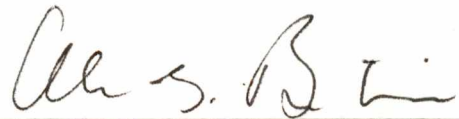


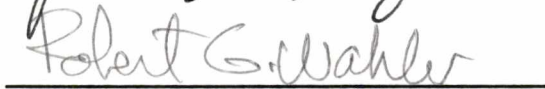
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Ann Siegrist Taylor entitled "Dual Career Couples and Geographic Transfer: Executives' Reactions to Commuter Marriage and Attitude Toward the Move." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.

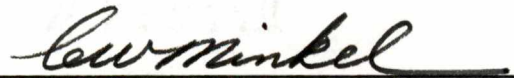


Alvin G. Burstein, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:



Accepted for the Council:



Vice Provost
and Dean of the Graduate School

DUAL CAREER COUPLES AND GEOGRAPHIC TRANSFER: EXECUTIVES'
REACTIONS TO COMMUTER MARRIAGE AND ATTITUDE
TOWARD THE MOVE

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Ann Siegrist Taylor
August 1986

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To my husband, Allen, whose support
has been invaluable.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to several individuals for their assistance over the course of this dissertation research. In particular I am indebted to Professors Alvin Burstein, John Lounsbury, Bob Wahler, and Priscilla White, who served as my chairperson and committee respectively. Al's encouragement enabled me to persevere with the project despite the demands of the third year curriculum; I am also appreciative of his guidance in my development as a clinical psychologist. To John I owe a debt of gratitude not only for his invaluable assistance in the conception and execution of this research, but also for his unrelenting efforts toward furthering my professional development. Both Bob and Priscilla stimulated my thinking about various aspects of the research, and provided much needed input. Without these individuals' consultation, criticism, and encouragement, these results would not have been possible.

I am indebted to the Staff of the Tennessee Executive Development Program, and particularly John Riblett, for permission to contact the program's alumni and for their assistance in so doing. I also wish to thank the 151 executives who took time out from their busy schedules to participate in this project. Obviously without their help this project would not have been possible.

Finally, I wish to thank the Psychology Department at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and particularly its Chairman, Professor Bill

Calhoun, for providing materials and services which alleviated the financial burden of this project.

ABSTRACT

The rise in the number of working couples has impacted the workplace in myriad ways. While the needs of working couples and companies often are at variance, perhaps the most difficult area to resolve is that of geographic transfer. Typically if a transfer is accepted, one spouse must give up present employment and search for opportunities at the new location. As such opportunities may be limited, a small, but growing number of couples have set up an arrangement often referred to as "commuter marriage." That is, they maintain separate households in two different locations, and reunite when schedules permit, typically on weekends. To date, no data exists on the employer's response to this pattern, and little information is available on what factors influence decisions concerning geographic transfers when working couples are involved. This study was undertaken to address these issues, and to expand the commuter marriage literature in the area of the workplace.

Four hundred thirty-four past participants in the Tennessee Executive Development Program were contacted by mail and were given a series of "in-basket" decision-making tasks to evaluate the impact of various manager and employee characteristics on hypothetical decisions involving the geographic transfer of employees. One hundred fifty-one executives agreed to participate in the study. The impact of managers' sex and relationship status (whether or not a member of a working couple) and employees' sex, relationship status (member of

a dual career, dual earner, or traditional couple), attitude toward the move (positive, ambivalent, or negative), and arrangement (both members of the couple move or the couple establishes a commuter marriage) on decision-making was investigated. Geographic transfers involving commuter marriages were predicted to be rated lower than those in which both members of the couple planned to relocate. Negative attitudes toward the move on the part of the couple were expected to result in lower ratings of the transfer. Further, it was predicted that moves involving dual career employees would be rated lower than those involving dual earner or traditional earners, and it was thought that transfers of female employees would be rated lower than those of males. Among the raters' characteristics, it was predicted that those with working spouses would evaluate the transfers of dual career employees more favorably than would raters who were unmarried or whose spouse was not employed, and that males and females would differ in their ratings.

Findings were in the predicted direction for arrangement, attitude toward the move, and employee relationship status, with the exception that transfers involving dual career employees were rated lower than those of traditional earners, but not than those involving dual earners. In contrast to the findings of previous studies, the employee's sex did not significantly affect ratings. The impact of manager sex could not be adequately assessed due to the small number of female managers in the sample; manager relationship status did not significantly affect ratings. A number of interaction effects were analyzed, and findings were discussed in terms of implications for future research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The rise in the labor force participation rate of women within recent years has been dramatic (Hicks, Hansen, & Christie, 1983). Women are joining the labor force in record numbers, profoundly impacting family life. The greatest increase in female labor force participation has occurred among married women (Quinlan & Shackelford, 1980), whose employment reached an all-time high in mid-1983, at 24.3 million (Klein, 1983). The increase in the number of married women in the workplace has contributed to a dramatic rise in the number of working couples. Indeed, by 1978 both partners were employed in over 50% of all married couples (Hayghe, 1981), a trend which has continued (Hayghe, 1983; Waldman, 1983). Koehn (1983) reports that the conventional nuclear family, consisting of a working father, non-working mother, and at least one child at home, comprised only 16% of all households in the United States.

In the last fifteen years, a growing body of research has focused on working couples, and, in particular, on a special type of dual-income couple, referred to as the "dual career couple." Characteristic of such couples is that each partner pursues a career, defined as a job which is highly salient personally, has a developmental sequence, and requires a high degree of commitment (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969). These couples are distinguished from those described as two-earner

or dual earner (in which each partner holds a job not involving such attributes) (Le Louarn & DeCotiis, 1983), and from traditional earner families, in which only the husband is employed (Hayghe, 1981).

Numerous articles have focused on the characteristics of dual career couples and on the stresses and rewards of such a relationship (e.g., Hester & Dickerson, 1981; Parker, Peltier, & Wolleat, 1981; Poloma, Pendleton, & Garland, 1981; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1978; Skinner, 1980, 1982). For example, Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) reported that the dual career wives in their survey typically were from higher social class backgrounds than their conventional counterparts, and they were frequently first or only children. The husbands tended to come from families in which they developed close relationships and empathy with women. Among the stresses associated with a dual career relationship were overload dilemmas, as in the physical overload of domestic tasks given career responsibilities, and role cycling conflicts, such as between the occupational roles of husband and wife and their family roles (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969). The rewards of such a lifestyle included self expression for women, the satisfaction from a professional work role, and the economic security associated with having two incomes (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971).

In recent years attention has been directed toward the impact of the workplace on dual career couples and the couples' reciprocal influence (Gilmore & Fannin, 1982; Hall & Hall, 1978; Kopelman, Rosensweig, & Lally, 1982; Madani & Cooper, 1977; Stringer-Moore, 1981). Much of this literature has considered the problems involved

in meshing the needs of the corporation with those of the dual career couple, but little attention has been focused on managers' attitudes and how these affect decision-making on topics of concern to dual career couples. A notable exception was the work of Rosen, Jerdee, and Prestwich (1975) in which the potential effects of discriminatory managerial attitudes toward females were examined. Particular areas investigated by the authors included: work-related travel, efforts to retain an employee when the spouse's career requires relocation, promotability of an employee who emphasizes that family comes first, expectations of social support from the spouse, and receptivity to a request for a leave of absence to care for children. In all areas the authors found significant differences between the managers' appraisal of the incidents depending on whether a male versus female employee were involved.

Taking his lead from the Rosen et al. (1975) study, Le Louarn (1982) expanded the concept to investigate the effects of not only characteristics of the employee, but also those of the decision-maker and the organization on decisions concerning hiring, promotion, geographic transfer, hiring in a position requiring extensive travel, and change of the vacation schedule. Employee variables were sex, number of children, and spouse's work situation. Manager characteristics included sex, marital status, spouse's work situation, presence of children, attitude toward working couples, and number of working couples known. Among the organizational variables were the company's

size, its main activity, its location, and its managerial philosophy. While the results of Le Louarn's study are too extensive to summarize adequately here, one of the key findings was that members of dual career couples were perceived as significantly less suitable for a geographic transfer than any other employees. However, when the decision was a promotion without relocation, members of dual career couples were rated higher than any other candidates. The findings concerning the geographic transfer situation were published in a recent article (Le Louarn & DeCotiis, 1983).

Although several work-related areas of concern have been delineated for dual career couples, perhaps the greatest focus has centered on the area of employee relocation, where problems may arise in obtaining employment for the transferee's spouse (Debats, 1982; Magnus & Dodd, 1981; Maynard & Zawacki, 1979). McDowell (1982) reported that 67% of the personnel managers she surveyed reported having at least one instance of a prospective employee refusing to join their company because it would involve a relocation which would disrupt his or her spouse's career. One response to this dilemma has been for the corporation to hire the transferee's spouse, yet this practice may not be permitted if the company has anti-nepotism rules (Gilmore & Fannin, 1982), or such practice may be viewed as discriminatory toward other candidates unless it is done presumably to correct previous discriminatory practices (Stringer-Moore, 1981). Another tactic has been for the company to offer placement programs for the spouse (Debats, 1982; Milbrandt, 1983). For example, the company may assist the

unemployed spouse through informal job counseling and tips on resume preparation. Companies may also hire formal job placement services. While clearly moves in the right direction, such assistance may not be successful when the unemployed spouse is at the peak of his/her career. The short time frame involved in many transfers is also a complicating factor (Debats, 1982).

When a situation arises in which the couple cannot meet both spouses' career goals in the same location, the traditional response has been to effect a compromise -- with one or both partners taking less desirable jobs, or one spouse giving up working altogether (Farris, 1978). Duncan and Perrucci (1976) report that the probability of familial migration depends on the husband's occupational prestige, but not on that of the wife. They found that interstate movement appeared to facilitate employment for wives who were unemployed before the relocation, but it hampered continued employment for those already employed. Lichter (1983) found that migration had a significant negative effect on married women's earnings in the short-term, although the longer-term effects were considered minimal. The results of this study also provided limited evidence that migration may be most disruptive to the earnings of women of higher occupational and educational attainment. Thus, the wife's career is the one most likely to suffer when a geographic transfer is undertaken.

A small, although apparently growing number of couples have chosen an unconventional solution to the dilemma of being unable to

meet both spouses' career goals in one location. That is, rather than sacrifice one spouse's career, they have chosen to set up two households in different locations and reunite when schedules permit. Such an arrangement has been variously termed in the literature as "two-location," "long-distance," or "commuter" marriage (Gerstel & Gross, 1982). Definitions of this phenomenon vary among researchers. Gerstel (1977) defined it as:

a marital form in which members of a couple spend at least two nights in a week in separate residences and yet are still married and intend to remain so. The separation is a result of both the husband's and wife's participation in demanding careers that require commitments in different locations.

In her operational definition of commuter marriage, Gross (1980) specified that the couple be legally married and living apart for at least four days at a time, for at least three months' duration. The most typical pattern within such marriages appears to be one in which the couple is separated during the week, and reunites on weekends, a pattern which closely approximates the work-leisure pattern in this country (Farris, 1978; Gerstel & Gross, 1982, 1983, 1984).

Some controversy has developed within the literature regarding whether this pattern is actually a unique, recent phenomenon. Kirschner and Walum (1978) argue that two-location families have historical precedent. For example, they cite several circumstances in which such an arrangement has been established: war, immigration, economic necessity, and employment in sales or executive positions.

However, they contend that in all these instances, it is typically the male who leaves the family for some period of time. Thus, Kirschner and Wallum argue that what is often unique about the establishment of such marriages today, is that the two-location marriage may be determined by the female's career. They suggest that the Women's Movement has served as an impetus, providing support for female-determined two-location families. Gerstel (1977) contends that commuter marriage is distinct from earlier forms of two-location marriage in several respects. She argues that such a marriage is limited to dual career families, and that the traveling spouse is frequently the woman, rather than the man, as was often the case historically in such instances as immigration, military service, and imprisonment. Secondly, she contends that in the case of soldiers and prisoners, separation is obligatory, while for commuter couples, it is voluntary. Thirdly, she notes that for emigrants and traveling salesmen, the primary motivation for commuting is increased earning ability. However, she found among the couples she studied that commuting may actually have a net financial cost. (This argument seems somewhat weak, as some among the former groups might also have found commuting to result in a net cost.) The commuter couple is seen as being primarily motivated by increased personal satisfaction stemming from increased career involvement. Lastly, Gerstel argues that a key distinguishing feature is that a separate home is established, and that the commuting is patterned, in that it always occurs to the

same location. Among some of the other groups, a separate residence is not established, and the commuting may occur to different locations. Farris (1978) describes the typical commuting pattern as involving a compartmentalization of work and home lives. During the work days away from home, the commuter is totally involved in work, with long hours, busy schedules, and no interference from family demands. However, during the weekend, time and attention are focused upon the family, including family activities and household chores. While the weekly separation pattern is most common, some couples do separate for longer periods, a few seeing each other less than once a month (Gerstel & Gross, 1982, 1984).

Presently the phenomenon of commuter marriage is not widely studied, and all of the research to date has involved the use of non-random samples of subjects, due to the difficulty of finding individuals in such marriages. There are no data on the incidence of commuter marriages, and Kirschner and Wallum (1978) argue that due to the definitions of the U.S. Census Bureau, it is impossible to determine the number of two-location families because such families are assumed not to exist. However, Gross (1980) speculates that this lifestyle is increasingly prevalent, as journalists have been devoting considerable space to it.

Despite the comparative newness as a research topic, a book on commuter marriage has been published (Gerstel & Gross, 1984), and a review of the literature in this area has been undertaken by Gerstel

and Gross (1982). They report the literature as focusing on marital and familial characteristics of the couples, characteristics of the commute itself, and the consequences of this lifestyle for careers, the couple's relationship, and significant others, such as relatives and friends. Among the major findings were those delineating the enabling conditions for a commuting lifestyle. Commuter marriage is likely to be least stressful when: couples have at least adequate incomes or financial resources; spouses have intense career motivations; couples have been married enough years to have a shared history which provides a sense of stability; children are not yet or no longer in the home; and spouses reunite regularly on weekends. Gerstel and Gross (1983) suggest a demographic profile of commuter couples reflecting: high educational levels, the majority having completed at least some graduate work; high-ranking occupations -- typically professionals or academics; and high family income, with a median between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

While the literature on commuter marriage has grown, to date no studies have been undertaken to assess the response of employers to this non-traditional pattern. We have no information on how an employee's plan to set up a commuter marriage might affect the likelihood of the company's offering a transfer. Would such employees be eliminated from consideration, or would transfers of them be evaluated less favorably than those in which both members of a couple plan to relocate? Further, we do not know whether decisions

concerning geographic transfers involving commuter marriage would differ depending on the sex of the employee, or on whether the employee is a member of a dual career, as opposed to dual earner, couple.

Another factor which has been neglected in the literature concerns the couple's attitude toward the move. The corporation is often stereotyped as being insensitive to employees' attitudes toward a transfer involving relocation (Maynard & Zawacki, 1979). However, we have no empirical evidence to support this contention. The representatives of corporations, those executives who make decisions about geographic transfers, may well respond differently depending on whether or not employees and their spouses are opposed, ambivalent toward, or in favor of a transfer involving relocation. Conceivably they might oppose a transfer if the couple objects to it, and endorse one if the couple favors it. Perhaps if the couple is ambivalent toward a transfer, they might also be uncertain if it is advisable.

Gerstel and Gross (1982) point to the need for research on employers' responses to commuter marriage: "We need to know about their preconceptions as well as their actual responses to their married employees who live apart. Successful commuting may in part depend on greater employer acceptance of this marital variant." Further, they call for research on the role of corporate systems in transferring employees to other locations, thus creating a commuter marriage.

In view of the above-cited deficits in the commuter marriage and geographic transfer literature, and taking into account the

problems associated with transfers involving relocation, research is needed to investigate the factors which influence decisions concerning geographic transfers. Given the rising number of dual career couples, and the continuation of corporate policy linking promotion with geographic transfer, commuter marriage is likely to increase. Yet to date no studies have attempted to assess the employer's response either to this pattern or to the couple's attitude toward the move. The present study has been undertaken to address these issues, and to expand the commuter marriage literature in the area of the workplace.

The present study represents an initial effort to shed some light on the factors influencing executives' appraisals of geographic transfers involving commuter marriage. Ideally, research on this topic would utilize some direct measure of executives' decision-making. However, given that commuter marriage continues to be a relatively novel phenomenon, it would be difficult to find a sample of executives who have had experience with it. Indeed, assuming commuter marriage increases, these decisions are more likely to occur with frequency in the future. Given the foregoing, an alternative means of measuring such decision-making was required. While questionnaires have been frequently used for this purpose (e.g., Vandervelde, 1979), such self-report measures may be influenced by social desirability (Nunnally, 1978). A more subtle assessment technique may be required. A widely employed alternative to the questionnaire is the "in-basket" decision-making task (Kovach, 1981; Le Louarn & DeCotiis, 1983; Lopez, 1966;

Rosen et al., 1975). This task requires executives to evaluate hypothetical work situations based on information from letters and memos. Although these tasks involve simulations, rather than actual situations, it is argued that responses to them are comparable to administrative decisions in managerial jobs and should accurately reflect day-to-day decision-making (Lopez, 1966; Rosen et al., 1975). Additionally, in the case of commuter marriage, the use of an in-basket technique permits the evaluation of a wider range of situations than executives have probably encountered. Nonetheless, the use of this technique involves a compromise, in that additional information is obtained, but under the limitation that it involves responses to hypothetical, rather than actual, situations. While recognizing this compromise, this study selected the in-basket technique as a measurement device in the hope of more fully assessing executives' responses to commuter marriage, albeit only under hypothetical conditions.

Another consideration was the selection of a sample of executives who would likely have had experience with geographic transfers. Rosen et al. (1975) derived their sample from subscribers to a well-known business publication. They assumed all these individuals would be executives, but conceivably some could have been students or other individuals interested in the field, in addition to some executives who were not experienced with geographic transfers. Le Louarn and DeCotiis (1983) utilized managers whose names were

provided by a mailing list company. While achieving a national sample, the actual response rate obtained was a disappointing 21%. The present study selected as subjects individuals who had participated in the Tennessee Executive Development Program of the University of Tennessee. This is an intense four week training program designed to enhance the administrative skills of upper level managers. The rationale for this decision was based on a number of considerations. In particular it was thought that these high-level executives would be more likely than managers in general to have had experience with geographic transfers, and they represent a wide range of companies and organizations. Additionally, it was hoped that a higher response rate would be obtained from these individuals, who presumably have had positive experiences with this program and might be more likely to respond to a research study sponsored by it. Thirdly, the utilization of this sample minimized the risk of sending materials to individuals deemed ineligible for the study (e.g., students), thereby increasing its cost-effectiveness. However, the decision to use this sample of executives also involved some drawbacks. The program's participants, while coming from across the nation, are primarily from the southeastern United States. Another concern is that since they typically are high-level executives, they might be more sophisticated than managers in general.

CHAPTER II

HYPOTHESES

Given the deficits in the literature, no empirical evidence exists on which to base a prediction about executives' responses to in-basket decisions involving geographic transfers and commuter marriage. Nonetheless, some authors have speculated about the employer's response to commuter marriage. Kirschner and Walum (1978) theorize that significant others, including employers, attempt to impose their definitions of marriage on the couple, and that such definitions include sharing the same domicile. Yet, they note for a successful career, the husband is often expected to be away from the home for varying periods of time. However, for a female to do the same may elicit unsolicited complaints from the same significant others. Therefore, they propose that few people will support the marriage partners' decision to live separately if it were reached to allow the female partner to continue or advance her career.

The dual career literature also lends support to the contention that a commuter marriage would be viewed unfavorably by employers. Skinner (1982) notes that the demands of particular professions for single-minded continuous commitment, for the subordination of other family members' needs to the job, and for a "support person" (usually the wife) to be available for entertaining and the like, create a stress for dual career couples. Since commuter marriage frequently

involves removing one spouse from the occupational social scene, it constitutes an affront to these expectations. Clearly it is a statement on the couples' part that both careers, rather than one, are important. Although couples in commuter marriages frequently do report being able to concentrate more fully on their work (Gerstel & Gross, 1982, 1983), this gain is not likely to be viewed as positively by employers, since it is associated with what may well be viewed as a deviant lifestyle. Given the foregoing, this study made the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Hypothetical in-basket situations concerning moves in which both members of the couple plan to relocate (BM) will be evaluated more favorably by executives than those involving moves in which a commuter marriage (CM) is planned. Symbolically, this can be represented by: $CM < BM$.

While there is no empirical evidence concerning executives' responses toward hypothetical situations involving commuter marriage, it seems logical that a manager's evaluation of a geographic transfer resulting in a commuter marriage could be influenced by the circumstances surrounding the move. This study focused on three employee variables and two manager characteristics which were predicted to have the greatest impact on the evaluation. The employee variables included: the couple's attitude toward the move (either positive, ambivalent, or negative), the employee's sex, and the relationship status of the employee (whether a member of a dual career, dual earner, or

traditional couple). The characteristics of managers which were considered included their sex and relationship status (working spouse versus non-working spouse or unmarried).

While it seems intuitively obvious that a manager's decision about the geographic transfer of a married employee would be influenced by the couple's attitude toward the move, to date this contention has not been put to empirical test. Naturally, if the manager's choice for a transfer is also in favor of the move, there is little question that the transfer will take place. Conversely, if the employee and his/her spouse are opposed to the transfer, most likely it will not occur. However, the more interesting question arises when the employee and spouse are ambivalent about the move, as in the case where the transfer will benefit the employee, but the spouse's career opportunities in the new location are uncertain. This study offered the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Moves in which the couple is opposed to the transfer (NEG) will be evaluated less favorably than those toward which the couple is ambivalent (AMB), which in turn will be judged less favorably than those in which the couple is positive about the move (POS). Symbolically, this can be represented as: $NEG < AMB < POS$.

The sex of the employee under consideration for a geographic transfer is another variable which might influence the manager's decision. Rosen et al. (1975) found significant differences for male versus female employees with males being favored in decisions

involving travel, moving, and promotion. While the geographic transfer question as posed herein was not addressed per se, they did investigate the amount of organizational intervention expended to retain a male versus female employee when the spouse was offered a transfer. They found significant differences in favor of males in all four of their measures of organizational intervention. Likewise, Kovach (1981) (using students enrolled in a personnel management course who were instructed to respond to in-basket decisions as though they were personnel managers of large business organizations) found that male employees were viewed as more worth retaining than female employees, although the qualifications of each were the same. (In this latter study, no significance tests were reported.) In light of these findings, the proposed study offered the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The moves of female employees will be evaluated significantly lower than those of males. This finding will be strongest within the ambivalent condition.

Only one study to date has investigated the impact of the couple's relationship status (dual career, dual earner or traditional marriage) on managers' decisions regarding geographic transfers. Le Louarn and DeCotiis (1983) found that dual career couples were perceived as significantly less suitable for transfer than the other groups. However, they did not investigate the role of the couple's attitude toward the transfer in the decision-making. It is hypothesized that the relationship status of the couple will have

minimal impact when the couple's attitude is positive or negative; however, its effect should be most pronounced under conditions wherein the couple has mixed feelings about the move due to career conflicts. Therefore, this study presented the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: In cases where the couple is ambivalent about the move, the transfer of dual career employees (DC) will be rated significantly lower than that of dual earner employees (DE), which in turn will be rated lower than that of traditional employees (T). This can be represented symbolically as: AMB: $DC < DE < T$.

To date, Le Louarn (1982) has been the only investigator to consider the impact of the manager's characteristics on decision-making affecting dual career couples, including geographic transfer. Employing manager's sex as a moderator variable with spouse's work situation as the independent variable, he hypothesized that female decision-makers would tend to discriminate less against working couples. However, this hypothesis was not supported in any of the decisions considered, including geographic transfer. While the manager's sex may not have an impact on decision-making, such an effect might have been masked by some aspects of the Le Louarn study. For one, the number of female managers who participated in the study was quite small compared to the number of males (26 compared to 386); thus, variability due to other person variables might have masked this relationship. In addition, the characteristics of the materials used in this study were such that in all but one decision, the

overwhelming majority of managers evaluated the situations positively, that is, they chose to promote, transfer, or change the vacation period (if the seniority rule were not broken). The percentages of managers endorsing decisions ranged from 89 to 95% in five of six decisions. Thus, characteristics of the situation may have masked any differences among managers related to sex. Yet another possibility is that Le Louarn's reasoning that female managers would discriminate less against dual career couples may be faulty. Such women are likely to be members of dual career couples themselves (if married) and have probably experienced the difficulties involved when career conflicts ensue. Thus, they might be less willing to transfer employees with working spouses, knowing full well the stress involved. In addition, given Duncan and Perrucci's (1976) findings that interstate movement hampered continued employment among wives employed before such a move, they might recognize the deleterious effects of transfer on the spouses involved, and recommend against it. Thus, while there may be a relationship between manager's sex and decision-making concerning geographic transfers, its directionality is unclear.

This study hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 5: Female managers will evaluate transfers differently (either more negatively or more positively) than male managers.

In the case of the second manager characteristic to be investigated, that of relationship status, again only Le Louarn (1982) has studied its effect on decision-making concerning the geographic

transfer of married employees. As in the case of manager's sex, he hypothesized that it was a moderator variable between spouse's work arrangement and the decisions involved (e.g., employee transfer). He proposed that the adverse effect of the spouse's work situation would be minimized when the decision-maker had a working spouse. Of the six decisions he tested, this hypothesis was only upheld in the case of geographic transfer. Based on Le Louarn's findings, this study offered the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6: Managers whose spouse is working will respond more favorably toward the transfer of an employee in a dual career or dual earner relationship than will managers who are unmarried or whose spouse is not employed.

It was predicted that factors influencing decision-making concerning geographic transfers would be independent of one another. Thus, the following hypothesis was offered:

Hypothesis 7: The relationships among factors will not be subject to interaction effects (two-way or greater).

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Subjects

Four hundred thirty-four past participants in the Tennessee Executive Development Program of the Management Center of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville were mailed a packet of materials and a letter requesting their participation in the study. One hundred fifty-one of these individuals (34.8%) completed and returned the materials. The Tennessee Executive Development Program has served individuals from across the United States. However, the majority of participants in the study were from the southeast (75%), the largest number coming from Tennessee (62%). The remainder were scattered from across the nation, and one reply came from Canada.

The vast majority of the respondents were males (94%), married (94%), with traditional relationship status (spouse a homemaker -- 54%). Dual career executives comprised 29% of the sample while dual earners made up 12%. Compared to the national average of approximately half of all couples being dual employed, this sample is under-represented by executives who are partners in working couples. Given that this program is geared to high-level executives, these individuals may be better able than many to support their families on a single income. Following the homemaker category, the highest percentages for spouse's occupation were for the category of professional and technical

occupations (18%), clerical and kindred (9%), and managers and administrators (8%). The vast majority of the sample have children (92%). Thirty-eight percent reported having two children; 30%, three; 13%, four or more. Eleven percent reported having one child, while only 8% had none. The average age of the sample was 46, but the range was from 30 to 66. A breakdown of the age of the sample is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of Raters' Age¹

Age range	Number of respondents	Percent reporting
30 and under	2	1
31-35	11	8
36-40	30	21
41-45	28	20
46-50	29	20
51-55	30	21
56-60	7	5
61 and over	6	4

¹An exact correspondence between the number of respondents and the percent reporting was not achieved because of the omission of this item by a few subjects.

These executives gave a variety of job titles, nearly all of which fell within the classification of managers and administrators. Representative titles included: vice-president of manufacturing, president, director of engineering, and manager. The question concerning the number of employees supervised was poorly worded, as some executives interpreted it to mean the number directly supervised, while others listed all the employees for whom they were indirectly responsible. The mean was 190, but values ranged from 0 to 2200. The primary job duties listed were: administration (33%), production (18%), other (17%), and sales (11%). In a few cases, several duties were selected. The majority of executives came from companies having less than 1000 employees (40%), with 1000-5000 being the next largest category at 30%. In only 5% of the cases were the organizations larger than 40,000. The highest category for type of organization was manufacturing at 56%. "Other" was selected by 17% of the sample; the combined category of finance, insurance, and real estate by 11%; and construction by 5%.

Table 2 presents the percentages of executives responding to the various categories of the question, "Of the married couples you know, in approximately what percent of these are both members pursuing careers?" This question sought to determine the executives' first-hand knowledge of dual career couples. Most of the executives were employed by companies which offered transfers involving relocation (82%). Seventy-one percent of the executives reported that less

Table 2. Classification of Raters' Familiarity with Dual Career Couples¹

Category	Number of respondents	Percent responding
Less than 10%	17	12
10 - 20%	24	16
20 - 30%	26	18
30 - 40%	19	13
40 - 50%	21	14
50 - 60%	18	12
60% or Greater	22	15

¹An exact correspondence between the number of respondents and the percent reporting was not achieved because of the omission of this item by a few subjects.

than 10% of the employees of their organization refused a transfer due to a disruption of their spouse's career; 17% reported an incidence of refusal for this reason among 10 to 20% of those offered transfers. One-third of the executives responded affirmatively to the question, "Have you ever had an employee accept a transfer although planning to live apart from his/her spouse and/or family for an extended period?" Of those expressing some familiarity with commuter marriage among employees, the majority were only aware of one such instance (50%), although 26% were aware of "four or more" or "several" cases. Fifteen percent reported knowledge of two instances, and 9% were aware of three.

The majority (52%) of the executives came from houses in which the mother did not work outside the home for any time period during their childhood. Fifteen percent reported that their mother worked for a period of less than five years; 12%, 5 to 10 years; 8%, 10 to 15 years; and 13%, 15 to 20 years.

Materials

The present study employed an in-basket decision-making task, in which executives were asked to make decisions pertaining to various organizational problems based on information from memos. Previous research has varied on whether a description of a hypothetical organization is given (Kovach, 1981; Rosen et al., 1975), or the procedures of the managers' own organizations are used (Le Louarn, 1982), in assessing these problems. Le Louarn's (1982) method was

selected because utilizing the procedures of the executives' own organizations rather than a hypothetical organization should more closely approximate the decisions a given individual would actually make on the job.

Executives were given a series of memos describing employees to be evaluated for geographic transfers (see Appendix B). Each memo was followed by a rating form, which contained a rating scale from 1 (Definitely Do Not Transfer) to 10 (Definitely Transfer) for the decision and the degree of confidence placed in it. The rating form also had questions concerning the factors which influenced the decision, and the circumstances under which a different decision would have been made. (A sample rating form is contained in Appendix C.) To minimize the influence of subject variables the sample was divided into four groups, each of which received 6 or 7 (depending on the condition) of the 27 memos (see Table 3). The content of each memo differed, but all were comparable in depicting the employee as competent and as having the necessary credentials to be transferred, thus maximizing the impact of the experimental manipulations.

Three basic memos were written for the dual career and dual earner conditions respectively, and one for the traditional earner condition. The spouse's occupations for each condition were as follows: dual career: attorney, architect, and urban planner; dual earner: postal clerk, shipping clerk, and bank teller; and traditional: homemaker. These occupations were selected on several bases. One

was that they clearly represented the distinctions of each category named. In particular, dual career occupations were selected which typically are highly salient personally, have a developmental sequence, and which require a high degree of commitment, following Rapoport and Rapoport (1969). An effort was made to duplicate the occupations utilized in Le Louarn (1982) where possible, but in several instances, the occupations were not judged to adequately distinguish between the dual career and dual earner classifications. For example, "spouse works at the municipal library" was listed as a dual earner occupation, but the position was not specified (librarian, janitor, et cetera). In addition, Le Louarn unwittingly manipulated job involvement in some of the occupations, as exemplified in these descriptions of the spouse's employment: "a white-collar job in a local company in which (s)he is not very involved" versus "a professor in a local college and that (s)he is very involved in her (his) career." The former was considered a dual earner condition while the latter was judged dual career. A third consideration was to select occupations within the dual career and dual earner classifications which had reasonably similar worker functions on tasks involving data, people and things. To this end, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (1977) was used as a guide.

The traditional condition had only one memo because it was thought that a traditional marriage would not involve a female as sole earner, nor a commuter arrangement, thus necessitating only one manipulation:

couple's attitude toward the move. In the case of dual career and dual earner employees, however, the employee may be male or female and a commuter marriage may or may not be established. In all three cases the couple's attitude toward the move could be negative, ambivalent, or positive. As this procedure is complicated, an example may serve to clarify. One group of subjects received a memo regarding the possible transfer of Charlotte Jones in which she and her husband are opposed to the transfer because they would have to set up a commuter marriage. Another group of subjects received a memo concerning Charlotte which is identical in all respects except that she and her husband are in favor of the transfer, despite planning a commuter marriage. The other two groups of subjects received memos concerning Charles Jones, which vary from Charlotte's only in terms of the sex variable, and in one case the couple's attitude toward the move is positive, while in the other it is negative. In other memos variables were manipulated in a similar fashion.

The "in-basket" decision-making task was followed by a questionnaire entitled, "Personal Data," requesting demographic information, job duties, and information regarding the spouse's occupation and career aspirations (see Appendix D).

The manager's relationship status was derived from the questionnaire item asking for a categorization of the spouse's primary employment. Non-working spouse included the homemaker category; the remaining four categories comprised the classification of working spouse.

Procedure

With the exception of eight individuals who participated in an earlier pilot study, all past participants in the Tennessee Executive Development Program were mailed a packet of materials on August 27, 1984. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four groups: A, B, C, or D, which varied from one another in the content of the memos received (refer to Table 3). Each set of memos for the four groups and their order of presentation was selected on the basis of evenly distributing the experimental manipulations. The number of completed replies for each group was as follows: A: 37, B: 42, C: 42, and D: 25. Each data packet contained a cover letter on departmental letterhead requesting the subject's participation, an instruction page, a consent form entitled "About This Task" (all three are contained in Appendix A), the memos (Appendix B) each of which had a rating form printed on the back (a sample of which is contained in Appendix C), the Personal Data form (Appendix D), and a postage-paid, business reply envelope for returning the materials. Subjects were instructed to sign the Task form if they chose to participate in the study, and to give their address if they would like to receive a copy of the results. (These forms were separated from the rest of the materials once received by the experimenter to insure the subjects' anonymity; they were so informed in the cover letter.) Subjects were then asked to read each memo, and assume that they were the individual to whom the memo was addressed. Next

they were instructed to rate each transfer based on the information available, and to apply the policies and procedures of their organizations, where applicable. Instructions dictated that the subjects were not to return to earlier decisions. Following completion of the memos, subjects were asked to fill out the Personal Data form, and then mail the materials in the self-addressed, postage-paid envelope. Executives who had not responded by September 28, 1984 were mailed a follow-up letter (see Appendix E), and were asked to call the experimenter if they had misplaced their packet of materials.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results of the three x two x three x two (employee relationship status by employee sex by attitude toward the move by arrangement) repeated measures analysis of variance with sex of the manager (rater) as covariate are reported in Table 4. Significant main effects were found for employee relationship status, attitude toward the move, arrangement, and for sex of manager as covariate.

Table 4. Analysis of Variance

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F-ratio
Covariates	45.06	1	45.06	7.56**
Sex of manager	45.06	1	45.06	7.56**
Main effects	5840.93	6	973.49	163.40**
Relationship status	41.09	2	20.55	3.45*
Employee sex	2.48	1	2.48	0.42
Attitude toward move	4431.42	2	2215.71	371.91**
Arrangement	1149.94	1	1149.94	193.02**

*
 $p < .05$.

**
 $p < .01$.

Due to empty cells, the analysis of variance would not yield interaction effects, if any were present. The empty cells occurred

due to the unbalanced nature of the design, as there were no female traditional earners, nor any male traditional earners in commuter marriages. In order to test for interaction effects, a method of mean substitution was used. "Dummy" data for the female traditional earners and the male traditional earners in commuter marriages were created by substituting the sample mean as the rating. Since ratings were whole numbers, the ratings of 5 and 6 were evenly distributed throughout the sample data to obtain an average equivalent to the sample mean. This "dummy" data was only used to test for interaction effects, and not for the value estimation of the main effects.

Significant three-way interaction effects were obtained for employee relationship status by employee sex by attitude, and employee relationship status by attitude by arrangement. Significant two-way interactions were obtained for employee relationship status by attitude, employee relationship status by arrangement, and attitude by arrangement. The results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 6 lists the means, standard deviations, and frequencies for each cell of the experimental design. Table 7 displays this information for each level of the four independent variables.

Hypothesis 1 stated that moves in which both members of the couple plan to relocate will be evaluated more favorably than moves in which a commuter marriage is planned. This hypothesis was supported, as illustrated in Table 4, which reveals a significant main effect for the arrangement variable ($F[1, 998] = 193.02, p < .01$).

Table 5. Interaction Effects as Determined by Mean Substitution¹

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F-ratio
2-way interactions	547.43	13	42.11	7.96**
Empsex by emprel	19.93	2	9.97	1.88
Empsex by attitude	4.51	2	2.25	0.43
Empsex by arrange	15.98	1	15.98	3.02
Emprel by attitude	84.73	4	21.18	4.00**
Emprel by arrange	39.55	2	19.78	3.74*
Attitude by arrange	393.76	2	196.88	37.21**
3-way interactions	243.70	12	20.31	3.84**
Empsex by emprel by attitude	133.40	4	33.35	6.30**
Empsex by emprel by arrange	21.06	2	10.53	1.99
Empsex by attitude by arrange	14.49	2	7.24	1.37
Emprel by attitude by arrange	57.49	4	14.37	2.72*
4-way interactions	46.96	4	11.74	2.22
Empsex by emprel by attitude by arrange	46.96	4	11.74	2.22

¹Empsex refers to employee sex; emprel to employee relationship status; attitude to attitude toward the move; and arrange to arrangement.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .05$.

Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations, and Frequencies for Each Cell of Design¹

	Attitude					
	Negative (NEG)		Ambivalent (AMB)		Positive (POS)	
	Both move (BM)	Commuter marriage (CM)	Both move (BM)	Commuter marriage (CM)	Both move (BM)	Commuter marriage (CM)
Male:						
Dual career (DC)	M 3.46 SD 2.40 f 37	2.14 2.10 43	5.89 2.19 44	4.92 2.52 25	9.54 0.70 43	4.82 3.05 39
Dual earner (DE)	M 3.32 SD 2.56 f 44	2.68 2.43 25	7.08 2.25 39	4.00 2.90 43	9.76 0.52 25	5.93 3.18 44
Traditional (T)	M 3.40 SD 2.91 f 43		8.32 1.60 25		9.58 0.89 38	
Female:						
Dual career (DC)	M 2.71 SD 1.97 f 24	1.61 1.20 43	5.02 2.77 43	4.28 2.46 39	9.25 1.38 44	6.88 3.21 25
Dual earner (DE)	M 2.86 SD 2.38 f 43	1.97 1.72 38	7.54 2.28 24	5.00 2.76 44	9.54 0.94 39	5.00 3.30 43

¹M refers to mean; SD to standard deviation; and f to frequency.

Table 7. Means, Standard Deviations, and Frequencies for Each Level of the Independent Variables¹

	Arrangement			Employee Relationship Status			Employee Sex		Attitude Toward the Move		
	BM	CM	DC	DE	T	M	F	NEG	AMB	POS	
M	6.39	4.04	5.11	5.22	6.77	5.54	5.08	2.68	5.59	7.74	
SD	3.37	3.04	3.35	3.42	3.51	3.40	3.45	2.31	2.80	3.01	
f	555	451	449	451	106	557	449	340	326	340	

¹BM refers to both move; CM to commuter marriage; DC to dual career; DE to dual earner; T to traditional earner; M to male; F to female; NEG to negative; AMB to ambivalent; POS to positive; M to mean; SD to standard deviation; and f to frequency.

The direction of this finding is evident from Table 7. Table 6 shows that in all comparable cells a commuter marriage is rated less favorably than an arrangement in which both members of the couple move. In addition, significant interaction effects were found among arrangement, attitude toward the move, and employee relationship status; arrangement and attitude; and arrangement and employee relationship status. A further analysis of interaction effects revealed a significant interaction between employee relationship status and attitude toward the move under conditions in which both members of the couple plan to move. Here if the attitude was ambivalent, dual career couples were rated significantly lower than dual earner and traditional earner couples. Ratings of traditional and dual earner employees did not differ significantly, however. These findings did not obtain under a commuter marriage arrangement. Despite interaction effects, the main effect for the arrangement variable was upheld.

Hypothesis 2 stated that moves in which the couple is opposed to the transfer (NEG) will be evaluated less favorably than those toward which the couple is ambivalent (AMB), which in turn will be judged less favorably than those in which the couple is positive about the move (POS). This hypothesis was supported. Despite interaction effects, Table 4 reveals a significant main effect for the attitude toward the move variable ($F[2, 998] = 371.91, p < .01$). Table 7 shows that this finding is in the predicted direction.

Significant three-way interactions were obtained for attitude with arrangement and employee relationship status, and for attitude with employee sex and employee relationship status. Significant two-way interactions were found for attitude with arrangement and for attitude with employee relationship status. As previously noted, in the case of the attitude by arrangement by employee relationship status interaction, in cases where the attitude was ambivalent and both members of the couple planned to move, dual career employees were rated significantly lower than dual earner and traditional earner employees. Further analysis of the attitude by employee sex by employee relationship status interaction yielded several findings. In the case of male employees with either positive or ambivalent attitudes, traditional employees were rated significantly higher than either dual career or dual earner employees. This finding did not obtain for males in the negative attitude condition. In the case of female employees, when attitude was positive, dual career employees were rated significantly higher than dual earner ones; in the ambivalent attitude condition, however, the converse was obtained. If dual career females were negative or ambivalent toward the move, they were rated significantly lower than dual career males, but when attitude was positive, the reverse was true.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the moves of female employees will be evaluated significantly lower than those of males, and further predicted that this finding will be strongest in the ambivalent

condition. This hypothesis was not supported ($F[1, 998] = 0.42$, $p > .05$). The attitude by employee sex by employee relationship status interaction yielded only one instance which partially supported this hypothesis. In cases of ambivalent attitude, dual career female employees were rated significantly lower than their male counterparts ($F[1, 149] = 4.46$, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 4 stated that in cases where the couple is ambivalent about the move, the transfer of dual career employees will be rated significantly lower than that of dual earner employees, which in turn will be rated lower than that of traditional employees. This hypothesis was only partially supported. A one-way analysis of variance of rating by employee relationship status when attitude was ambivalent obtained significance ($F[2, 323] = 15.90$, $p < .01$). However, further analysis via a Student-Newman-Keuls procedure revealed the ratings of dual career and dual earner employees differed significantly from those of traditional employees, but they did not differ significantly from each other. A further breakdown of the findings revealed in the both move condition when attitude was ambivalent, both traditional employees and dual earners were rated significantly higher than dual career ones, but dual earners did not differ significantly from traditional employees. In the commuter marriage condition when attitude was ambivalent, no significant differences were found among levels of employee relationship status. Indeed, Table 6 reveals in the case of males in a commuter marriage

with ambivalent attitudes, dual earner employees were actually rated lower than dual career employees.

Hypothesis 5 predicted female managers will evaluate transfers differently (either more negatively or more positively) than male managers. This hypothesis received support, as a significant main effect was obtained for sex of manager as a covariate ($F[1, 998] = 7.56, p < .01$), but this finding was based on a very small number of female managers ($n = 9$, only 6% of the sample). Further analysis revealed female managers' ratings were significantly higher than those of their male counterparts ($t = 1.96, p < .05$). However, given the paucity of female managers, this finding could be the result of other subject variables, and is only tentative support at best.

Hypothesis 6 predicted managers whose spouse is working will respond more favorably toward the transfer of an employee in a dual career or dual earner relationship than will managers who are unmarried or whose spouse is not employed. This hypothesis was not supported, although findings were in the predicted direction ($t = 1.23, p > .05$).

Hypothesis 7 predicted that the relationships among factors will not be subject to interaction effects (two-way or greater). This hypothesis was not supported. Table 5 reveals significant three-way interactions among employee sex, employee relationship status and attitude toward the move, and among employee relationship status, attitude, and arrangement. Three significant two-way interactions were found: employee relationship status by attitude; employee

relationship status by arrangement; and attitude by arrangement.

Despite these interaction effects, it is noteworthy that significant main effects were obtained for employee relationship status, attitude, and arrangement.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study sought to investigate the factors which influence decisions concerning geographic transfers, and to assess the reactions of employers to an innovative response to the relocation problem, commuter marriage. As commuter marriage is a relatively novel phenomenon, the present study measured executives' reactions to hypothetical, rather than actual, situations involving it. To this end, the in-basket decision-making task was selected as a research tool. Four employee characteristics which were thought to influence decision-making were selected for investigation: employee sex, employee relationship status (member of a dual career, dual earner, or traditional couple), attitude toward the move, and arrangement (both move or commuter marriage). Decisions were also thought to be influenced by the rater's sex and relationship status. A number of hypotheses were proposed.

Hypothesis one concerned the influence of commuter marriage on decision-making, and predicted that moves in which both members of the couple plan to relocate will be evaluated more favorably than moves in which a commuter marriage is planned. This hypothesis was supported. Transfers involving a commuter marriage were rated significantly lower than those in which both members of the couple planned to move. When asked what factors influenced a decision,

13% of the executives gave a description of arrangement as the first factor. A sampling of comments included: "two households"; "I would not transfer because I do not feel Charlotte would be at her best while living out of a separate household. I would try to use her abilities to their fullest at her present location"; "the separation of his family is definitely a negative factor"; "the fact that his wife and children were not moving with him. Do not feel it would work out."

While the arrangement factor alone influenced decision-making, it was also involved in a three-way interaction with attitude toward the move and employee relationship status. In cases in which both members of the couple planned to move, and the attitude was ambivalent, transfers involving dual career couples were rated significantly lower than those involving dual earner or traditional earner couples. This finding did not obtain under conditions of a commuter marriage, or in transfers involving involving either positive or negative attitude. One possible explanation concerns the dilemma presented by the ambivalent attitude. Here the couple was not certain if a move would work out satisfactorily, and in the case of dual career and dual earner couples, their concern was related to employment opportunities for the spouse, while for traditional couples, uncertainty was over moving away from relatives. In the commuter marriage arrangement, the couple, whether dual career or dual earner, has decided upon a statistically deviant lifestyle to resolve the spouse's employment problem. Since only

one-third of our sample has had any experience with employees choosing such a lifestyle, they have little information on which to base a prediction on whether or not it will work, far less on whether it will work out best for dual earner as opposed to dual career couples. However, they have more of a basis of knowledge of dual career couples, as the majority indicated that dual career couples comprised at least 30-40% of the married couples they knew. Executives may have viewed the dual earner or traditional couples as better able to resolve potential problems in a both move situation. Representative comments included the following: "Good opportunity for Frank. Wife does not work"; "I would not transfer because husband has established practice as attorney"; "wife's occupation is such that she would have a good chance to find a comparable job and family could move" (bank teller condition); "Charlotte has the most valuable and promising career. Family must be kept together -- her husband must sacrifice shipping clerk job and go along."

Hypothesis two concerned the influence of the attitude toward the move on decision-making, and predicted that moves in which the couple is opposed to the transfer will be evaluated less favorably than those toward which the attitude is ambivalent, which in turn will be evaluated less favorably than those in which the attitude is positive. This hypothesis was supported. Despite stereotypes of the corporation as being unconcerned with the employee's feelings about a transfer (Maynard & Zawacki, 1979), our sample clearly

responded to the attitude factor. Attitude was also involved in two three-way interaction effects, with arrangement and employee relationship status, and with employee relationship status and employee sex. Several findings were derived from the latter interaction. In the case of male employees with either positive or ambivalent attitudes, traditional employees were rated significantly higher than either dual career or dual earner employees, but dual career and dual earner employees did not differ significantly. (Note that this finding cannot apply to females as there is no female traditional earner condition.) This finding did not obtain for males in the negative attitude condition. Possibly this finding can be explained by the absence of commuter marriage in the traditional condition, since commuter marriage arrangements were rated significantly lower than both move ones. Commuter marriage, though, also operated in the negative attitude situation, but here, the overriding consideration may have been the couple's firm opposition to the transfer, regardless of arrangement.

In the case of female employees, transfers involving dual career and dual earner employees were evaluated differently in the positive and ambivalent attitude situations. In cases of positive attitude, transfers involving dual earners were rated significantly lower than those involving dual career employees. Perhaps a spouse with a career was viewed as an asset to the community, particularly when the couple expressed no reservations about his chances for employment. In cases

of ambivalent attitude, the reverse was found: transfers involving dual career employees were rated significantly lower than those involving dual earner employees. Here the rater may have shared the couple's concern about the likelihood of the dual career spouse being able to obtain employment. Why should such a difference be found for female employees and not their male counterparts? This is a thorny problem; perhaps the raters, being predominantly males, identified with the plight of the husband in the dual career female employee conditions, and the couple's ambivalent attitude was more salient. Another finding concerned the differences among the ratings of dual career males and females depending on attitude. If dual career females were negative or ambivalent toward the move, they were rated significantly lower than their male counterparts. However, they were rated significantly higher than the males when attitude was positive. Again, perhaps in the cases of negative or ambivalent attitude, the raters were more likely to identify with the plight of the husband in the dual career female conditions. Yet, when attitude was positive, transfers involving female dual career employees were rated higher than those involving dual career males. Possibly here raters were responding to the need to recruit female employees in response to the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, and were more than eager to transfer a willing female.

Hypothesis three examined the impact of the employee's sex on the evaluation of transfers, and predicted that the moves of female

employees would be evaluated significantly lower than those of males, particularly in the ambivalent condition. This hypothesis was not supported. This outcome is important in that it runs counter to the findings of the Rosen et al. (1975) study, which found significant differences in favor of males in the amount of organizational intervention expended to retain an employee when the spouse was offered a transfer. It also contradicts the outcome of the Kovach (1981) study, which found that male employees were viewed as more worth retaining than female employees. While these studies did not compare the ratings of transfers involving male and female employees, they did find differences on their tasks related to sex of the employee. One reason the results of this study apparently contradict these previous ones may be due to the differences in the time the studies were conducted. This study was conducted 10 years later than the Rosen et al. (1975) study, and four years later than that of Kovach (1981), pointing to the possibility that executives are now less likely to discriminate. On the other hand, the subjects used in the present study tended to be top level executives, whom their companies selected to participate in Tennessee Executive Development Program. These individuals probably differ from executives in general in their sophistication and level of awareness concerning discrimination based on gender. Their responses might differ from those of the subjects in the Rosen et al. (1975) study, as the latter were drawn from a list of subscribers to a well-known business

publication. The executives in the present study differed markedly from those individuals Kovach (1981) utilized as subjects, who were students enrolled in a personnel management course. Presumably the students would be less sophisticated concerning discrimination in the workplace than experienced, top level executives. Regarding the prediction concerning ambivalent attitude, only the transfers of dual career female employees were rated significantly lower than those of their male counterparts. As previously noted, here the raters may have identified with the position of the husband, leading to lower evaluations of this situation.

Hypothesis four examined the impact of employee relationship status when attitude is ambivalent. The ratings of transfers of dual career employees were predicted to be lower than those of dual earner employees, which were predicted to be lower than those of traditional employees. This hypothesis was only partially supported. While overall significance for employee relationship status in cases of ambivalent attitude was obtained, the ratings of transfers involving dual career and dual earner employees differed significantly from those of traditional employees, but not from each other, as was predicted. Possibly this outcome was affected by the absence of commuter marriage within the traditional conditions, while commuter marriage was a factor in the dual earner and dual career conditions. Indeed, under conditions of ambivalent attitude and commuter marriage, no significant differences were found between levels of employee

relationship status (dual career versus dual earner). Yet under the both move condition when attitude was ambivalent, transfers involving traditional and dual earner employees were rated significantly higher than those of dual career employees. However, in this case, transfers involving dual earners did not differ significantly from those of traditionals. Here the salience of career could have been the deciding factor: those with professional careers were expected to have difficulty finding employment, while dual earners were judged able to find comparable employment with little difficulty. In such a case the dual earners might not have been perceived as having more difficulty adjusting to the move than traditionals, who had reservations about leaving relatives behind.

Hypotheses five and six concerned the impact of the raters' characteristics on the decision-making process. Hypothesis five predicted that female managers would evaluate transfers differently than male managers, without specifying the direction. While the results gave tentative support to this hypothesis, the number of female executives in the sample ($n = 9$) was exceedingly small, such that other subject variables could have accounted for the findings. Transfers were rated higher by females than males in this study; these findings need to be replicated in studies utilizing greater numbers of female executives as raters. Hypothesis six concerned the impact of the rater's relationship status on decision-making. It predicted that managers with working spouses (either dual career

or dual earner) would respond more favorably toward the transfer of an employee in a dual career or dual earner relationship than would managers who are unmarried or whose spouse is not employed. This hypothesis was not supported, although findings were in the predicted direction. Perhaps the executive's own personal experience with spousal career conflicts was not an important factor in decision-making. Executives in traditional earner marriages might well be aware of dual career conflicts, and of couples' abilities to overcome them, through their experience with dual career couples in general.

Hypothesis seven predicted that the relationships among factors would not be subject to interaction effects (two-way or greater). This hypothesis was clearly not supported, as both two-way and three-way interactions were found. The decision-making process concerning geographic transfers is apparently quite complicated, and depends upon the interplay among various factors.

The generalizability of these findings is subject to a number of limitations. One of the inherent problems with mailed survey data is that only a small percentage of those contacted actually respond. In this study, 35% completed the materials, which is a higher percentage than that usually obtained. Nonetheless, 65% of those contacted did not do so; one cannot assume that no differences exist between these two groups.

While an attempt was made to obtain a national sample, the majority of the subjects were from the southeastern United States,

a region generally regarded as a somewhat conservative area. These findings may not be generalizable to executives from other areas of the country; the managers in this study might have evaluated commuter marriage more conservatively than would executives at large. On the other hand, participants in the Tennessee Executive Development Program probably differ from executives in general in other respects, which might lead them to be less conservative. As primarily top level executives and by virtue of their participation in the program, they are probably more alert to gender discrimination and possibly more sensitive to employees' attitudes about geographic transfers than executives at large. More studies are needed with middle of the road managers and with more nationally representative samples to determine if the results obtained in this study hold for other executives as well.

Another important factor concerns the small number of female executives in the sample. While the results of this study point to the possibility that female executives might evaluate transfers more favorably than their male counterparts, the number of females participating in the study was exceedingly small. More studies, using larger proportions of female subjects, are needed to determine the impact (if any) of manager sex on decision-making.

The results of this study are based on the evaluation of hypothetical, rather than actual, geographic transfers. While tasks were designed to simulate day-to-day managerial decisions, they

cannot adequately reflect the complexity of the actual decision. Until commuter marriage is a more common phenomenon, it will be difficult to measure its impact on actual decisions, since the incidence of these decisions is as yet quite rare.

Despite the above-cited limitations of the study, some implications can be drawn. Clearly the attitude of the couple toward a transfer had an impact on the rater's decision; these representatives of the corporation did not fit the stereotype of the company as being insensitive to the employee's needs. On the other hand, transfers involving commuter marriage were rated lower than those in which both members of the couple planned to move, even in cases where the couple felt positively that this arrangement would work. This finding may serve as a caution to employees planning such an arrangement, in that it may be viewed as deviant by managers. As commuter marriage is a relatively recent phenomenon, few executives may be directly acquainted with couples having such a marital arrangement, and, hence, may be skeptical.

The ratings of traditional employees were significantly higher than those of dual career and dual earner employees. As commuter marriage was not included in the traditional earner category, this finding may simply reflect the raters' skepticism of it. On the other hand, possibly transfers involving traditional employees were rated higher because these individuals (males with spouses as homemakers) fit the raters' conceptions of what transferees and

their families should be like. Whatever the case, since relocation typically is a consequence of promotion, these findings point to the possibility of an overlooked form of bias. Executives need to become aware of their potential for unwittingly making discriminatory judgments. One possible avenue for achieving this end, and sensitizing them to the problems associated with geographic transfers, would be through corporate seminars on various facets of the relocation process. Other possibilities for increasing awareness include utilizing reading material on these issues, and providing greater contact with employees undergoing transfers, to get direct input on the problems involved. One mechanism for achieving the latter might be through a company-sponsored relocation interview, which would be designed to directly focus on specific problem areas for families, including spouses' employment possibilities, housing, children's education, and the like.

Another area for possible future research would be to examine how attitudes concerning commuter marriage are located in the matrix of other attitudes. A favorable attitude toward commuter marriage might well be predicted from attitudes toward women's issues, such as those concerning married female labor force participation, egalitarian roles for married couples, the viability of day care, and the importance of women's career fulfillment, among others. Some of these attitudes might be more readily assessable for direct measurement than commuter marriage, such as through determining company policy on nepotism,

flexitime, leave of absence for child care, maternity/paternity leave, and geographic transfer.

This study necessarily addressed only a few of the factors which might influence executive decision-making concerning commuter marriage in cases of geographic transfer. Further research is needed to explore the relative impact of various facets of the commuter marriage arrangement, such as: the presence or absence of children, the ages of children, the distance between the two households, and the length of time anticipated for the commuter marriage arrangement. Research comparing employee relationship status should also investigate various reasons for traditional employees to refuse or be ambivalent about a transfer. In this study the reason cited was to be near relatives, but other factors might be more compelling, such as wanting to remain near elderly parents who are ill, or wanting to stay in an area so that adolescent children can remain in the same high school.

Another promising avenue for future research would be to evaluate the linkage between hypothetical decisions, as measured in the present study, and actual decisions concerning geographic transfers involving commuter marriage. Conceivably executives might react differently to an actual on-the-job decision than to a simulated circumstance. Given the small number of these actual decisions, however, such a study will probably only become feasible if the incidence of commuter marriage significantly increases.

The executives in this study seem to regard commuter marriage with considerable skepticism. Given the limited amount of data on

the success (however defined) of commuter marriage, their doubts may well be warranted. Further studies are needed to determine the outcome of actual commuter marriages born out of the geographic transfer process.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER, CONSENT FORM, INSTRUCTIONS



The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
College of Liberal Arts
Department of Psychology

KNOXVILLE, TN 37996-0900

(615) 974-2531

August 22, 1984

Dear Executive:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, where I am conducting research on managerial decision-making concerning the geographic transfer of employees. Your name was given to me as a past participant in the Executive Development Program. This program has graciously permitted me to contact former participants to seek their assistance in my study. I feel fortunate that I have been given this opportunity because the program is quite selective, and these names are not normally given out. In my case it was thought that the results of this research would be of interest to participants, and potentially beneficial to their organizations.

Participation will take approximately a half hour of your time, and involves the evaluation of the enclosed materials. I recognize you are a busy individual, and that this request involves a sacrifice on your part. I would sincerely appreciate your efforts on my behalf.

If you are willing to participate, please read and sign the enclosed form entitled "About This Task". If you would like a copy of the results of this study, you may so indicate on this form. (It will be separated from the rest of the materials to insure your anonymity.) Next read the instructions page, which will guide your completion of the tasks.

A postage-paid, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. If possible, please return the materials by September 25th.

Thank you for your interest and cooperation!

Sincerely,

Ann Taylor

Ann Taylor, M.A.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
College of Liberal Arts
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
#307 Austin Peay
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-0900

ABOUT THIS TASK

This is a research project in which we are studying managerial decision-making involving the geographic transfer of employees. The tasks you are about to complete include evaluating memos concerning employee transfers, and filling out a questionnaire. They will involve about a half hour of your time.

We appreciate your agreement to help and want to repeat that all of the information you give us will be strictly confidential and anonymous. Your participation is also completely voluntary--you may choose not to answer some of the questions, and in fact, may stop the tasks at any time.

If you have any questions or would like further information about this project, the project director, Ann Taylor, M.A., may be reached at the Department of Psychology, Austin Peay Building, by calling 974-2531.

Again, thank you!

I have read the above statement and understand its content.

Signature Date

If you would like a copy of the results of this study, please
PRINT your name and mailing address below:

INSTRUCTIONS

This study is intended to explore managerial decision-making. You have before you a series of memos describing various work-related situations. In each case, assume that you are the individual to whom the memo is addressed.

On the back of each memo is a rating form asking for your evaluation of the situation described. These simulations of work-related situations are somewhat brief, and understandably you would normally want more information. However, we are asking you to utilize your knowledge and expertise, and to respond to the memo as you would in your current position. Use the policies and procedures of your organization, where applicable.

Consider each memo separately and respond to it before going on to the next one. Do not return to earlier decisions.

After you have completed the memos, please fill out the Personal Data form. All information provided is kept strictly confidential.

Please return the materials in the enclosed envelope by September 25th.

Thank you for your assistance in this research project!

APPENDIX B

MEMOS

Set A

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Plant Superintendent position, Riverview plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Riverview position, and are considering a transfer of Kevin Johnson from the Middletown plant. He has been with the company for nine years, having initially worked for three years in the Wilson research group where he developed some key product improvements for Rolex. Subsequently Kevin was transferred to Lakeside where he served as production engineer. In this capacity he streamlined production of Astor, a move which saved the company \$100,000 annually. Three years ago he became assistant superintendent at Middletown. There he has developed good working relations between the operators and management, and the plant has set new production records under his leadership, while maintaining its superior safety record.

Kevin comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and his performance appraisals have consistently been superior. At this point I believe he is ready to be promoted to plant superintendent, and the Riverview plant, being one of our smaller facilities, seems to be an appropriate choice. As you know, production at Riverview has been sluggish of late, and Kevin may be just the change of leadership needed to turn it around.

I have discussed the transfer with Kevin, and he is positive about it. He told me his wife, who is an attorney, is also in favor of his accepting the transfer. However, she feels that she could not find comparable employment in Riverview. If he were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that she could continue her employment, while he would live in Riverview. Since they would be about 140 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. Although they have not tried such an arrangement before, they felt confident they could adjust to it. They have two children, a boy, 8, and a girl, 6.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Employee Relations position, Jackson Heights Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Bill Smith from the Lakeside office. Bill has been with the company ten years, having served in the Lakeside office as employee relations manager for the past five years. Prior to that he was assistant employee relations manager at the Middletown office. As you know, relations between employees and management at Lakeside are among the best in the company. Bill has been instrumental in introducing policy changes so that they are readily understood and frequently accepted. The controversy over the changes in the insurance package, so widespread at some of the other sites, was minimal at Lakeside due largely to his efforts.

Bill comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and his performance reviews have been consistently high. As you know, the Jackson Heights office has had frequent problems, and I anticipate even more when the proposed shift changes are put into effect early next year. Bill's expertise in handling such thorny issues should be a key to the successful implementation of the changes and to the development of better relations at Jackson Heights. In addition, this move should be a good one for his career advancement, and I believe he is ready to rise to the challenge.

I have discussed the transfer with Bill, and he has mixed feelings about it. He and his wife view it as a good opportunity for him, but she is a bank teller here, and may not be able to find comparable work in Jackson Heights. They have two children, a boy, 11, and a girl, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Sales position--Lakeside Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Lakeside position, and are considering a transfer of Charlotte Jones from the Brookwood office. She has been with the company for nine years and has received excellent ratings from her supervisors. Charlotte took over a new territory one year ago, and increased sales 35% over the previous year. Prior to that, she set impressive sales records at Jackson Heights with initially a local, and later a regional territory. Her familiarity with the Wilkerson product line should be instrumental in its introduction to the Lakeside area.

Over the course of her employment with the company, Charlotte's performance appraisals have been consistently high, and she has more than met the challenge when previously promoted. The move to Lakeside would, I think, be good for her professional development, and should benefit the company, as, if her past record is any indication, her sales ability should enable us to gain a strong foothold in the Lakeside market.

I have discussed the transfer with Charlotte, and she was opposed to it. She told me she and her husband had talked about it, but he is a shipping clerk, and he feels that he could not find comparable employment in Lakeside. If we went ahead with the transfer, their plans would be to set up two households so that he could continue his employment, while she would live in Lakeside. Since they would be about 150 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They did not see this as being an acceptable arrangement, and, therefore, objected to the transfer. They have two children, a girl, 9, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Superintendent of Plant Protection position, Middletown plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Frank Adams from the Lakeside plant. He has been with the company ten years, having served four years at Fairview, where he was in charge of protection for Building 8 (Rolex production). During this time no major incidents occurred, and on several occasions trespassers were apprehended by the protection team under his direction. Six years ago Frank became assistant superintendent of plant protection at Lakeside, where he assists in directing and coordinating protection activities for the entire plant. As you know, this plant has one of our highest protection records, partly attributable to a new training program which Frank devised.

Frank comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and he has consistently received excellent performance appraisals. His present supervisor noted his ability to organize and coordinate protection programs as well as his skill at implementation. The move to Middletown would enhance Frank's career development in that he will be in charge of the entire plant protection operation, and given some of the recent problems there, it should prove challenging. Frank's expertise might well be what is needed to address these problems and improve the present protection program.

I have discussed the transfer with Frank, and he is positive about it. He told me his wife, who is a homemaker, is also in favor of his accepting the transfer, although they both have relatives in the area, whom they will miss. They have two children, a girl, age 10, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Director of Research and Development position, Jackson Heights office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Jack Clayton from the Eastside office. He has been with the company ten years, having initially worked at Lakeside where, among other accomplishments, he developed key improvements in the dye process for the Martin line. Five years ago Jack was transferred to Eastside where he is project director of the Maxwell research team, one of six project teams there. Under his supervision, the group developed the new Hiadex product line, which has been highly successful, and they developed several improvements in the Maxwell line as well.

Jack has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and his supervisors have recommended him highly. His current supervisor has noted his competence in the field as well as his ability to develop a good working atmosphere among staff. At this point I believe he is ready for the challenge of directing a larger research group, and the position at Jackson Heights seems an appropriate choice. As you know, the research group there has had several internal problems, and Jack may be just the change in leadership needed to reorder priorities and get viable research going again.

I have discussed the transfer with Jack, and he was opposed to it. He told me he and his wife talked about it, but she is an urban planner, and she feels that she could not find comparable employment in Jackson Heights. They have two children, a girl, 10, and a boy, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Superintendent of Labor Utilization position, Middletown plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Judy Marshall from the Clarkson plant. She has been with the company nine years, having initially worked at Jackson Heights where she served on the Plant Effectiveness evaluation team, whose recommendations were instrumental in the reorganization of plant operations there. Four years ago Judy became assistant superintendent of labor utilization at Clarkson. In this capacity she reviewed overall plant operations and made several key recommendations which led to greater efficiency as well as cost effectiveness.

Judy has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and her supervisors have highly recommended her. Her current supervisor noted that she is highly skilled in evaluating plant functioning, as well as being an effective leader. The position at Middletown would be an important step in Judy's career development, while also providing a challenge as it involves unionized employees and different manufacturing processes from her previous positions. I believe Judy is ready for these challenges, and she may be just the person needed to streamline the processes at Middletown.

I have discussed the transfer with Judy, and she has mixed feelings about it. She and her husband view it as a good opportunity for her, but he is an architect and may not be able to find comparable employment in Middletown. If she were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that he could continue his employment, while she would live in Middletown. Since they would be about 145 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They have not tried such an arrangement before, and were not sure if they would be able to adjust to it. They have two children, a boy, 9, and a girl, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Marketing position--Middletown Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Mary Williams from the Jackson Heights office. She has eight years service with the company, having served three years in the Wilson Division where she was a key figure in the successful Rolex campaign. Five years ago she was promoted to her present position at Jackson Heights, where she has introduced several successful marketing campaigns. The latest, for Doran, has increased sales 40% over the previous year.

Mary comes highly recommended by her supervisors, and her performance ratings have consistently been in the superior range. The Middletown position needs someone skillful at launching products in an already highly competitive market, as in the Astor and Rockwell lines. Mary has considerable experience with tight markets, Rolex being one example. The position would be a challenging one for her, I think, and good for her overall professional development. The company should also benefit if her past performance is any indication.

I have discussed the transfer with Mary, and she is positive about it. She told me her husband, who works as a postal clerk, is also in favor of her accepting the transfer. He plans to seek comparable employment in Middletown. They have two children, a boy, 10, and a girl, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

Set B

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Employee Relations position, Jackson Heights Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Bill Smith from the Lakeside office. Bill has been with the company ten years, having served in the Lakeside office as employee relations manager for the past five years. Prior to that he was assistant employee relations manager at the Middletown office. As you know, relations between employees and management at Lakeside are among the best in the company. Bill has been instrumental in introducing policy changes so that they are readily understood and frequently accepted. The controversy over the changes in the insurance package, so widespread at some of the other sites, was minimal at Lakeside due largely to his efforts.

Bill comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and his performance reviews have been consistently high. As you know, the Jackson Heights office has had frequent problems, and I anticipate even more when the proposed shift changes are put into effect early next year. Bill's expertise in handling such thorny issues should be a key to the successful implementation of the changes and to the development of better relations at Jackson Heights. In addition, this move should be a good one for his career advancement, and I believe he is ready to rise to the challenge.

I have discussed the transfer with Bill, and he has mixed feelings about it. He and his wife view it as a good opportunity for him, but she is a bank teller here, and may not be able to find comparable work in Jackson Heights. If he were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that she could continue her employment, while he would live in Jackson Heights. Since they would be about 140 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They have not tried such an arrangement before, and were not sure if they would be able to adjust to it. They have two children, a boy, 11, and a girl, 8.

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To: Executive Vice President

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I have discussed the transfer with Jack, and he is positive about it. He told me his wife, who is employed as an urban planner, is also in favor of his accepting the transfer. She plans to seek comparable employment in Jackson Heights. They have two children, a girl, 10, and a boy, 8.

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MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

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Re: Superintendent of Plant Protection position, Middletown plant

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Frank comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and he has consistently received excellent performance appraisals. His present supervisor noted his ability to organize and coordinate protection programs as well as his skill at implementation. The move to Middletown would enhance Frank's career development in that he will be in charge of the entire plant protection operation, and given some of the recent problems there, it should prove challenging. Frank's expertise might well be what is needed to address these problems and improve the present protection program.

I have discussed the transfer with Frank, and he was opposed to it. He told me he and his wife have talked about it, but they both have relatives in the area, and do not want to move away from them. She is a homemaker, and they have two children, a girl, age 10, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President
From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office
Re: Sales position--Lakeside Office

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Over the course of her employment with the company, Charlotte's performance appraisals have been consistently high, and she has more than met the challenge when previously promoted. The move to Lakeside would, I think, be good for her professional development, and should benefit the company, as, if her past record is any indication, her sales ability should enable us to gain a strong foothold in the Lakeside market.

I have discussed the transfer with Charlotte, and she is positive about it. She told me her husband, who works as a shipping clerk, is also in favor of her accepting the transfer. However, he feels that he could not find comparable employment in Lakeside. If she were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that he could continue his employment, while she would live in Lakeside. Since they would be about 150 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. Although they have not tried such an arrangement before, they felt confident they could adjust to it. They have two children, a girl, 9, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Plant Superintendent position, Riverview plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Riverview position, and are considering a transfer of Kathy Johnson from the Middletown plant. She has been with the company for nine years, having initially worked for three years in the Wilson research group where she developed some key product improvements for Rolex. Subsequently Kathy was transferred to Lakeside where she served as production engineer. In this capacity she streamlined production of Astor, a move which saved the company \$100,000 annually. Three years ago she became assistant superintendent at Middletown. There she has developed good working relations between the operators and management, and the plant has set new production records under her leadership, while maintaining its superior safety record.

Kathy comes highly recommended by her supervisors, and her performance appraisals have consistently been superior. At this point I believe she is ready to be promoted to plant superintendent, and the Riverview plant, being one of our smaller facilities, seems to be an appropriate choice. As you know, production at Riverview has been sluggish of late, and Kathy may be just the change of leadership needed to turn it around.

I have discussed the transfer with Kathy, and she has mixed feelings about it. She and her husband view it as a good opportunity for her, but he is an attorney here, and may not be able to find comparable employment in Riverview. They have two children, a boy, 8, and a girl, 6.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Superintendent of Labor Utilization position, Middletown plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Joe Marshall from the Clarkson plant. He has been with the company nine years, having initially worked at Jackson Heights where he served on the Plant Effectiveness evaluation team, whose recommendations were instrumental in the reorganization of plant operations there. Four years ago Joe became assistant superintendent of labor utilization at Clarkson. In this capacity he reviewed overall plant operations and made several key recommendations which led to greater efficiency as well as cost effectiveness.

Joe has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and his supervisors have highly recommended him. His current supervisor noted that he is highly skilled in evaluating plant functioning, as well as being an effective leader. The position at Middletown would be an important step in Joe's career development, while also providing a challenge as it involves unionized employees and different manufacturing processes from his previous positions. I believe Joe is ready for these challenges, and he may be just the person needed to streamline the processes at Middletown.

I have discussed the transfer with Joe, and he was opposed to it. He told me he and his wife had talked about it, but she is an architect, and she feels that she could not find comparable employment in Middletown. If we went ahead with the transfer, their plans would be to set up two households so that she could continue her employment, while he would live in Middletown. Since they would be about 145 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They did not see this as being an acceptable arrangement, and, therefore, objected to the transfer. They have two children, a boy, 9, and a girl, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

Set C

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President
From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office
Re: Marketing position--Middletown Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Mark Williams from the Jackson Heights office. He has eight years service with the company, having served three years in the Wilson Division where he was a key figure in the successful Rolex campaign. Five years ago he was promoted to his present position at Jackson Heights, where he has introduced several successful marketing campaigns. The latest, for Doran, has increased sales 40% over the previous year.

Mark comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and his performance ratings have consistently been in the superior range. The Middletown position needs someone skillful at launching products in an already highly competitive market, as in the Astor and Rockwell lines. Mark has considerable experience with tight markets, Rolex being one example. The position would be a challenging one for him, I think, and good for his overall professional development. The company should also benefit if his past performance is any indication.

I have discussed the transfer with Mark, and he was opposed to it. He told me he and his wife talked about it, but she is a postal clerk, and she feels that she could not find comparable employment in Middletown. They have two children, a boy, 10, and a girl, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Employee Relations position, Jackson Heights Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Susan Smith from the Lakeside office. Susan has been with the company ten years, having served in the Lakeside office as employee relations manager for the past five years. Prior to that she was assistant employee relations manager at the Middletown office. As you know, relations between employees and management at Lakeside are among the best in the company. Susan has been instrumental in introducing policy changes so that they are readily understood and frequently accepted. The controversy over the changes in the insurance package, so widespread at some of the other sites, was minimal at Lakeside due largely to her efforts.

Susan comes highly recommended by her supervisors, and her performance reviews have been consistently high. As you know, the Jackson Heights office has had frequent problems, and I anticipate even more when the proposed shift changes are put into effect early next year. Susan's expertise in handling such thorny issues should be a key to the successful implementation of the changes and to the development of better relations at Jackson Heights. In addition, this move should be a good one for her career advancement, and I believe she is ready to rise to the challenge.

I have discussed the transfer with Susan, and she has mixed feelings about it. She and her husband view it as a good opportunity for her, but he is a bank teller here, and may not be able to find comparable work in Jackson Heights. If she were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that he could continue his employment, while she would live in Jackson Heights. Since they would be about 140 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They have not tried such an arrangement before, and were not sure if they would be able to adjust to it. They have two children, a boy, 11, and a girl, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Director of Research and Development position, Jackson Heights office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Joan Clayton from the Eastside office. She has been with the company ten years, having initially worked at Lakeside where, among other accomplishments, she developed key improvements in the dye process for the Martin line. Five years ago Joan was transferred to Eastside where she is project director of the Maxwell research team, one of six project teams there. Under her supervision, the group developed the new Miadex product line, which has been highly successful, and they developed several improvements in the Maxwell line as well.

Joan has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and her supervisors have recommended her highly. Her current supervisor has noted her competence in the field as well as her ability to develop a good working atmosphere among staff. At this point I believe she is ready for the challenge of directing a larger research group, and the position at Jackson Heights seems an appropriate choice. As you know, the research group there has had several internal problems, and Joan may be just the change in leadership needed to reorder priorities and get viable research going again.

I have discussed the transfer with Joan, and she is positive about it. She told me her husband, who is employed as an urban planner, is also in favor of her accepting the transfer. He plans to seek comparable employment in Jackson Heights. They have two children, a girl, 10, and a boy, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Sales position--Lakeside Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Lakeside position, and are considering a transfer of Charles Jones from the Brookwood office. He has been with the company for nine years and has received excellent ratings from his supervisors. Charles took over a new territory one year ago, and increased sales 35% over the previous year. Prior to that, he set impressive sales records at Jackson Heights with initially a local, and later a regional territory. His familiarity with the Wilkerson product line should be instrumental in its introduction to the Lakeside area.

Over the course of his employment with the company, Charles' performance appraisals have been consistently high, and he has more than met the challenge when previously promoted. The move to Lakeside would, I think, be good for his professional development, and should benefit the company, as, if his past record is any indication, his sales ability should enable us to gain a strong foothold in the Lakeside market.

I have discussed the transfer with Charles, and he is positive about it. He told me his wife, who works as a shipping clerk, is also in favor of his accepting the transfer. However, she feels that she could not find comparable employment in Lakeside. If he were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that she could continue her employment, while he would live in Lakeside. Since they would be about 150 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. Although they have not tried such an arrangement before, they felt confident they could adjust to it. They have two children, a girl, 9, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President
From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office
Re: Plant Superintendent position, Riverview plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Riverview position, and are considering a transfer of Kevin Johnson from the Middletown plant. He has been with the company for nine years, having initially worked for three years in the Wilson research group where he developed some key product improvements for Rolex. Subsequently Kevin was transferred to Lakeside where he served as production engineer. In this capacity he streamlined production of Astor, a move which saved the company \$100,000 annually. Three years ago he became assistant superintendent at Middletown. There he has developed good working relations between the operators and management, and the plant has set new production records under his leadership, while maintaining its superior safety record.

Kevin comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and his performance appraisals have consistently been superior. At this point I believe he is ready to be promoted to plant superintendent, and the Riverview plant, being one of our smaller facilities, seems to be an appropriate choice. As you know, production at Riverview has been sluggish of late, and Kevin may be just the change of leadership needed to turn it around.

I have discussed the transfer with Kevin, and he has mixed feelings about it. He and his wife view it as a good opportunity for him, but she is an attorney here, and may not be able to find comparable employment in Riverview. They have two children, a boy, 8, and a girl, 6.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Superintendent of Labor Utilization position, Middletown plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Judy Marshall from the Clarkson plant. She has been with the company nine years, having initially worked at Jackson Heights where she served on the Plant Effectiveness evaluation team, whose recommendations were instrumental in the reorganization of plant operations there. Four years ago Judy became assistant superintendent of labor utilization at Clarkson. In this capacity she reviewed overall plant operations and made several key recommendations which led to greater efficiency as well as cost effectiveness.

Judy has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and her supervisors have highly recommended her. Her current supervisor noted that she is highly skilled in evaluating plant functioning, as well as being an effective leader. The position at Middletown would be an important step in Judy's career development, while also providing a challenge as it involves unionized employees and different manufacturing processes from her previous positions. I believe Judy is ready for these challenges, and she may be just the person needed to streamline the processes at Middletown.

I have discussed the transfer with Judy, and she was opposed to it. She told me she and her husband had talked about it, but he is an architect, and he feels that he could not find comparable employment in Middletown. If we went ahead with the transfer, their plans would be to set up two households so that he could continue his employment, while she would live in Middletown. Since they would be about 145 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They did not see this as being an acceptable arrangement, and, therefore, objected to the transfer. They have two children, a boy, 9, and a girl, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

Set D

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Employee Relations position, Jackson Heights Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Susan Smith from the Lakeside office. Susan has been with the company ten years, having served in the Lakeside office as employee relations manager for the past five years. Prior to that she was assistant employee relations manager at the Middletown office. As you know, relations between employees and management at Lakeside are among the best in the company. Susan has been instrumental in introducing policy changes so that they are readily understood and frequently accepted. The controversy over the changes in the insurance package, so widespread at some of the other sites, was minimal at Lakeside due largely to her efforts.

Susan comes highly recommended by her supervisors, and her performance reviews have been consistently high. As you know, the Jackson Heights office has had frequent problems, and I anticipate even more when the proposed shift changes are put into effect early next year. Susan's expertise in handling such thorny issues should be a key to the successful implementation of the changes and to the development of better relations at Jackson Heights. In addition, this move should be a good one for her career advancement, and I believe she is ready to rise to the challenge.

I have discussed the transfer with Susan, and she has mixed feelings about it. She and her husband view it as a good opportunity for her, but he is a bank teller here, and may not be able to find comparable work in Jackson Heights. They have two children, a boy, 11, and a girl, 8.

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Over the course of his employment with the company, Charles' performance appraisals have been consistently high, and he has more than met the challenge when previously promoted. The move to Lakeside would, I think, be good for his professional development, and should benefit the company, as, if his past record is any indication, his sales ability should enable us to gain a strong foothold in the Lakeside market.

I have discussed the transfer with Charles, and he was opposed to it. He told me he and his wife had talked about it, but she is a shipping clerk, and she feels that she could not find comparable employment in Lakeside. If we went ahead with the transfer, their plans would be to set up two households so that she could continue her employment, while he would live in Lakeside. Since they would be about 150 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They did not see this as being an acceptable arrangement, and, therefore, objected to the transfer. They have two children, a girl, 9, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Superintendent of Plant Protection position, Middletown plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Frank Adams from the Lakeside plant. He has been with the company ten years, having served four years at Fairview, where he was in charge of protection for Building 8 (Rolex production). During this time no major incidents occurred, and on several occasions trespassers were apprehended by the protection team under his direction. Six years ago Frank became assistant superintendent of plant protection at Lakeside, where he assists in directing and coordinating protection activities for the entire plant. As you know, this plant has one of our highest protection records, partly attributable to a new training program which Frank devised.

Frank comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and he has consistently received excellent performance appraisals. His present supervisor noted his ability to organize and coordinate protection programs as well as his skill at implementation. The move to Middletown would enhance Frank's career development in that he will be in charge of the entire plant protection operation, and given some of the recent problems there, it should prove challenging. Frank's expertise might well be what is needed to address these problems and improve the present protection program.

I have discussed the transfer with Frank, and he has mixed feelings about it. He and his wife view it as a good opportunity for him, but they both have relatives in the area, and do not want to move away from them. She is a homemaker, and they have two children, a girl, age 10, and a boy, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Plant Superintendent position, Riverview plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Riverview position, and are considering a transfer of Kathy Johnson from the Middletown plant. She has been with the company for nine years, having initially worked for three years in the Wilson research group where she developed some key product improvements for Rolex. Subsequently Kathy was transferred to Lakeside where she served as production engineer. In this capacity she streamlined production of Astor, a move which saved the company \$100,000 annually. Three years ago she became assistant superintendent at Middletown. There she has developed good working relations between the operators and management, and the plant has set new production records under her leadership, while maintaining its superior safety record.

Kathy comes highly recommended by her supervisors, and her performance appraisals have consistently been superior. At this point I believe she is ready to be promoted to plant superintendent, and the Riverview plant, being one of our smaller facilities, seems to be an appropriate choice. As you know, production at Riverview has been sluggish of late, and Kathy may be just the change of leadership needed to turn it around.

I have discussed the transfer with Kathy, and she is positive about it. She told me her husband, who is an attorney, is also in favor of her accepting the transfer. However, he feels that he could not find comparable employment in Riverview. If she were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that he could continue his employment, while she would live in Riverview. Since they would be about 140 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. Although they have not tried such an arrangement before, they felt confident they could adjust to it. They have two children, a boy, 8, and a girl, 6.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Director of Research and Development position, Jackson Heights office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Jackson Heights position, and are considering a transfer of Joan Clayton from the Eastside office. She has been with the company ten years, having initially worked at Lakeside where, among other accomplishments, she developed key improvements in the dye process for the Martin line. Five years ago Joan was transferred to Eastside where she is project director of the Maxwell research team, one of six project teams there. Under her supervision, the group developed the new Miadex product line, which has been highly successful, and they developed several improvements in the Maxwell line as well.

Joan has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and her supervisors have recommended her highly. Her current supervisor has noted her competence in the field as well as her ability to develop a good working atmosphere among staff. At this point I believe she is ready for the challenge of directing a larger research group, and the position at Jackson Heights seems an appropriate choice. As you know, the research group there has had several internal problems, and Joan may be just the change in leadership needed to reorder priorities and get viable research going again.

I have discussed the transfer with Joan, and she was opposed to it. She told me she and her husband talked about it, but he is an urban planner, and he feels that he could not find comparable employment in Jackson Heights. They have two children, a girl, 10, and a boy, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President
From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office
Re: Marketing position--Middletown Office

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Mark Williams from the Jackson Heights office. He has eight years service with the company, having served three years in the Wilson Division where he was a key figure in the successful Rolex campaign. Five years ago he was promoted to his present position at Jackson Heights, where he has introduced several successful marketing campaigns. The latest, for Doran, has increased sales 40% over the previous year.

Mark comes highly recommended by his supervisors, and his performance ratings have consistently been in the superior range. The Middletown position needs someone skillful at launching products in an already highly competitive market, as in the Astor and Rockwell lines. Mark has considerable experience with tight markets, Rolex being one example. The position would be a challenging one for him, I think, and good for his overall professional development. The company should also benefit if his past performance is any indication.

I have discussed the transfer with Mark, and he is positive about it. He told me his wife, who works as a postal clerk, is also in favor of his accepting the transfer. She plans to seek comparable employment in Middletown. They have two children, a boy, 10, and a girl, 8.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

MEMO

To: Executive Vice President

From: Sam Jacobson, Corporate Personnel Office

Re: Superintendent of Labor Utilization position, Middletown plant

We have reviewed several candidates for the Middletown position, and are considering a transfer of Joe Marshall from the Clarkson plant. He has been with the company nine years, having initially worked at Jackson Heights where he served on the Plant Effectiveness evaluation team, whose recommendations were instrumental in the reorganization of plant operations there. Four years ago Joe became assistant superintendent of labor utilization at Clarkson. In this capacity he reviewed overall plant operations and made several key recommendations which led to greater efficiency as well as cost effectiveness.

Joe has consistently received excellent performance appraisals, and his supervisors have highly recommended him. His current supervisor noted that he is highly skilled in evaluating plant functioning, as well as being an effective leader. The position at Middletown would be an important step in Joe's career development, while also providing a challenge as it involves unionized employees and different manufacturing processes from his previous positions. I believe Joe is ready for these challenges, and he may be just the person needed to streamline the processes at Middletown.

I have discussed the transfer with Joe, and he has mixed feelings about it. He and his wife view it as a good opportunity for him, but she is an architect and may not be able to find comparable employment in Middletown. If he were transferred, their plans would be to set up two households so that she could continue her employment, while he would live in Middletown. Since they would be about 145 miles apart, they would get together on weekends. They have not tried such an arrangement before, and were not sure if they would be able to adjust to it. They have two children, a boy, 9, and a girl, 7.

PLEASE SEE OTHER SIDE.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE RATING FORM

This is a sample of the rating form which appeared on the back of each memo. Rating forms differed from one another only in the name of the employee listed.

Evaluation of Kevin Johnson

Naturally you would ordinarily require additional information, but based on the limited amount available, what is your decision about the transfer of Kevin Johnson?

Circle the number that best corresponds to your decision and your degree of confidence in it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Definitely				Not					Definitely
Do Not				Sure					Transfer
Transfer									

What factor(s) influenced your decision?

Under what (if any) circumstances would you make a different decision?

APPENDIX D

PERSONAL DATA FORM

PERSONAL DATA

Please complete the following items. All information is strictly confidential.

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age: _____

Marital Status: ☐ Never Married ☐ Widowed
 ☐ Married ☐ Separated
 ☐ Divorced

If married, check one box to describe your spouse's primary employment:

- ☐ Homemaker
- ☐ Pursuing a career
- ☐ Employed, but not pursuing a career
- ☐ A student, planning to pursue a career at a later point
- ☐ A student, without defined career plans at present

(If spouse is unemployed, but is currently seeking employment, check the item which most closely reflects the position sought.)

Spouse's Occupation: _____

Number of Children: ☐ None ☐ Three
 ☐ One ☐ Four
 ☐ Two ☐ More than four

Your Job Title: _____

Number of Employees You Supervise: _____

What is the primary functional responsibility of your position?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Production | ☐ Personnel |
| ☐ Sales | ☐ Accounting |
| ☐ Research and Development | ☐ Finance |
| ☐ Administration | ☐ Other _____ |
| | (Specify) |

Approximately how many employees are there in your organization as a whole?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Less than 1000 | ☐ 20,000 - 25,000 |
| ☐ 1000 - 5000 | ☐ 25,000 - 30,000 |
| ☐ 5000 - 10,000 | ☐ 30,000 - 35,000 |
| ☐ 10,000 - 15,000 | ☐ 35,000 - 40,000 |
| ☐ 15,000 - 20,000 | ☐ More than 40,000 |

What is the main activity of your organization?

- ☐ Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries
 - ☐ Mining
 - ☐ Contract Construction
 - ☐ Manufacturing
 - ☐ Transportation, Communications, and Utilities
 - ☐ Wholesale and Retail Trade
 - ☐ Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
 - ☐ Medical Services
 - ☐ Educational Services
 - ☐ Business and Repair Services
 - ☐ All Other Services
 - ☐ Public Administration (Federal, State. . .)
 - ☐ Other _____
- (Specify)

Does your organization offer transfers involving relocation?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, what percentage (if any) of employees have refused a transfer because it would disrupt their spouse's career?

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| ☐ Less than 10% | ☐ 50 - 60% |
| ☐ 10 - 20% | ☐ 60 - 70% |
| ☐ 20 - 30% | ☐ 70 - 80% |
| ☐ 30 - 40% | ☐ 80 - 90% |
| ☐ 40 - 50% | ☐ 90 - 100% |

Have you ever had an employee accept a transfer although planning to live apart from his/her spouse and/or family for an extended period?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, please indicate the number of times this has occurred and describe the situation(s) involved. _____

Of the married couples you know, in approximately what percent of these are both members pursuing careers?

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| ☐ Less than 10% | ☐ 50 - 60% |
| ☐ 10 - 20% | ☐ 60 - 70% |
| ☐ 20 - 30% | ☐ 70 - 80% |
| ☐ 30 - 40% | ☐ 80 - 90% |
| ☐ 40 - 50% | ☐ 90 - 100% |

While you were growing up, how many years did your mother work outside the home?

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ None | ☐ 10 to 15 years |
| ☐ Less than 5 years | ☐ 15 to 20 years |
| ☐ 5 to 10 years | |

If your mother worked, would you consider her employment to be

- ☐ Career Related ☐ Non Career Related

APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP LETTER



The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
College of Liberal Arts
Department of Psychology

KNOXVILLE, TN 37996-0900

(615) 974-2531

September 26, 1984

Dear Executive:

Recently I mailed you a packet of materials concerning my dissertation research on executive decision-making with regard to the geographic transfer of employees. I am writing to urge you to complete and mail the materials, if you have not already done so.

If the packet has become misplaced, please call (615) 974-6846, and I will gladly supply another one. Please disregard this letter if you have already responded.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Ann Taylor

Ann Taylor, M.A.

VITA

Ann Siegrist Taylor was born in Amherst, Virginia, on February 17, 1953. In September 1971 she entered Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and in June 1975 she received a Bachelor of Science with Distinction degree in Psychology. Later that same month she married Allen R. Taylor. In August 1975, she accepted a graduate fellowship at Central Michigan University, where she began study toward a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology. This degree was awarded in May 1977.

In September 1977, Ms. Taylor accepted a position with Shawnee Mental Health Center in Portsmouth, Ohio, as a psychology assistant, which she held until August 1981. Subsequently, she became employed as a behavior specialist in alcohol and drug abuse services at Georgia Highlands Center in Dalton, Georgia. She held this position until September 1982, when she accepted a graduate assistantship at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and began study toward the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Clinical Psychology. Throughout the entire time Ms. Taylor has worked on her doctorate, she and her husband have experienced the stresses and rewards of a commuter marriage.

Although this dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Office in the summer of 1985, Ms. Taylor does not anticipate the award of her degree until August 1986. At that time she will have completed an additional program requirement of a clinical psychology internship, at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan.