collected. All data will be stored on the faculty advisor's computer for a minimum of three years following study completion.

Contact Information: Samantha Moline | Sam.Moline@mtsu.edu or Dr. Van Hein | judith.vanhein@mtsu.edu

Participating in this project is voluntary, and refusal to participate or withdrawing from participation at any time during the project will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private but total privacy cannot be promised, for example, your information may be shared with the Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board.

In the event of questions or difficulties of any kind during or following participation, you may contact the Principal Investigator as indicated above.

For additional information about giving consent or your rights as a participant in this study, please feel free to contact the MTSU Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918. I have read the above information and my questions have been answered satisfactorily by project staff. I believe I understand the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study and give my informed and free consent to be a participant.

By proceeding to the next page, you are indicating agreement with the above statement.

## Independent Variable Introductions

### Screening System Introduction

#### Instructions:

The following sections contain information about various aspects of searching for a job. Please read each section carefully and answer the questions that follow.

After job seekers apply for job openings by submitting their application and résumé, the company must review the content of these materials to determine if the job seeker is qualified. This screening process identifies highly qualified job seekers and removes less qualified job seekers from the selection process. Companies may use various methods to review and screen résumés and applications. In some organizations, a recruiter will have the responsibility of manually reviewing application materials to determine applicant eligibility for vacant positions. The recruiter can then focus their efforts on qualified applicants and remove less qualified applicants from consideration.

Alternatively, companies may receive too many résumés from interested job seekers to review their applications manually. A large percentage of these companies utilize automated screening systems to sort résumés and applications into those who are more or less qualified. These systems will store relevant information and eliminate the need for manual evaluation of applicant information. Using this stored information, a computer system can identify potential candidates based on the existence of particular keywords and phrases within their résumé.

1. The screening process
  - a. Removes qualified job seekers
  - b. Shields the company from bad hires
  - c. Removes unqualified job seekers\*
  - d. Identifies who to hire
  
2. What additional screening method do automated screening systems perform?
  - a. The computer can sort through the applicant information provided.\*
  - b. These systems don't perform screening.
  - c. These systems screen out résumés with errors.
  
3. How do automated screening systems sort résumés?
  - a. By using a complex equation
  - b. By reading each line of the résumé
  - c. By reviewing an applicant's past work and experiences
  - d. By searching for keywords and phrases\*

## Personal Connections Introduction

Many job seekers consider finding a job to be much easier when they have a relationship or connection with an employee who currently works for a company that is hiring. These personal connections may be based on social relationships, such as friends or family, or professional relationships, such as former work colleagues, members of professional organizations, or professionals introduced through networking opportunities. The relationships a job seeker has may vary in their usefulness and helpfulness during a job search. Some relationships may be more helpful in assisting an individual to locate or obtain a job than others.

Various types of personal connections are featured below.

- Job seekers may have limited personal connections if they have faced long-term unemployment, are reluctant to network, are transitioning career fields, or are new to the workforce (e.g., recent college graduates).
- Job seekers may have personal connections that are limited to specific companies, industries, or locations.
- Job seekers may have a wide and diverse set of personal and professional connections.

1. Personal connections may consist of
 

a. Friends	e. A and C
b. Former work colleagues	f. C and D
c. Family	g. All of the Above*
d. Professional connections	
  
2. Which outcome of personal connections was missing from the description above?
  - a. They may help a job seeker find a job opportunity
  - b. They may connect a job seeker to other individuals
  - c. They guarantee a job seeker gets a job\*
  - d. They may be able to communicate with other employees
  
3. Select the answer beginning with the letter d.
  - a. Answer
  - b. Posting
  - c. Screening
  - d. Description\*
  
4. Identify which type of personal connection was not previously discussed.
  - a. Job seekers may have no useful personal connections for their job search.
  - b. Job seekers may have numerous and diverse personal connections.
  - c. Job seekers may only have informal connections, such as family members.\*
  - d. Job seekers may have personal connections limited to a particular industry.

## **Manipulated Scenarios**

### **Instructions:**

The following scenario details the job search experience of an individual. Please read the situation and consider the prompts that follow. You will be asked to consider how fair you believe the situation is for the job seeker. Please choose the rating that best reflects your level of agreement.

### Scenario 1 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World. The website instructed him to attach a copy of his résumé to the application and also provide the plain text of his résumé in a textbox. By including the plain text of his résumé, a computer system can search through the content of Carl's résumé for the presence of keywords related to the open position. The computer system can then notify the company if Carl has included specific qualifications in his résumé.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl didn't know anyone working at Marty World.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 1 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World through a computerized system. He also reached out to the people in his network and found he didn't know anyone at Marty world.

Carl was later informed that he received the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

### Scenario 2 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World. The website instructed him to attach a copy of his résumé to the application and also provide the plain text of his résumé in a textbox. By including the plain text of his résumé, a computer system can search through the content of Carl's résumé for the presence of keywords related to the open position. The computer system can then notify the company if Carl has included specific qualifications in his résumé.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring. Carl reached out to Susan to see if she could help his résumé get noticed by the department hiring.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 2 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World through a computerized system. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring.

Carl was later informed that he received the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

### Scenario 3 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World. The website instructed him to attach a copy of his résumé to the application and also provide the plain text of his résumé in a textbox. By including the plain text of his résumé, a computer system can search through the content of Carl's résumé for the presence of keywords related to the open position. The computer system can then notify the company if Carl has included specific qualifications in his résumé.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, is the hiring manager at Marty World and tells Carl that she will make sure that his résumé is reviewed and considered.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 3 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World through a computerized system. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague is the hiring manager at Marty World and would make sure his résumé would be reviewed and considered.

Carl was later informed that he received the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

**Scenario 4 – Part 1**

Carl applied for a management position at Marty World. He sent his résumé directly to a recruiter at Marty World. The recruiter responded to Carl's submission by informing him that they would personally review his résumé and contact him soon.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl didn't know anyone working at Marty World.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 4 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position at Marty World by sending his résumé directly to a recruiter. He also reached out to the people in his network and found he didn't know anyone at Marty world.

Carl was later informed that he received the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

### Scenario 5 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position at Marty World. He sent his résumé directly to a recruiter at Marty World. The recruiter responded to Carl's submission by informing him that they would personally review his résumé and contact him soon.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring. Carl reached out to Susan to see if she could help get his résumé noticed by the department hiring.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 5 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position at Marty World by sending his résumé directly to a recruiter. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring.

Carl was later informed that he received the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

**Scenario 6 – Part 1**

Carl applied for a management position at Marty World. He sent his résumé directly to a recruiter at Marty World. The recruiter responded to Carl's submission by informing him that they would personally review his résumé and contact him soon.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, is the hiring manager at Marty World and tells Carl that she will make sure that his résumé is reviewed and considered.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 6 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position at Marty World by sending his résumé directly to a recruiter. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague is the hiring manager at Marty World and would make sure his résumé would be reviewed and considered.

Carl was later informed that he received the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

### Scenario 7 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World. The website instructed him to attach a copy of his résumé to the application and also provide the plain text of his résumé in a textbox. By including the plain text of his résumé, a computer system can search through the content of Carl's résumé for the presence of keywords related to the open position. The computer system can then notify the company if Carl has included specific qualifications in his résumé.

After Carl applied, he reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl didn't know anyone working at Marty World.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 7 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World through a computerized system. He also reached out to the people in his network and found he didn't know anyone at Marty world.

Carl was later informed that he did not receive the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

### Scenario 8 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World. The website instructed him to attach a copy of his résumé to the application and also provide the plain text of his résumé in a textbox. By including the plain text of his résumé, a computer system can search through the content of Carl's résumé for the presence of keywords related to the open position. The computer system can then notify the company if Carl has included specific qualifications in his résumé.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring. Carl reached out to Susan to see if she could help his résumé get noticed by the department hiring.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 8 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World through a computerized system. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring.

Carl was later informed that he did not receive the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

### Scenario 9 – Part 1

Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World. The website instructed him to attach a copy of his résumé to the application and also provide the plain text of his résumé in a textbox. By including the plain text of his résumé, a computer system can search through the content of Carl's résumé for the presence of keywords related to the open position. The computer system can then notify the company if Carl has included specific qualifications in his résumé.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, is the hiring manager at Marty World and tells Carl that she will make sure that his résumé is reviewed and considered.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 9 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position online at Marty World through a computerized system. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague is the hiring manager at Marty World and would make sure his résumé would be reviewed and considered.

Carl was later informed that he did not receive the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

**Scenario 10 – Part 1**

Carl applied for a management position at Marty World. He sent his résumé directly to a recruiter at Marty World. The recruiter responded to Carl's submission by informing him that they would personally review his résumé and contact him soon. After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl didn't know anyone working at Marty World.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 10 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position at Marty World by sending his résumé directly to a recruiter. He also reached out to the people in his network and found he didn't know anyone at Marty world.

Carl was later informed that he did not receive the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

**Scenario 11 – Part 1**

Carl applied for a management position at Marty World. He sent his résumé directly to a recruiter at Marty World. The recruiter responded to Carl's submission by informing him that they would personally review his résumé and contact him soon.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring. Carl reached out to Susan to see if she could help get his résumé noticed by the department hiring.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 11 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position at Marty World by sending his résumé directly to a recruiter. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague works at Marty World but not in the department that is hiring.

Carl was later informed that he did not receive the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

**Scenario 12 – Part 1**

Carl applied for a management position at Marty World. He sent his résumé directly to a recruiter at Marty World. The recruiter responded to Carl's submission by informing him that they would personally review his résumé and contact him soon.

After he applied, Carl reached out to the people in his network to see if he knew of anyone working at Marty World to help get his résumé noticed. Carl's former work colleague, Susan, is the hiring manager at Marty World and tells Carl that she will make sure that his résumé is reviewed and considered.

Rate your level of agreement with the statements below in relation to the scenario above.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. The strength of the relationship between Carl and his connection is...
  - a. Strong
  - b. Weak
  - c. Carl does not have any connections.

**Scenario 12 – Part 2**

Please recall that Carl applied for a management position at Marty World by sending his résumé directly to a recruiter. He also reached out to the people in his network and found that his former colleague is the hiring manager at Marty World and would make sure his résumé would be reviewed and considered.

Carl was later informed that he did not receive the job.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The company acted fairly in this situation.					
The company's process is unbiased					
Carl acted fairly in this situation.					
Carl's behavior in this situation is acceptable.					
In general, the processes used were fair.					

1. Did Carl get the job at Marty World?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. Who did Carl know at Marty World?
  - a. He didn't know anyone
  - b. Someone who works at Marty World but not in the department hiring
  - c. The hiring manager at Marty World

## Supplemental Information

### Instructions:

Please read the following questions and indicate your level of agreement.

1. A recruiter manually reviews all incoming applications and résumés. They consider the experience and qualifications contained in each résumé. After evaluating the qualifications of the applicants, the recruiter recommends those who are eligible for an interview to the hiring manager. I believe that this practice is fair.
  - a. Strongly Disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Agree
  - e. Strongly Agree
  
2. A company uses an automated screening system to identify résumés containing keywords and phrases commonly associated with the vacant position. The system identifies the résumés containing keywords as eligible for interview. These applicants are recommended to the hiring manager for interview. I believe that this practice is fair.
  - a. Strongly Disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Neutral
  - d. Agree
  - e. Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
It is fair to use personal connections during a job search.					
It is fair for companies to use automated résumé screening systems.					
It is fair for recruiters to manually screen résumés.					
It is fair for companies to use automated screening systems instead of manual screening by a recruiter.					
Respond by selecting disagree.					
When job seekers use their personal connections for an advantage during a job search, it is fair to other job seekers.					
I would work harder to find a connection at a company if I knew they were using an automated screening system.					

**Instructions:**

Please answer the following questions as they relate to you.

**History**

1. How many hours do you currently (or most recently) work during a typical week?
  - a. I don't work
  - b. 0-20 hours
  - c. 21-39 hours
  - d. 40 hours or more
2. Have you ever held a full-time (at least 40 hours a week) job?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
3. What statement best describes your current or most recent job?
  - a. Full-time, hourly
  - b. Full-time, salaried
  - c. Part-time, hourly
  - d. Temporary assignment
  - e. I don't know
  - f. I've never held a job
4. What methods do you consider most effective for locating employment opportunities or obtaining employment? Check all that apply.
  - a. Friends and/or family
  - b. Employee referrals (current employees recommend you for employment)
  - c. Professional contacts (reaching out to former colleagues, etc.)
  - d. Networking (Attending events, meeting people, common interest/career groups, LinkedIn)
  - e. Newspaper postings
  - f. Online job boards
  - g. Company websites
  - h. Employment agencies
  - i. Recruiter (contacting or being contacted by company recruiters)
  - j. Direct application to company
5. During previous job searches, how often have you used personal connections to help you get a job?
  - a. Most of the time
  - b. A few times
  - c. Once
  - d. Never
  - e. I don't know
6. Have you ever referred someone for a job?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

7. Approximately how many times have you referred someone for a job?
  - a. Many times
  - b. A few times
  - c. Once
  - d. Never
  - e. I don't know
8. Please choose the category that best describes the relationship you typically have had with those you have referred for employment.
  - a. Former work colleagues
  - b. Members of professional organizations
  - c. Professional acquaintances
  - d. Friends
  - e. Family
  - f. Other
9. Please indicate which best describes you.
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. I decline to share.
10. Please indicate which group contains your age.
  - a. 18-24
  - b. 25-30
  - c. 31-40
  - d. 41-49
  - e. 50+

**Personal Connections**

Social media sites include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.

1. How many social media sites do you use on a regular basis?
2. Check all of the social media sites that you use.
  - a. Facebook
  - b. Twitter
  - c. LinkedIn
  - d. Instagram
  - e. Snapchat
  - f. Pinterest
  - g. Other
3. How often do you use social media sites?
  - a. Very often
  - b. Often
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
4. How often have you used social media sites during past job searches?
  - a. Very often
  - b. Often
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
5. Approximately how friends do you have on social media sites?
  - a. Over 500
  - b. 300-499
  - c. 100-299
  - d. 51-99
  - e. 0-50
  - f. I don't use social media sites.
  - g. I don't know.
6. How many LinkedIn connections do you have?
  - a. Over 500
  - b. 300-499
  - c. 100-299
  - d. 51-99
  - e. 0-50
  - f. I don't use social media sites.
  - g. I don't know.
7. How connected would you consider yourself to be with individuals who could assist you during a job search?
  - a. Highly connected
  - b. Moderately connected
  - c. A little connected
  - d. Not very connected

### Additional Questions

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel awkward using personal connections to find or obtain employment					
I am comfortable with socializing to make connections.					
I consider myself to be an introvert.					
It is necessary to use personal connections to find or obtain employment.					
I am uncomfortable networking with others.					
Respond by selecting agree.					
It is expected that job seekers will use personal connections to find employment.					
I consider myself to be an extrovert.					
Personal connections are critical to obtaining employment.					
I am hesitant to rely on my connections to find a job.					
Using personal connections to obtain an advantage over other candidates during the hiring process is fair.					

### International Personality Item Pool 20-Item Scale

#### Instructions:

In the following section, there are phrases describing people's behaviors. Determine how accurately each statement describes you. Describe yourself as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Please read each statement carefully, and then choose the best response option.

#### Response Options:

1: Very Accurate; 2: Moderately Accurate; 3: Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate; 4: Moderately Inaccurate; 5: Very Inaccurate

#### Items:

1. Tend to vote for conservative political candidates.
2. Make demands on others.
3. Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
4. Follow through with my plans.
5. Believe that too much tax money goes to support artists.
6. Carry the conversation to a higher level.
7. Have little to say.
8. Have frequent mood swings.
9. Respect others.
10. Insult people.
11. Get stressed out easily.
12. Get back at others.
13. Finish what I start.
14. Know how to captivate people.
15. Believe that others have good intentions.
16. Don't put my mind on the task at hand.
17. Feel comfortable around people.
18. **I am in the United States. \*Accurate/Very Accurate\***
19. Am exacting in my work.
20. Feel comfortable with myself.
21. Make friends easily.
22. Have a vivid imagination.
23. Am often down in the dumps.
24. Do not like art.
25. Don't mind being the center of attention.
26. Avoid contacts with others.
27. Have a good word for everyone.
28. Am out for my own personal gain
29. Often feel blue.
30. Do things according to a plan.
31. Accept people as they are.
32. Hold a grudge.
33. Cut others to pieces.

34. Am not easily bothered by things.
35. Have a sharp tongue.
36. Keep others at a distance.
37. Am skilled in handling social situations.
38. Do just enough work to get by.
39. Enjoy wild flights of fantasy.
40. Sympathize with others' feelings.
41. Leave things unfinished.
42. Tend to vote for liberal political candidates.
43. Am not interested in abstract ideas.
44. Don't like to draw attention to myself.
45. Would describe my experience as somewhat dull.
46. Warm up quickly to others.
47. Mess things up.
48. Cheer people up.
49. Have a rich vocabulary.
50. Don't see things through.
51. Rarely look for a deeper meaning in things.
52. Carry out my plans.
53. Waste my time.
54. Make people feel at ease.
55. Do not like poetry.
56. Fear for the worst.
57. Am not easily frustrated.
58. Make a mess of things.
59. Pay attention to details.
60. Am relaxed most of the time.
61. Believe that I am better than others.
62. Do not enjoy going to art museums.
63. Shirk my duties.
64. Worry about things
65. Am not interested in theoretical discussions.
66. Talk to a lot of different people at parties.
67. Find it difficult to approach others.
68. Remain calm under pressure.
69. Complete tasks successfully.
70. Believe in the importance of art.
71. Treat all people equally.
72. Start conversations.
73. **I am currently taking a survey. \*Accurate/Very Accurate\***
74. Get excited by new ideas.
75. Rarely get irritated.
76. Am concerned about others.
77. Make plans and stick to them.
78. Rarely lose my composure.

79. Dislike myself.
80. Am always prepared.
81. Get chores done right away.
82. Seldom feel blue.
83. Don't talk a lot.
84. Seldom get mad.
85. Am very pleased with myself.
86. Enjoy thinking about things.
87. Am easy to satisfy.
88. Keep in the background.
89. Contradict others.
90. Find it difficult to get down to work.
91. Retreat from others.
92. Am hard to get to know.
93. Can say things beautifully.
94. Am the life of the party.
95. Need a push to get started.
96. Feel threatened easily.
97. Suspect hidden motives in others.
98. Panic easily.
99. Avoid philosophical discussions.
100. Enjoy hearing new ideas.
101. Trust what people say.
102. Am filled with doubts about things.

## APPENDIX B

### Participant Information

#### *Gender*

	<i>n</i>	%
Female	276	72.3
Male	104	27.2
Total	380	99.0

#### *Age*

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
<u>Age</u>		
18-24	74	19.4
25-30	102	26.7
31-40	98	25.7
41-49	42	11.0
50+	66	17.3
Total	382	100.0

#### *Current Employment*

	<i>n</i>	%
0-20 hours	59	15.4
21-39 hours	81	21.2
40+ hours	185	48.4
Unemployed	57	14.9
Total	382	100.0

#### *Employment History*

Full-Time Job	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	351	91.9
No	31	8.1
	382	100.0

*Most Recent Job Type*

	<i>n</i>	%
Full-time, salaried	112	29.3
Full-time, hourly	150	39.3
Part-time, hourly	88	23.0
Temporary Assignment	24	6.3
Has never held a job	2	0.5
Uncertain	6	1.6
	382	100.0

## APPENDIX C

### IRB Approval Form

**IRB**  
**INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
 Office of Research Compliance,  
 010A Sam Ingram Building,  
 2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd  
 Murfreesboro, TN 37129



#### EXEMPT APPROVAL NOTICE

8/27/2015

Investigator(s): Samantha Moline  
 Department: Psychology  
 Investigator(s) Email: Sam.Moline@mtsu.edu  
 Protocol Title: "Finding the job: Is it who you know, what you know, or how your apply? "  
 Protocol ID: 16-1020

Dear Investigator(s),

The MTSU Institutional Review Board, or a representative of the IRB, has reviewed the research proposal identified above and this study has been designated to be EXEMPT.. The exemption is pursuant to 45 CFR 46.101(b) **(2) Educational Tests, Surveys, Interviews, or Observations**

The following changes to this protocol must be reported prior to implementation:

- Addition of new subject population or exclusion of currently approved demographics
- Addition/removal of investigators
- Addition of new procedures
- Other changes that may make this study to be no longer be considered exempt

The following changes do not have to be reported:

- Editorial/administrative revisions to the consent of other study documents
- Changes to the number of subjects from the original proposal

All research materials must be retained by the PI or the faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years after study completion. Subsequently, the researcher may destroy the data in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity. IRB reserves the right to modify, change or cancel the terms of this letter without prior notice. Be advised that IRB also reserves the right to inspect or audit your records if needed.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board  
 Middle Tennessee State University

NOTE: All necessary forms can be obtained from [www.mtsu.edu/irb](http://www.mtsu.edu/irb).